

Recording & Filing FAQ's

Q. As a new property owner, where do I go, and what steps should I take, to record my ownership documents on a piece of property?

A. Go to the Los Alamos County Clerk's Office, at 1000 Central Avenue, Suite 240, Los Alamos, NM, 87544. The Clerk's Office records various documents, such as: Deeds, Real Estate Contracts, and other purchase or transfer of real property documents. We also record State and Federal Liens, Military Discharge papers (DD-214), Liens and Release of Liens, Mortgages, Living Trusts, Power of Attorney, Deeds of Trust, Plats, Boundary Surveys, and Transcripts of Judgment, just to name a few.

Q. What happens to my document when it is presented for recording?

A. If the document is complete, and the proper fees are attached, our office will accept the document and make it part of the permanent public record. The document is optically scanned and all pertinent information is indexed. The original document is handed back, if done in-person, or mailed back to the address indicated. If the original document is ever lost or misplaced, a certified copy* may be obtained from our office. [*Certain restrictions apply when certifying some documents.](#)

Q What are the recording fees?

A. The Recording and Filing fees are \$25.00, for the first ten index entries, regardless of the number of pages. Each additional block of ten index entries is another \$25.00. Please see our complete [fee schedule](#) for more details. **PLEASE NOTE:** A 1" x 4" space is required for the recording label.

Q. May payment be made with debit or credit cards?

A. Not at this time. The Clerk's Office accepts cash, check or money order, payable to: Los Alamos County Clerk.

Q. Will you accept a certified copy for recording?

A. Yes. We will accept a certified copy for recording if, before it is presented to our office for recording, it has a proper certification with a raised seal.

Q. Does the County Clerk keep the original document?

A. No. With the exception of Los Alamos County Government Plats, all original documents are returned after being recorded and scanned.

Q. Does your office supply blank forms to prepare documents for recording, i.e. Warranty Deeds, Power of Attorney, Mechanics Liens, etc.?

A. No. The Clerk's office does not provide legal forms. Legal forms can be found at most office supply or stationary stores, and are also available on the internet.

Q. Where do I mail my documents?

A. Documents may be mailed or delivered via UPS/FedEx to: Los Alamos County Clerk, 1000 Central Avenue, Suite 240, Los Alamos, NM, 87544.

Q Can I obtain copies of recorded documents?

A. Yes, copies of recorded documents are available for purchase. Copies are available for \$1.00 per page. Those certified as being true and correct copies from the Clerk's records are available for \$1.00 per page, plus an additional certification fee of \$1.00. Certified copies of marriage records are \$2.50. Requests by mail must include: the date/year of recording, the names of the individuals on the document, the document type, and payment. Please make check or money order payable to: Los Alamos County Clerk.

Q. Are recorded images of documents available online?

A. Our office has an internet portal, [Los Alamos County Clerk Records](#), where you can access the index information (grantor, grantee, recording date, legal description) from 2001 to present. Images are only available to registered users. If you would like to register for a search account, please contact our office at (505) 662-8010, or email: clerks@lacnm.us.

Q. Can you tell me the selling price of a piece of property?

A. No. The State of New Mexico is one of fourteen non-disclosure states; therefore, the selling price is not disclosed on any deed.

Q. How can I find out more information about a house for sale, a house in foreclosure, or a tax sale property?

A. Anyone can access the ownership records by coming into the Clerk's Office and using the Public Search Terminals. You need to know the owner's name and/or the legal description of the property. On request, our office will offer assistance to customers performing basic real estate title searches. Our office assumes no liability for searches conducted by customers. On property being sold for back taxes, please contact the State of New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department – Property Tax Division – Delinquent Property Tax Bureau at (505) 827-0883 or [click here](#) to visit their website.

Q. What is a "grantor" or "grantee"?

A. grantor refers to either the seller of a property, the borrower of a mortgage/trust deed, or the person filing a lien, so generally the person who is signing the document. Grantee refers to either the buyer of a property, the bank or lending institution, or the person a lien has been placed upon.

Q How do I add or remove a name on my property?

A. Your question may be answered by a title company or by consulting an attorney. A new deed, reflecting any changes, will need to be recorded.

Q. What type of Deed must I use to transfer property (Warranty Deed, Special Warranty Deed or Quitclaim Deed)?

A. The Clerk's office records deeds. We do not draft deeds, nor can property be transferred without one. If you wish to transfer your property, it is recommended that you seek the assistance of an attorney or a title company. Blank forms can be found at most office supply or stationary stores. You can draft the document yourself, if you wish. All names of the original owners must appear on the new deed, as the seller (grantor), and their signatures must be notarized.

Q. If my spouse and I own property in joint tenancy and my spouse dies, how do I obtain sole title to the property?

A. Usually, you can present the Death Certificate to the County Assessor's Office to update the assessment records. If the property is not held in joint tenancy, processing the estate in Probate Court may be required. For more information on Probate, call (505) 660-2329. As with all real estate transactions, we recommended that you seek the assistance of an attorney or a title company.

Q. Can the Clerk's Office search the records and tell me who owns a particular piece of real estate and whether there are any mortgages or liens on the property?

A. The staff in the Clerk's Office are not bonded or licensed to conduct official in-depth real estate searches. Please contact a title company for assistance with official in-depth real estate searches. Our office can provide basic information on real estate transactions from 2001 to present. Records prior to 2001 are indexed by grantors and grantees names only. Our office provides a Public Search Terminal for customers who wish to research information prior to 2001.

Q. Can the County Clerk's staff locate the property owner's name, if given a legal description of the property?

A. The County Assessor's Office is the best place to obtain the most current information on property ownership. You can reach them at (505) 662-8030. The County Clerk's records are easily searchable from 2001 to present. Please provide us with the filing numbers (Book/Page/Doc#), grantors and grantees (sellers and buyers), date of the recording, and legal description. Records prior to September 2001 are indexed by grantors and grantees names only. Our office provides a Public Search Terminal for customers who wish to research information prior to September 2001.

Q. A Lien has been placed on my property. I have paid off the note, how do I remove the Lien from the County Clerk's record?

A. A record of the Lien will remain even after the debt has been paid. A Release of Lien must be filed by the person or company who filed the Lien, stating that the lien has been paid or satisfied.

Q. If there is a lien on my property, what information will the Clerk's records contain?

A. The Clerk's Office can provide whatever information was contained on the original Lien. Any additional information should be obtained from the Lien holder.

Q. How long is a Lien in effect and how can I remove an erroneous Lien on my property?

A. This is a legal question, and we advise you consult an attorney.

Q. Where do I file Land Survey Plats?

A. Land Survey Plats are filed in the Clerk's Office. The cost is \$25.00, per Plat. The original Land Survey Plat is recorded, scanned and returned.

Q. Are copies of subdivision maps available in the County Clerk's Office?

A. Yes. Copies of Plats sized 24" x 36" may be purchased for \$9.00 per page, and copies of Boundary Surveys sized 18" x 24" may be purchased for \$4.50 per page. Other Plats are sold at various rates depending on the size. Please see our [Plat Copy Fee Schedule](#) for more details.

Q. How can I get the dimensions of my property?

A. You can get this information from the Plat, which are filed in our office. You may also have your property surveyed by a land surveyor.

Q. Are there easements on my property?

A. You will need to check the Plat of the property and also search the indexes for grant of easement and vacate of easement documents. The Clerk's Office does not maintain separate indexes for easements. The County Utility Department may be able to assist homeowners.

Q. Does the County Clerk's Office record Discharge Papers (DD214's)

A. Yes. Military Discharge papers are recorded at no charge in the Clerk's Office.

Q. When I pay off my Mortgage, do I get a new deed?

A. No, when you pay off your Mortgage, you should receive a Discharge or Satisfaction of Mortgage from your Lender. You do not receive a deed at this time, because you get your deed when you first purchase the property. If you do not have your deed, then you can get a recorded copy of it at our office. Copy fees will apply.

Q. What are the procedures and fees for filing Uniform Commercial Code documents?

A. Effective July 1, 2001, UCC Filings are filed in Santa Fe, N.M. at the Secretary of State's office. For information call 505-827-3600, or [click here](#) to visit their website. UCC's may be filed at the County Clerk's Office for fixtures.

Q. Where can I get an Apostille?

A. The Office of the Secretary of State is the only office in New Mexico authorized to issue a certification, or apostille, for a notarized document going to a foreign country. The NM SOS also issues certifications and apostilles for other public documents issued by government agencies, including those issued by County Clerks and the New Mexico State Registrar of Vital Records. Please [click here](#) to visit the NM SOS website or call (505) 827-3600, for more information about apostilles.

Q. Does the Clerk's Office have Birth and Death Certificate Records?

A. No, the Clerk's office cannot provide copies of birth or death certificates. You can obtain these copies from the NM State Vital Statistics Bureau. For more information on obtaining copies or questions regarding these records, please call (505) 827-0121, or [click here](#) to visit their website.

Q. I just moved to Los Alamos, NM, can I register my car at the Clerk's Office?

A. Unlike other states, New Mexico County Clerks do not serve as motor vehicle agents/registrars. The NM Department of Motor Vehicle performs this function for the State of New Mexico. Please [click here](#) to visit their website or call the local MVD Field Office at (505) 6624243, for more information on registering a vehicle.

Q. Does the Clerk's Office provide notary services? If so, what is the cost?

A. Yes. We have several notaries available, and there is no charge for this service. Please bring identification with you before signing any documents needing notarization.

Q. How do I find taxation or assessment information about my property?

A. The County Assessor's Office maintains this information. The Assessor's Office is located at 1000 Central Avenue, Suite 210, Los Alamos, NM, 87544, or you can call them at (505) 662-8030.

Q. Where do I pay my property taxes?

A. Property taxes are paid to the 311 Customer Care Center, formerly KANDU. To pay in person, go to the [311 Customer Care Center](#), located at the Los Alamos Dept. of Public Utilities at 1000 Central Avenue. You can mail payments to: Los Alamos County, PO Box 99, Los Alamos, NM, 87544-0099. For more information regarding the property tax owner, name change, address correction, valuation, and more, call 662-8030 or [click here](#) to visit their website.