

GUIDELINES FOR GENEALOGISTS

As a genealogist, you are welcome to research our records. Most of the records held by the Circuit Clerk are public record, exceptions being adoption and juvenile proceedings, which are impounded under State Law. You may also do a preliminary search of our immigration records at www.mcleancountyil.gov. Click on Departments, then on Circuit Clerk. Scroll down the list in the left-hand margin to "Genealogy", and then click on "Immigration".

Please allow yourselves plenty of time, since we will expect you to browse the index books for your cases. Please wear clothing that you don't mind getting soiled. You may have encountered what we call "red rot" on index books before. We may require you to wear cotton gloves based on the condition of the records, and we do ask that you handle the records carefully and refold them on the same lines they were folded.

Unfortunately, because of a few unscrupulous individuals, we also request you handle only one file at a time. Due to the theft and recovery of a will a few years ago, we have had to add security measures to safeguard our records.

There may be interruptions in your service, inasmuch as we must handle daily business in addition to assisting with your research. We also have files that are stored at another facility and it may take a few days to retrieve them. If we cannot help you while you are here, we may ask that you call or return after we have had the opportunity to process your request.

If we are not able to duplicate a document for you, we will be happy to allow you to hand copy the information. Please respect our decisions and understand that it is based upon either the condition of the record or the legality of duplicating the document.

We prefer that you come between 8:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. We are short staffed in the departments over the noon hour and experience has proven it difficult to accomplish much in the last half-hour of the day. The Circuit Clerk will photocopy records for you at a statutory cost. This cost is set at \$2 for the first page, .50 for each page thereafter. Once you copy past 20 pages per file, the rate is reduced to .25 per page. The Clerk will certify the authenticity of the copies for an additional \$6 fee.

Due to the volume of daily work that must be completed, we ask that you conduct the inspection of all index books and request all materials at once to save our staff trips to the basement or another storage facility. We are more than willing to provide you with the materials you need to do your genealogical search.