



STACY M. BUTTERFIELD, CPA

Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller
Polk County, Florida

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month - Polk County Jurors Donate Over \$100,000 Since 2006

Bartow, Fla. (Oct. 3, 2023) – Polk County leaders joined today to proclaim October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Stacy Butterfield, Polk County Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller, Larry Williams, Jr., Chief Executive Officer of Peace River Center, the Polk County Board of County Commissioners, and representatives from the Polk County Domestic Violence Task Force joined for the proclamation at the commissioners' meeting.

"It's crucial that we remain committed to raising awareness and taking action to support our community," said Commissioner George Lindsey, chairman of the Polk County Board of County Commissioners. "I encourage everyone to join forces in our efforts to end domestic violence and to raise awareness about the available resources for those in need. Together, we can make a difference."

Clerk Butterfield also shared that this year marks a significant milestone in the community's ongoing efforts to combat domestic violence. Generous jurors have contributed over \$100,000 since 2006 from their juror compensation to support Peace River Center's Lakeland Domestic Violence Shelter.

"I am deeply moved by the generosity and commitment of our jurors who have consistently supported the cause of ending domestic violence. Their contributions have made a profound difference in our community," said Clerk Butterfield.

Clerk Butterfield strongly encourages the community to take advantage of available resources, emphasizing, "many resources are available to help domestic violence survivors, including injunctions for protection. I want to let our customers know that we are here to help."

The Clerk's office offers resources to assist domestic violence survivors including the option to file injunctions at no cost. For those seeking guidance through the process, the Bartow DIY Center is available with designated staff and tools to assist customers

during office hours from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. It is located on the first floor of the Bartow Courthouse at 255 N. Broadway Ave. An online DIY tool, similar to TurboTax, is also available on the Clerk's website www.PolkCountyClerk.net. The interactive tool guides users through each stage of preparing the necessary paperwork for filing an injunction.

Peace River Center also provides free, confidential services for individuals affected by domestic violence. A 24-hour Domestic Violence Crisis line is available at 863-413-2700.

"Thanks to the support of the County, the Clerk's office, and the citizens, Peace River Center can ensure DV survivors have the resources they need to build self-sufficient lives free of their abusers," said Williams.

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Photo Caption: The Polk County Board of County Commissioners, Peace River Center CEO Larry Williams, Jr., 10th Judicial Circuit Chief Judge James Yancey, Clerk Butterfield, and staff proclaim October Domestic Violence Awareness Month at the BOCC meeting on Oct. 3.

First row, left to right: Diana Wilkinson, Clerk Family Law Manager; Erica Bigham, Clerk Domestic Violence Supervisor; Clerk & Comptroller Stacy Butterfield; 10th Judicial Circuit Chief Judge James Yancey; Jessica Lawson, Director of Community Relations and Development of Peace River Center; Tronda Burton, Peace River Center Domestic Violence Shelter Manager; Kelsey Jaffer, Peace River Center Resource Development Manager; and Larry Williams, Chief Executive Officer of Peace River Center.

Second row, left to right: Michelle Yodonis, Clerk Administrative Services Director; Kim Stenger, Clerk Courts Division Director; Candance Barnes, Chief Operating Officer of Peace River Center; Nick Sudzina, 10th Judicial Circuit Court Administrator; with members of the domestic violence task force.

Third row, left to right: Commissioner Rick Wilson; Commissioner and Chair George Lindsey; Commissioner Martha Santiago, and Commissioner Neil Combee.