

NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF AMANDA STANFORD,
CLERK OF THE SUPERIOR COURT PINAL COUNTY
PINAL COUNTY ARIZONA 85132

PREPARED BY STAFF

PHONE: 520.866.5382

lhurley@courts.az.gov



CLERK AMANDA STANFORD

REPORT ON UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS TO SUPERIOR COURT RECORDS RELEASED BY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

PINAL COUNTY, AZ (7/09/2015) – The agency of governance for the Superior Courts of Arizona has released their initial findings based on data provided by the Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court (COSC) in Pinal County. The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) replicated the COSC report and found that *significant corroboration* exists between what was provided by the COSC and their internal investigation.

Some of the AOC report findings include that 43 cases were involved and 66 individual instances of unauthorized access has taken place in the time period analyzed. The scope of the AOC investigation was extremely narrow and was limited to active criminal cases, whereas the report by the COSC included all case types as well as adjudicated cases.

“Our focus was on all profiles. A profile is a specific assigned account to an entity, such as the County Attorney’s office and Public Access as well as others,” said Clerk Stanford. “The findings of my office were more inclusive – we looked at *anything and everything* involving unauthorized access by profiles reviewing what our case management system recognized as sealed,” she continued. The designation of “sealed” includes Mental Health Records and Ex Parte Communications.

The COSC has been working diligently since the investigation began in January to correct and secure all records. The COSC has fully addressed the AOC finding of the use of “generic headings.” They are in the

process of being replaced with specific document “headers.” All case document descriptions are in process of strict standardization as well.

“A part of the variation in cases numbered in the AOC report can be attributed to correction efforts by my office from the time period the time of the initial News Release in January and the beginning of the AOC investigation in April,” stated the Clerk. The Clerk’s office alerted AOC analysts from the beginning that a variance would exist due to massive correction efforts already in progress.

“What is important to know is that in Appendix B of this report, the investigators *have only counted one viewing even if there were several separate viewings occurring in one day,*” explained Stanford.

“The report clearly identified that cases were breached. The ramifications are still to be determined and that is a matter best left to the courts to decide. That is the main responsibility of a Special Master Judge, who will be appointed to oversee any next steps,” she concluded.

The Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court is committed to providing *quality* customer service, ensuring the integrity of, and access to, court records by supporting the Judicial process through efficient management of records, fiscally prudent administration, current technology, and maintenance of a viable Jury pool.

The Florence office of the Clerk of the Superior Court is located at 971 N. Jason Lopez Circle in the Pinal County Justice Complex, Building A. It is open to serve the public on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

Satellite offices are located in Apache Junction and Casa Grande. The office of the Clerk of the Superior Court in Pinal County can be reached at 520-866-5300. To learn more about the Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court in Pinal County please visit: <http://www.coscpinalcountyaz.gov/>

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