



## **KEN BURKE**

### CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT - PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

Clerk of the County Court • Recorder of Deeds • Clerk and Accountant of the Board of County Commissioners  
Custodian of County Funds • County Auditor • Clerk of the Water and Navigation Control Authority

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#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

#### **CHECK CASHING COMPANIES WARNED OF FRAUDULENT CHECKS**

*Bogus checks made to look as if issued by the Pinellas County Clerk's Office*

Several Pinellas County check cashing companies have accepted and cashed official-looking checks, which appearing to have been issued by the Pinellas County Clerk of the Circuit Court's Office. These checks are fraudulent and were not issued by the Pinellas County Clerk's Office. The signature is forged among other discrepancies, according to Ken Burke, Clerk of the Circuit Court.

"One company, which refused to cash a check, faxed us a copy and it is evident that the check presented was not one issued by this office, said Burke. "The wording across the top of the fraudulent check is not the same and our checks also contain a message at the bottom, there are differences in the layout and font and my signature is not the same."

The fake checks also contained information that the Clerk's Office routinely puts on all checks such as the reason for the check and the case number related to the refund, according to Burke.

A police report was filed in at least one incident by one company. Another check cashing company plans to press charges against the person/s who cashed bogus checks through the company.

"The Clerk's Office has contacted the State Attorney's Office to make them aware of the situation, as well as informing the media in an effort to put other companies on alert so they do not fall victim to this apparent scam," said Burke.

For more information, contact the Clerk's Office at 727-464-3341, 315 Court St., Clearwater, Florida.

#### **About the Clerk's Office**

In 1838 the Florida Constitution established the Clerk of the Circuit Court as a public trustee, thereby creating a system of checks and balances at the county level. The office of the Clerk performs a wide range of record keeping, information management, and financial management in the judicial system and county government.