

STEPHANYMAE STENNIS

MY PLAN FOR THE MADISON COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE

**WHAT THE CLERK DOES • WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED
HOW I WOULD APPROACH IT • WHY IT MATTERS**

**INTEGRITY. SERVICE. RESULTS.
PUTTING MADISON COUNTY FIRST.**

Candidate for Madison County Clerk

THE OFFICE: MORE THAN ELECTION DAY

When people hear “County Clerk,” many immediately think about elections. Elections are one of the office’s most visible responsibilities, but the Clerk’s work reaches much further into the everyday operation of county government and the courts.

The Madison County Clerk’s Office handles court records and filings, certain court-related payments, child-support payment processing, marriage licenses, certified copies and official documents, election administration, candidate filings and petitions, ballot preparation, voting equipment, records management, and other duties established by Indiana law and the courts.

The Clerk is not a judge and does not decide cases. The Clerk’s responsibility is to administer the office accurately, lawfully, efficiently, impartially, and with excellent public service.

CUSTOMER SERVICE MATTERS. ACCURACY MATTERS. TRANSPARENCY MATTERS. LEADERSHIP MATTERS.

My goal is not to walk into the office assuming everything is wrong. My goal is to understand what is working, identify what can be improved, and build a culture of continuous improvement focused on the people of Madison County.

CUSTOMER SERVICE & ACCESSIBILITY

WHAT THE CLERK DOES

Residents interact with the Clerk's Office for court records, marriage licenses, election information, payments, copies, and other administrative needs.

WHAT I BELIEVE CAN BE IMPROVED

Government processes can be difficult to navigate. Residents should be able to quickly answer: Where do I go? What do I need? What does it cost? Can I do it online? Who do I contact? What happens next?

HOW I WOULD APPROACH IT

- Review the customer journey for the office's most common services.
- Develop plain-language FAQs, step-by-step guides, printable checklists, and clear fee/payment information.
- Use QR codes and official online resources to connect residents directly to accurate information.
- Clearly explain what the Clerk can and cannot do, and direct residents to the correct agency when necessary.
- Establish clear customer-service expectations and identify recurring questions that better communication could prevent.

WHY IT MATTERS TO MADISON COUNTY

People should not need to understand the structure of county government just to get help. Government should be understandable and accessible to the people it serves.

MODERNIZATION & TECHNOLOGY

WHAT THE CLERK DOES

The Clerk manages large volumes of information and works within statewide court and election systems, including electronic filing and online case-information systems.

WHAT I BELIEVE CAN BE IMPROVED

Technology should make government easier - not simply move a confusing process from paper to a screen. Existing tools should be evaluated for usability, efficiency, and public accessibility.

HOW I WOULD APPROACH IT

- Map major office workflows before proposing changes.
- Identify bottlenecks, repetitive work, outdated instructions, and avoidable manual steps.
- Determine what is controlled by Indiana law, the courts, statewide systems, or local policy.
- Improve use of existing technology before spending taxpayer money on new systems.
- Maintain strong in-person and telephone service for residents who need human assistance.

WHY IT MATTERS TO MADISON COUNTY

Efficient processes save residents time, help employees work effectively, and can reduce unnecessary taxpayer expense.

ELECTION INTEGRITY, SECURITY & TRANSPARENCY

WHAT THE CLERK DOES

The Clerk has major responsibilities in election administration and serves with the bipartisan county election structure.

WHAT I BELIEVE CAN BE IMPROVED

Election administration must be accurate, secure, transparent, impartial, and understandable to the public - regardless of party.

HOW I WOULD APPROACH IT

- Prioritize compliance with Indiana election law and documented procedures.
- Strengthen election-worker recruitment, training, and clear operational expectations.
- Emphasize voting-equipment security, chain of custody, accurate ballot preparation, and reconciliation.
- Communicate procedures and changes in plain language before Election Day.
- Correct material election misinformation through official, factual, nonpartisan communication.
- Conduct post-election operational reviews and document lessons learned.

WHY IT MATTERS TO MADISON COUNTY

Public confidence is stronger when residents can see and understand how elections are administered. Election integrity is not Republican or Democratic - it is fundamental to representative government.

VOTER EDUCATION

WHAT THE CLERK DOES

The Clerk provides official election information and helps residents navigate registration, voting methods, deadlines, and election procedures.

WHAT I BELIEVE CAN BE IMPROVED

Telling people to “go vote” is not enough when residents are confused about registration, identification, early voting, absentee voting, Vote Centers, or what appears on their ballot.

HOW I WOULD APPROACH IT

- Create nonpartisan voter-education materials using official sources.
- Explain registration and update deadlines, early voting, absentee voting, Vote Centers, ID requirements, and ballot access.
- Provide clear information on becoming a poll worker and participating in election administration.
- Use multiple official communication channels so information reaches residents where they are.

WHY IT MATTERS TO MADISON COUNTY

An informed voter is an empowered voter. Better education can reduce confusion, prevent avoidable problems, and strengthen civic participation.

MADISON COUNTY CLERK'S YOUTH COMMISSION

WHAT THE CLERK DOES

The Clerk's election and records responsibilities create a natural opportunity for nonpartisan civic education.

WHAT I BELIEVE CAN BE IMPROVED

Young people often reach voting age without practical exposure to local government, election administration, public records, or the responsibilities of county offices.

HOW I WOULD APPROACH IT

- Explore creation of a nonpartisan Clerk's Youth Commission with clear eligibility, ethics, confidentiality, and political-neutrality rules.
- Offer educational sessions on local government, elections, voter registration, courts, records, civic responsibility, and public service.
- Create appropriate opportunities to observe public governmental processes and meet public servants.
- Invite students to develop civic-education projects and recommend better ways to communicate with young residents.
- Ensure the program never becomes a campaign, party, or candidate organization.

WHY IT MATTERS TO MADISON COUNTY

Civic engagement should begin before age 18. The goal is not to tell students what to think - it is to teach them how their government works and give them tools to participate responsibly.

NOT A DEMOCRATIC YOUTH COMMISSION. NOT A REPUBLICAN YOUTH COMMISSION. MADISON COUNTY YOUTH LEARNING HOW THEIR GOVERNMENT WORKS.

TRANSPARENCY & COMMUNICATION

WHAT THE CLERK DOES

The Clerk's Office holds and communicates information that residents, voters, candidates, attorneys, and court users rely on.

WHAT I BELIEVE CAN BE IMPROVED

Having information is not the same as communicating it effectively. Residents should not have to hunt through multiple sources to find basic deadlines, procedures, or service changes.

HOW I WOULD APPROACH IT

- Publish timely official information on election deadlines, early voting, Vote Centers, candidate filing, Election Board meetings, office closures, and service changes.
- Use plain language and consistent formatting across official communication channels.
- Create recurring educational content explaining common Clerk functions.
- Make it easier to distinguish official information from rumor or unofficial social-media claims.

WHY IT MATTERS TO MADISON COUNTY

Clear communication reduces confusion and unnecessary calls, helps staff, and builds public trust.

EMPLOYEE TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT & OFFICE CULTURE

WHAT THE CLERK DOES

The Clerk leads an office whose employees perform specialized administrative, court, financial, records, and election functions.

WHAT I BELIEVE CAN BE IMPROVED

Strong public service depends on trained, supported employees and documented procedures. Institutional knowledge should not reside with only one person.

HOW I WOULD APPROACH IT

- Evaluate onboarding, procedure manuals, continuing education, and customer-service standards.
- Expand cross-training and backup coverage for critical functions.
- Document key workflows so knowledge survives turnover and absences.
- Create structured opportunities for employees to identify inefficiencies and propose improvements.
- Set clear expectations while treating employees with professionalism and respect.

WHY IT MATTERS TO MADISON COUNTY

Well-trained employees make fewer mistakes, provide better service, and protect continuity of operations.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

WHAT THE CLERK DOES

The Clerk handles public funds and financial transactions connected to statutory and court responsibilities and operates using taxpayer-supported resources.

WHAT I BELIEVE CAN BE IMPROVED

Fiscal responsibility requires more than simply cutting costs. Leaders must understand operations, internal controls, compliance requirements, staffing needs, and the consequences of changes.

HOW I WOULD APPROACH IT

- Review internal controls, payment handling, reconciliation, audit findings, purchasing, technology costs, and vendor relationships within the Clerk's authority.
- Address State Board of Accounts findings and recommendations promptly.
- Look for duplication, avoidable costs, and opportunities to improve value without degrading service.
- Use data before making major staffing or spending decisions.

WHY IT MATTERS TO MADISON COUNTY

Taxpayer money belongs to the taxpayers. Every expenditure should support lawful, effective, and accountable public service.

RECORDS ACCURACY, SECURITY & PRESERVATION

WHAT THE CLERK DOES

The Clerk is custodian of important court and governmental records, some of which must remain accessible for decades while others contain confidential or legally protected information.

WHAT I BELIEVE CAN BE IMPROVED

Records must be accurate, retrievable, appropriately protected, and preserved against technology failure, disaster, or operational disruption.

HOW I WOULD APPROACH IT

- Prioritize accurate indexing and recordkeeping.
- Follow retention schedules and confidentiality requirements.
- Review digital security, backups, disaster recovery, and continuity procedures.
- Improve efficient retrieval of public information while protecting restricted information.
- Preserve historical records consistent with law and available resources.

WHY IT MATTERS TO MADISON COUNTY

A government record may represent a marriage, court case, judgment, payment, election, or part of Madison County history. Accuracy and preservation matter.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT & PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

WHAT THE CLERK DOES

The Clerk is responsible for managing an ongoing public operation that must adapt to legal, technological, staffing, and community changes.

WHAT I BELIEVE CAN BE IMPROVED

“That’s how we’ve always done it” is not a sufficient management philosophy. At the same time, change should not be made simply for the sake of change.

HOW I WOULD APPROACH IT

- Use a Listen → Learn → Evaluate → Improve → Measure → Repeat framework.
- Seek input from employees, judges and court personnel, attorneys, election workers, Election Board members, county departments, state partners, and residents.
- Protect processes that work well and prioritize realistic improvements where evidence shows a need.
- Set measurable operational goals where legally and practically appropriate.
- Report progress back to the public.

WHY IT MATTERS TO MADISON COUNTY

Campaign promises should not disappear after Election Day. Residents deserve to know what was promised, what was completed, what remains in progress, and what needs to change.

HOW I WOULD MEASURE SUCCESS

Where legally and operationally appropriate, I want the Clerk's Office to use measurable goals instead of relying only on anecdotes. Potential performance indicators could include:

- Customer wait times and service-response patterns
- Common resident questions, complaints, and points of confusion
- Processing backlogs and workflow bottlenecks
- Website and public-resource usage
- Election-worker recruitment, training, and operational issues
- Employee training and cross-training completion
- Implementation status of process improvements
- Public outreach and civic-education participation

HERE'S WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO. HERE'S WHAT WE COMPLETED. HERE'S WHAT WE'RE WORKING ON. HERE'S WHAT DIDN'T WORK. HERE'S WHAT WE'RE CHANGING.

A RESPONSIBLE FIRST-100-DAYS APPROACH

- Listen to employees and understand each major function before making structural changes.
- Review applicable Indiana statutes, court rules, Election Division guidance, policies, audits, contracts, budgets, and existing procedures.
- Map high-volume resident services and identify the most common friction points.
- Review election operations with the bipartisan Election Board and experienced election staff.
- Identify quick wins that improve clarity or service without unnecessary expense.
- Develop a longer-term improvement roadmap with priorities, costs, legal constraints, and measurable outcomes.

MY COMMITMENT TO MADISON COUNTY

I am not promising that I can walk into the Clerk's Office on Day One and magically change everything.

Some responsibilities are established by Indiana law. Some processes are controlled by the courts or statewide systems. Some election decisions involve the bipartisan Election Board. Some improvements may require funding or cooperation from other county officials.

A responsible leader understands those boundaries before making promises.

I WILL ASK QUESTIONS.

I WILL LISTEN.

I WILL LEARN.

I WILL LOOK FOR BETTER WAYS TO SERVE PEOPLE.

I WILL COMMUNICATE WITH THE PUBLIC.

I WILL PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF OUR ELECTIONS.

**I WILL TREAT TAXPAYER MONEY LIKE IT BELONGS TO THE TAXPAYERS -
BECAUSE IT DOES.**

Whether you have a D, R, I, L, or nothing beside your name, when you walk into the Madison County Clerk's Office, you are a Madison County resident first. You deserve dignity, accurate information, competent government, and an elected Clerk who remembers exactly who the office exists to serve.

THE PEOPLE.

StephanyMae Stennis
Candidate for Madison County Clerk

Integrity. Service. Results.
Putting Madison County First.

OFFICIAL SOURCES & GOVERNING REFERENCES

This platform is a management and service-improvement plan. Any initiative would be implemented consistent with Indiana law, court rules, county authority, available funding, and the responsibilities of the bipartisan election structure.

Madison County Clerk of the Circuit Court

<https://www.madisoncounty.in.gov/departments/clerk-of-the-circuit-court>

Madison County Election Board

<https://www.madisoncounty.in.gov/madison-county-election-board>

Indiana Judicial Branch - Clerks

<https://www.in.gov/courts/admin/tech/clerk/>

Indiana Secretary of State - Elections

<https://www.in.gov/sos/elections/>