

Three Florida County Agencies to Receive Award

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Florida Gov. Charlie Crist, Lt. Governor Jeff Kottkamp and the Florida Sterling Council announced Monday that three county government agencies -- The Hillsborough County Tax Collector, Marion County Sheriff's Office, and Orange County Clerk of Courts -- were among five organizations that will receive the prestigious [Governor's Sterling Award](#) for 2008.

For 16 years, the Governor's Sterling Award has recognized organizations and businesses in Florida that have successfully achieved performance superiority within their management and operations. This year's recipients of the coveted award are:

- Hillsborough County Tax Collector (Tampa) is a constitutional office comprised of 300 employees with an annual budget of \$23.6 million. The office handles the collection and distribution of property, tangible and business taxes, as well as more than a million motor vehicle, vessel, mobile home and driver license transactions annually. The Hillsborough County Tax Collector was the first in Florida to use Q-MATIC, the provider of key productivity and line-queuing software, which is credited with helping reduce wait times from an hour to 15 minutes. Q-MATIC allows the office to measure employee productivity and deploy strategies based on data, which has improved customer satisfaction and loyalty. Over the last six years, the office has maintained consistently high levels of customer satisfaction (from 98 to 99 percent), favorably exceeding the best state peer. The Hillsborough County Tax Collector is the first tax collector's office in Florida and the first government agency in Hillsborough County to win the Governor's Sterling Award.
- Marion County Sheriff's Office (Ocala) is a full-service law enforcement agency equipped with a variety of resources to meet the unique needs of its citizens. The Marion County Sheriff's Office workforce includes 894 authorized employees, segmented by 585 sworn officers and 309 civilians. The agency's four guiding strategies (quality of life, stewardship, safe and motivated workforce and excellence of service) enable the Marion County Sheriff's Office to focus on creating and balancing value for their customers and key stakeholders. The office maximizes money spent through its focus on delivering law enforcement services through its decentralized community policing initiative and a cost-effective corrections facility that includes a work farm program. The Sheriff's commitment of "putting citizens first" is exemplified by key customer requirements such as response time, visibility and professional service. They have the best crime clearance rate of the 28 highest populated counties in Florida. In addition, the Jail to Work Program has shown favorable increases as the value of inmate labor significantly improved from more than 4.3 million in 2004 to more than 8.6 million in 2007, demonstrating a greater than \$4 million increase in cost savings. The Marion County Sheriff's Office is the first sheriff's office to win the Governor's Sterling Award.
- Orange County Clerk of Courts (Orlando) is a constitutional office of the state of Florida with the clerk serving as an elected officer in the Ninth Judicial Circuit. Orange County has the state's fifth largest population. With a workforce of more than 600 deputy clerks, the clerk's services include court support, case maintenance, data reporting, customer assistance and collections and disbursement of court fines and fees. Through the use of innovative technology, including a customer queuing system as well as expanded e-systems to facilitate record sharing and collection, the clerk has demonstrated both positive financial and customer outcomes. The Orange County Clerk of Courts has established positive trends in the areas of collection rates, revenue and restitution collection to victims of crime (from \$700,000 in 2001 to \$1.6 million in 2007), which exceeds comparable organizations. Customer satisfaction has increased from 90.6 percent in 2003 to 95.1 percent in 2007. The Orange County Clerk of Courts is only the second Clerk of Courts to win the Governor's Sterling Award.