

Macomb County to streamline making of concealed pistol licenses

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The days of tearing, trimming, pasting and laminating by hand concealed pistol licenses will come to an end in Macomb County.

Clerk/Register of Deeds Carmella Sabaugh got the go-ahead from commissioners to spend about \$8,000 initially then \$6,000 annually for the IDentiphoto system to streamline the permit-creating process.

Her office is to have 78 employees next year and anticipates processing 10,000 CPL applications -- more than four times as many as her staff of 98 processed in 2007.

"We have to look at ways we can minimize some of the cuts by using technology," Sabaugh said. "(The new system) really will save time, and the licenses will be safer."

Currently, employees must print the permits, tear perforations, trim and paste the applicant's passport-style photo and laminate the permit. With more than 700 applications processed monthly, the process can take four or five days per month.

The new concealed pistol licenses will look more like a driver's license. Photos and signatures will be stored electronically and saved with the data printed on the card. The licenses will be harder to tamper with or duplicate, Sabaugh said.

Currently, applicants can bring in their own photo or have one taken at the clerk's office for \$15. As part of the new process, the county's Concealed Weapons Licensing Board may consider requiring applicants to have photos taken by the Clerk's Office so they can be electronically stored and printed on the permits.

Wayne County is among a dozen counties in Michigan using the system Macomb plans to use, according to information given to Macomb commissioners, who approved the idea last month.

Oakland County Deputy Clerk Mike Senyko said the county processes CPLs by hand and considered the system Macomb is planning to implement at the beginning of the year.

"We are pleased at this time how we are processing things," he said. "We've looked at it. We're intrigued, but we haven't pulled the trigger yet. We can look at it again."

Senyko said the Oakland staff, like Macomb's, has shrunk about 20% in the last few years to 112 people while the number of CPL applications has grown from nearly 3,700 in 2007 to more than 12,300 projected next year.

Kalamazoo County Clerk/Register of Deeds Tim Snow, who is president of the Michigan Association of County Clerks, said his county is looking at the system Macomb will use.

"That appears to me to be a terrific time saver," he said. "Everyone that I've talked to that has it, loves it."

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