



# THE SPOTLIGHT

From Rick Barnes, Tax Assessor-Collector

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Refunds, Exemptions, and Mineral Rights



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## WELCOME TO THE SPOTLIGHT



Hello and welcome to the launch of *The Spotlight*, the new quarterly newsletter from the Tarrant County Tax Office.

In this edition, we share highlights from my first six months in office. It has been a busy and productive time. We've already made changes to improve service delivery for the community, which is a top priority for this office. I've met with employees across all Tax Office departments to listen firsthand to their insights, concerns, and ideas to cultivate a workplace where staff at all levels are empowered to succeed. Combining the experience of our employees and the latest technology, we continue to find ways to streamline processes and become more efficient.

I am honored to serve you and look forward to sharing more progress. Future editions will include content such as in-depth reports and updates on key initiatives. Your feedback is valued, and future editions will include your topics of interest. For real-time updates, follow us on Facebook, X, and LinkedIn, and watch for weekly email announcements.

Thank you for your trust and your continued support. Whether you are visiting in person or utilizing online services, we welcome you to the Tarrant County Tax Office.

Sincerely,  
**Rick Barnes**

Tarrant County Tax Assessor-Collector

### Inside the Tax Office

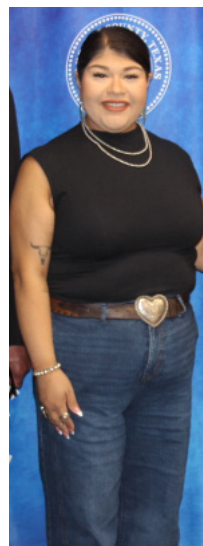
*What exactly does the Tarrant County Tax Office do? It's a question Rick Barnes, who took office as Tax Assessor-Collector on January 1, 2025, has encountered often in his first six months. The answer may surprise many. Yes, the Tax Office is responsible for collecting property taxes—but that's only part of the story.*

*The Tax Office serves as a vital hub for many essential government functions. It acts as the local collector for the State of Texas, processing state motor vehicle sales taxes paid by individuals and businesses, including over 1500 dealerships operating in Tarrant County. It is the point of contact for vehicle title and registration of cars, trucks, motorcycles, trailers, and campers.*

*Read more on Page 3*



Management Team at Swearing-In Ceremony, January 1, 2025



## CELEBRATING EMPLOYEE WORK ANNIVERSARIES IN JULY!

We love celebrating our employees and value their commitment to public service. Celebrating 5 and 10 year milestones in Commissioners Court on July 1 were Erika Fitchett (center above with Andy Nguyen on left and Rick Barnes on right) with 10 years and Carolina Casillas (pictured at right) for 5 years of service.

Bianca Ortiz and Kashif Hussain were also recognized for their 5 years of service although they are not pictured here. Their dedication is appreciated. Their contributions are exemplary. We look forward to celebrating with them at future milestone anniversaries. Fitchett joins many other County employees who are vested in the TCDRS retirement system, a key benefit offered by Tarrant County after 8 years of full time employment, marking a positive sign for continued service.



### Inspiration from Sheri Fields, Training Coordinator

"There's no such thing as a bad day—only bad moments. Don't let a single moment decide the outcome of your entire day."

If you've been around Sheri at any time, you've no doubt heard her say this before. She even writes it on the board for the new trainees!

## Announcements & Important Dates

**July 31, 2025**

4th Quarter Installment Due

*Property tax statements for taxpayers who pay their taxes in 4 equal installments have been mailed. The statement amount is due upon receipt and will become delinquent after July 31!*

\*\*\*\*\*

### Truth in Taxation

*The Taxing Entities (e.g., cities, county, school districts, special districts) will soon begin preparing their Truth-in-Taxation calculations. For more information regarding this process, including how to contact your Taxing Entities directly, please visit:*

[www.texas.gov/living-in-texas/property-tax-directory/](http://www.texas.gov/living-in-texas/property-tax-directory/)

## Inside the Tax Office

*What exactly does the Tarrant County Tax Office Do? (cont. from page 1)*



The office collects property taxes for 87 different taxing entities across the county—cities, school districts, Tarrant County College, JPS, and utility districts among them.

Using valuation data from the Tarrant Appraisal District (TAD) and tax rates set by those taxing entities, the office calculates, bills, and distributes collected tax revenues to fund essential services—from paying teachers to maintaining parks and libraries.

Rick Barnes entered office with a clear mission: to take the Tax Office to the next level in service, professionalism, and efficiency. Drawing on his extensive business background, he began by meeting with every employee across the department to listen firsthand to their insights, concerns, and ideas. That spirit of open communication continues to guide the office today, cultivating a workplace where staff at all levels are empowered to succeed.

A highlight of this employee-focused approach was the annual Teams Achieving eXcellence or T.A.X. Day, which emphasized professional growth through sessions on leadership, resilience, conflict resolution, professional

growth, and teambuilding. Employees not only gained new skills but also saw firsthand that their contributions are essential to the office's success. The group photo from T.A.X. Day is shown below.

Simultaneously, Barnes and Chief of Staff Andy Nguyen launched a comprehensive internal review to improve organizational performance. Leveraging modern technology and working closely with the County Auditor, Budget Director, and Human Resources, the office is implementing quantifiable performance-based metrics across all departments. This data-driven approach enables more accurate evaluations of employee performance and office efficiency—ensuring that taxpayer dollars are used wisely and that the highest levels of service are delivered at every touchpoint.



Quality Assurance Department  
*Bottom row, left to right: Tyler Reainthong (Director), Cassandra and Duncan. Top row, left to right: Kristen Harmonson (Manager), Alejandra and Candice*



To support these efforts, the Quality Assurance Department is now aggregating business intelligence across all service areas. This internal data helps guide strategic decision-making, allowing leadership to anticipate challenges and respond swiftly. With more than 200 employees working across nine locations, such analysis is critical to ensuring consistency, accuracy, and responsiveness countywide.

Looking ahead, the office is preparing for a major software transition at the Tarrant Appraisal District. Recognizing the challenges that accompanied TAD's last system upgrade—challenges that impacted timely billing and collections—Barnes has proactively assembled a "Tiger Team" of stakeholders. This coalition includes representatives from TAD, Tarrant County IT, and key Tax Office staff. Their goal: ensure a seamless transition with minimal disruption to taxpayers and taxing entities alike. Rick Barnes has made it clear—smooth execution, not surprise setbacks, must be the standard.

As part of his commitment to professional excellence, Barnes began certification courses immediately upon taking office and remains on track to complete his required credentials on schedule. This includes training in Truth in Taxation, Assessment & Collections, Ethics, and Open Meetings.

With the annual budgeting process now underway, the Tax Office is incorporating feedback from its most valuable resource—its employees. Their expertise is helping to shape a forward-looking financial plan that

meets today's operational needs while building the capacity and flexibility to address future demands.

At the same time, he has been active in Austin during the just-concluded legislative session. There, he advocated for policies benefiting both taxpayers and the Tax Office—including property tax reforms, appraisal oversight, regulatory improvements for motor vehicles, land use clarifications, and measures to strengthen election integrity and security.



Through it all, Rick Barnes has kept one priority front and center: the taxpayer. Every reform, every conversation, every policy decision has been anchored in his desire to serve Tarrant County residents with integrity, transparency, and professionalism.

From property tax relief to regulatory clarity, Barnes is steering the Tax Office toward a stronger, smarter future—one that delivers real value in every transaction, every day.



## TEAMS **A**CHIEVING **eX**CELLENCE



### The Importance of T.A.X. Day *by Stephanie Perrier*



*Stephanie Perrier  
Training Coordinator*



Each year, one day is set aside for Tax Office employees to step away from their day-to-day responsibilities and focus on professional and personal development. It is one of my favorite days of the year because it's when all of the Tax Office staff comes together to focus on personal and team growth. While the team is committed year-round to serving the public, this day is reserved for investing in the people who make that service possible.



This year, the name changed to T.A.X. Day, or **T**eams **A**chieving **eX**cellence. The theme for this year emphasized leadership, adaptability to change, and effective communication. Through interactive sessions, staff explored the idea that leadership is not limited to management roles. Anyone can lead. Staff members learned strategies to prepare for and guide others through change, adapt to unforeseen challenges, and close the gaps that can limit progress.



A significant portion of the day was devoted to understanding communication styles through the DISC assessment. This tool provided valuable insights into the strengths and challenges of different communication preferences, helping team members better understand one another. Emphasis was placed on applying the platinum rule: treating others the way they want to be treated.



T.A.X. Day continues to be a cornerstone of the department's culture, fostering stronger connections among staff and equipping them with the tools to grow as individuals and as a unified team committed to public service. Overall, T.A.X. Day gave us a renewed sense of purpose, strengthened our team connection, and equipped us with practical tools to continue growing both as individuals and as a team committed to serving the public.



## TARRANT COUNTY DEALERS:

*Don't forget your monthly Special Inventory Tax obligation under Tax Code 23.122.*

Dealers must file Form 50-246 (Motor Vehicle), 50-260 (Vessel and Outboard), 50-266 (Heavy Equipment), and 50-268 (Manufactured Housing) with the County Tax Assessor-Collector, along with the unit property tax payment, for vehicles sold in the previous month.

**Due Date:** By the 10th of each month, Heavy Equipment is due by the 20th

**Where:** County Tax Assessor-Collector + Copy to the Appraisal District

**Per Location:** File a separate form for each business location

**No Sales? Still File!**

**Questions?** Contact your SIT Specialists in our office: 817-884-2869 or [vit@tarrantcountytexas.gov](mailto:vit@tarrantcountytexas.gov)

**Portal** (requires login credentials): <https://www.tarrantcountytexas.gov/en/tax/property-tax/special-inventory-tax-portal-.html>

### New Era for Texas Vehicle Sales: Metal Plates at Purchase (Effective July 1, 2025)

July 1, 2025 marked the beginning of a major change for all Texas Motor Vehicle Dealers: all transactions will now be processed electronically through the TxDMV webDEALER system. This is a big step for dealerships across the state, and while we anticipate some initial challenges, the TxDMV is actively working to address any issues that arise from this new, mandatory system use, which was enacted by a 2023 legislative bill.

Our team has been preparing for this significant transition for months. We've been actively connecting with our dealer partners through emails, phone calls, and mail, and have conducted numerous training sessions and group presentations in our webDEALER Extravaganza sessions, as you see pictured at right. If you have any questions about these updated processes, please reach out to us!



[taxwebdealer@tarrantcountytexas.gov](mailto:taxwebdealer@tarrantcountytexas.gov)

# MOTOR VEHICLE

## STAY AHEAD OF THE CURVE WITH MOTOR VEHICLE NEWS & UPDATES

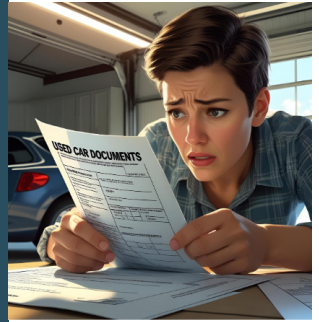


Amber Wilson,  
Motor Vehicle Director

The Tarrant County Tax Office has seen a significant increase in cases where individuals purchasing vehicles through online platforms like Facebook Marketplace or Craigslist fall victim to fraudulent titles or, even worse, discover they've bought a stolen vehicle. Protect yourself! "Take extra precautions before finalizing any deal made on these platforms," warns Amber Wilson, Motor Vehicle Director.

Don't let a **"TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE"** deal catch you off guard.

Take your time and follow the steps on the next page to protect yourself when buying a used car from a private party.



### Online Title Check:

[www.txdmv.gov/motorists/buying-or-selling-a-vehicle/title-check-look-before-you-buy](http://www.txdmv.gov/motorists/buying-or-selling-a-vehicle/title-check-look-before-you-buy)

### Good News for Car Buyers

For customers purchasing a vehicle from a Texas dealer, you'll experience a welcome change!

You'll now drive away from the dealership with your metal license plates already attached to your new vehicle. And if you're trading in a car, you have choices for your old plates: you can transfer them to your new vehicle, have the dealership handle their disposal, or even keep them as a keepsake.

**WHAT'S CHANGING IN TEXAS?**  
**SAY GOODBYE TO PAPER TEMP TAGS!**

<b>PAPER TEMPORARY TAGS ARE OUT</b>	<b>METAL LICENSE PLATES ARE IN</b>
A paper temporary tag with the text "TEXAS BUYER", "EXPIRES DEC 29, 2022", and "006-641". A large red "X" is drawn over the tag.	A metal license plate with the text "TEXAS", "ABC-1234", and "The Lone Star State".
<b>STARTING JULY 1ST, TEXAS IS SWITCHING TO METAL LICENSE PLATES AT THE TIME OF SALE TO FIGHT FRAUD AND CAR THEFT.</b>	

## BUYING A USED CAR?

### AMBER'S TIPS ON PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM FRAUD!



Title Check

**Visit:** [www.txdmv.gov/motorists/buying-or-selling-a-vehicle/title-check-look-before-you-buy](http://www.txdmv.gov/motorists/buying-or-selling-a-vehicle/title-check-look-before-you-buy) and pay a small fee to have the VIN checked.

**Benefit:** Search will reveal if the vehicle has a “clean title” or if it’s branded with issues like salvage or flood damage.



Mechanic Inspection

**Visit:** A local mechanic you trust to complete a pre-purchase inspection.

**Benefit:** Uncover hidden mechanical problems, saving you from costly repairs down the line.



Obtain Service Reports

**Visit:** [www.carfax.com/](http://www.carfax.com/) or another service that can provide vehicle history reports.

**Benefit:** These reports are valuable in helping you understand how the car was maintained and if it has been involved in any accidents.

### Strongest Recommendation: *Visit a Tax Office With the Seller*

**Benefit:** This ensures a smooth title transfer process and allows for immediate resolution of any last-minute issues that might arise when submitting the title application. Plus, you will meet some of our friendly and helpful employees!



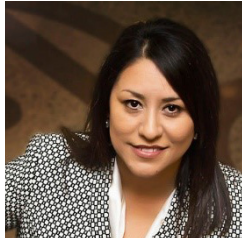
List of Locations:

<https://www.tarrantcountytexas.gov/en/tax/motor-vehicle/motor-vehicle-maps-and-locations.html>

### If the Seller Cannot Accompany You, Request These Documents:

- **Properly assigned vehicle title:** Remember, only the owner(s) listed on the front of the title can legally assign it. **\*\*Exercise extreme caution if there are multiple assignments on the back of the title.\*\***
- **Completed Application for Texas Title and/or Registration (Form 130-U).**
- **Any other necessary supporting documents**, such as a release of lien or power of attorney.

## TAX TALK TIDBITS. . . FROM THE PROPERTY TAX DEPARTMENT



Amelia Rice,  
Property Tax Director

### Don't Pay a Third Party Company! Filing is FREE!

There is no fee to apply for a refund of an overpayment or to apply for exemptions through Tarrant Appraisal District (TAD). "Third party companies charge a range of fees for these services that are provided for free", says Amelia Rice, Property Tax Director. "There is no cost to the taxpayer."

Please contact us if you have questions about a refund before paying a third party to assist you. Apply directly to TAD for exemptions or to inquire about an exemption you may be eligible for.

**Refunds:** [www.tarrantcountytx.gov/en/tax/property-tax/property-tax-refunds](http://www.tarrantcountytx.gov/en/tax/property-tax/property-tax-refunds)

**Exemptions:** [www.tad.org/forms/homestead-exemption](http://www.tad.org/forms/homestead-exemption)



### Property Tax Refunds

It's Free to Inquire or Apply!

Following the Texas Tax Code, the Property Tax Refund Department processes well over 3500 refunds each month for taxpayers with property in Tarrant County. There is never a cost to the taxpayer to request a refund. We have a team of experts to help you.

Paying more than the amount due and a recalculation by TAD are the most common reasons for a refund. Some refunds are automatic and some require an application. The Tax Office will mail or email an application to taxpayers due a refund that is \$5 or more. Refunds over \$2500 require Commissioners Court approval.

Contact our office to inquire about a refund or to request one. Property Tax Specialists will assist you through the refund process and will ensure timely processing according to Tax Code once an overpayment is reflected on the account.

Phone: 817-884-1100

Email: [taxrefund@tarrantcountytx.gov](mailto:taxrefund@tarrantcountytx.gov)

Website:

[www.tarrantcountytx.gov/en/tax/property-tax/property-tax-refunds](http://www.tarrantcountytx.gov/en/tax/property-tax/property-tax-refunds)

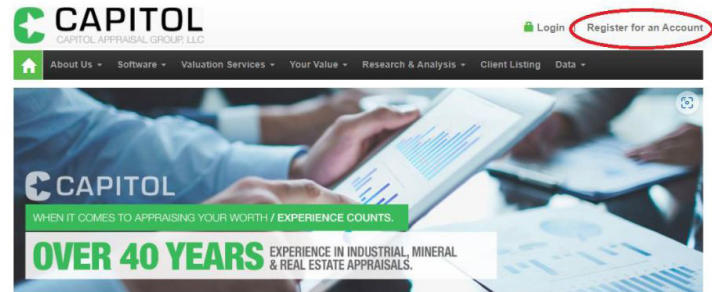
### **Beware:**

*All taxpayers should be aware that they can get uncashed funds that belong to them from the Tax Office at NO COST.*

*Be aware of the potential loss of most of your refund by going through a third party company.*

## Own Mineral Accounts in Tarrant County?

The Tax Office bills based on information received from Tarrant Appraisal District (TAD) and nearby appraisal districts in surrounding counties. The appraisal district electronically sends updates to the Tax Office throughout the year. TAD has announced on their website, [www.tad.org](http://www.tad.org), that in Tarrant County, the 2025 Mineral Accounts are worked by Capitol Appraisal Group.



## Contact Information

2025 Valuation: (512) 233-2121  
2025 Ownership: (737) 587-3150  
OR Call (817) 284-0024, Option 3

Inquiries for years prior to 2025: (817) 284-9101

Helpful information, including your mineral account details, can be found by registering for an account on their website:

[www.cagi.com](http://www.cagi.com)

## Exemptions

There is no fee to file an application for an exemption!

A homestead exemption removes all or a portion of value from your residence homestead as authorized by the State or adopted by a local taxing unit and *reduces the amount of taxes you pay*. It can take up to 90 days for an exemption to reflect on your Tax Office property tax account. We urge taxpayers who believe they are eligible for an exemption to apply to their county appraisal district where the property is located.

### Popular exemptions:

- General Homestead
- Over 65 & Disabled
- Veterans

*For properties located in Tarrant County, contact Tarrant Appraisal District to learn more. A homestead exemption can be filed online at [www.tad.org/forms/homestead-exemption](http://www.tad.org/forms/homestead-exemption).*

Qualifying individuals must submit an application to the appraisal district, not the Tax Office, to receive the homestead exemption. Exemption information, property values, ownership and address updates are handled by the appraisal district in the county where the property is located. Tax Office employees are unable to make changes to your account.

Appraisal District contact information for surrounding counties can be found on our website:

[www.tarrantcountytx.gov/en/tax/property-tax/appraisal-district-contact-information](http://www.tarrantcountytx.gov/en/tax/property-tax/appraisal-district-contact-information)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS



Swearing-In 2025



National Day of Prayer



Salute Veterans



Rotary Club



Rotary Club



Open House



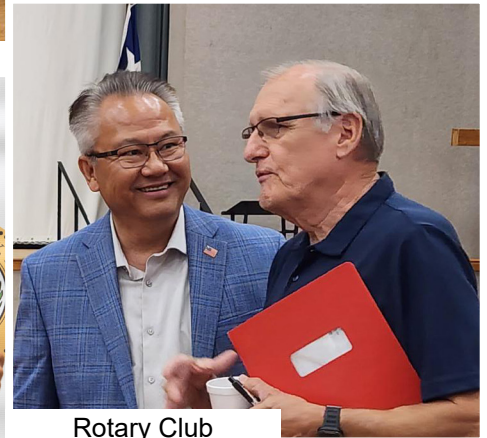
National Day of Prayer



TNT Session for Entities



Open House



Rotary Club



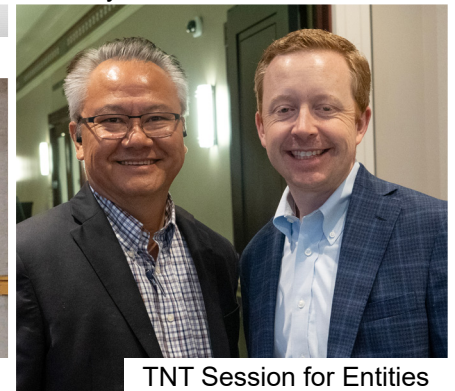
Arlington Sr. Men's Club



Salute Veterans



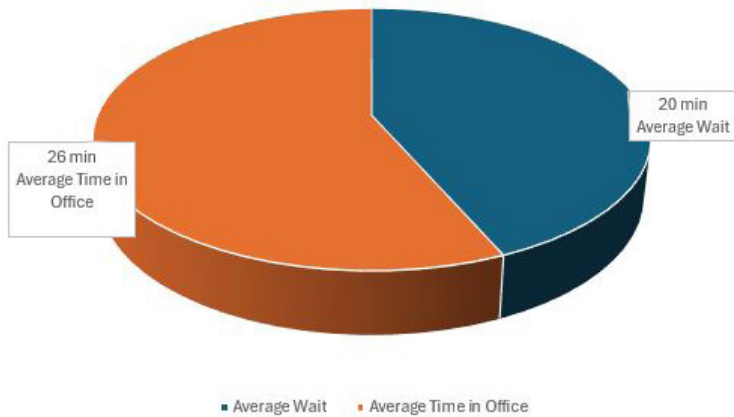
Rotary Club



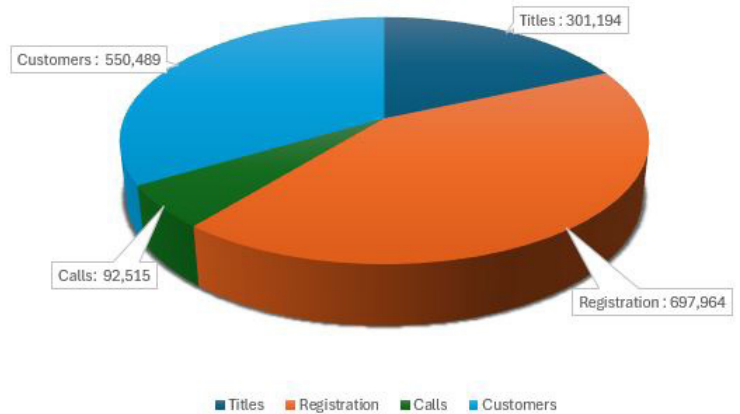
TNT Session for Entities

# FUN FACTS & STATISTICS

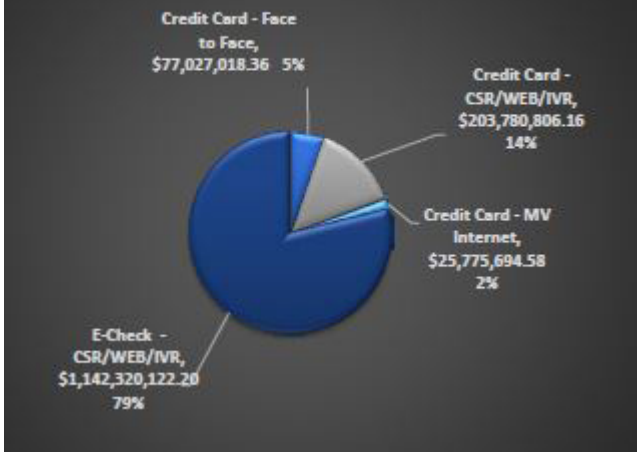
Average Wait Times in Minutes  
January 1 - June 30, 2025



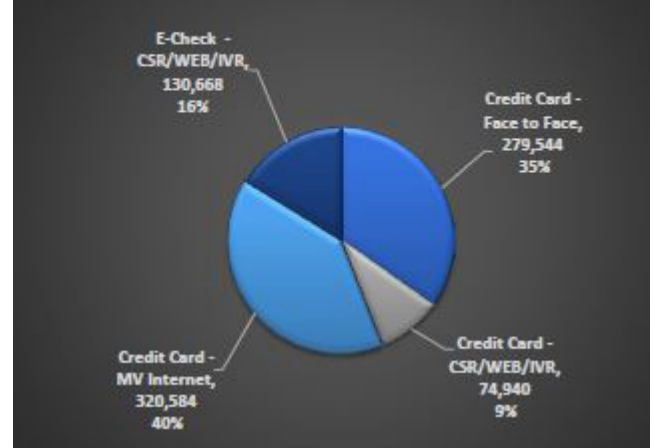
Motor Vehicle Services  
January 1 - June 30, 2025



Total Receipts - County Wide



Total Transactions - County Wide



Arlington Sr. Men's Club

## Speaker Request:

Community groups can request Rick Barnes or our expert property tax and motor vehicle staff members to discuss a certain topic with them. Let us know what topic you would like for us to address. Call 817-884-1106 or email [cjsadler@tarrantcountytx.gov](mailto:cjsadler@tarrantcountytx.gov) to schedule.

# SPOTLIGHT ON EMPLOYEES

## WESTERN DAY



## T.A.X. DAY MAKEUP DAY



## MOTOR VEHICLE BAKE-OFF CONTEST



Bake-Off Winner, Adele

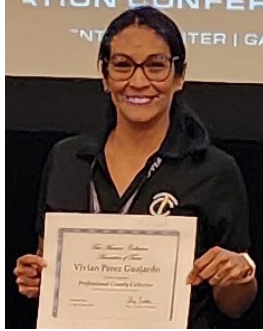


Above: Employees attend Truth in Taxation Training Class

# SPOTLIGHT ON EMPLOYEES



Kassandra,  
Quality Assurance  
Team Winner  
Easter Egg Hunt



Vivian, Refunds  
Manager, awarded  
PCC Certificate  
T.A.C.A. Conference



Employee Appreciation Day



Employee Appreciation Day



Luau Fun at Northeast



Motor Vehicle Supervisors Meeting



T.A.C.A. Conference



National Day of Prayer



Visits to Branches on Valentine's Day



T.A.X. Day Sneak Peak for Managers & Directors

# SPOTLIGHT ON EMPLOYEES

## T.A.X. DAY RECOGNITION FOR EXEMPLARY SERVICE

A priority on employee recognition for exemplary service was a new initiative spearheaded by Tax Assessor-Collector Rick Barnes at T.A.X. Day in May. Each Manager nominated one deserving employee based on outstanding performance and professionalism.

Imagine the excitement as each name was called, and comments with descriptions such as “kind,” “eager to learn,” provides “great customer service,” “steps in to help,” and even “encourages others” were read aloud by Barnes while being presented with a certificate! These powerful words truly captured the essence of their extraordinary work. Congratulations!



Tiffany Downing

Presented by  
Motor Vehicle Director  
Amber Wilson



Samantha King

Presented by  
Accounting Director  
Daniel Taylor



Claudia Luna

Presented by  
Motor Vehicle Manager  
Camryn Robbins,  
Northwest



Jose Ortiz

Presented by  
Motor Vehicle Manager  
Elvira Simpson,  
Downtown



Isabel Gonzalez

Presented by  
Motor Vehicle Manager  
Joanna Garvey and  
Asst. Branch Manager  
Karyan Evans,  
Downtown Internal



Sheila Harvey

Presented by  
Motor Vehicle Manager  
Jessica Montoya,  
Southlake  
and Rick Barnes

## T.A.X. DAY RECOGNITION FOR EXEMPLARY SERVICE



Melissa Rodriguez-Martinez

Presented by  
Motor Vehicle Manager  
Breanna Gidley,  
Mansfield



Sonya Adame

Presented by  
Property Tax Manager  
Vivian Perez Guajardo



Angelica DeLaRosa

Presented by  
Property Tax Manager  
Letty Garcia



Julia Alexandra Herrera

Presented by  
Property Tax Manager  
Beckie Fernandez



Candice Bryan

Presented by  
Quality Assurance Manager  
Kristen Harmonson



Saundra Hatchett

Presented by  
Motor Vehicle Supervisor  
Kayla Scofield



Leslie Garcia

Presented by  
Motor Vehicle Manager  
Cris Gallagher,  
Poly



Sascha Anderson

Presented by  
Motor Vehicle Manager  
Lindsey Darnell,  
Arlington  
and Rick Barnes

# SPOTLIGHT ON EMPLOYEES

## FOURTH OF JULY



# KUDOS FROM OUR CUSTOMERS!

## Diego, Property Tax

*“Diego did an amazing job helping me figure out tax information for a client.”*

## Javier, Property Tax

*“Javier went above and beyond to help her today. She received great customer service and appreciated it. Javier is doing a great job.”*

## Sonya, Motor Vehicle, Downtown

*“I would like to give a POSITIVE SHOUT OUT to Sonya. She was extremely professional, knowledgeable, and helpful. Please keep people like her around. She is a wonderful soul that brightens the room!”*

## Angelina, Motor Vehicle, Southwest

*“Angelina helped me on July 7 and again today. She was very nice and explained everything that needed to be done. She took her time to actually help me, and fast. I was in and out in less than 20 minutes. Love it! Excellent customer service I received in both visits with her!!!”*

## Adele, Tax Office Call Center

*“I had a couple of questions about some car registration and some handicap plates, and she was nothing but helpful. She’s fantastic. Had all my questions answered in like 10 minutes. She did a wonderful job. Thank you so much.”*

## Christine, Motor Vehicle, Downtown

*“During my 1-year deployment my registration sticker was lost in the mail. I mailed in for a replacement and Christine quickly contacted me back and sent out a replacement. Thank you.”*

## Lucero, Motor Vehicle, Southwest

*“I arrived at 3:30pm on a Friday and was surprised the numbers were being called so fast! My number was 13 numbers away from the numbers being called. I was walking out the door with my registration in about 20 mins time!!!”*

## Suzette, Motor Vehicle, Southlake

From Suzette’s Manager, Jessica:

*“J. Gregory called to say that Suzette was the kindest, the nicest, the most knowledgeable, and the most personable person she has worked with. She said her husband passed away and Suzette walked her through the process of transferring the title with such ease. WAY TO GO SUZETTE!”*

## Allie & Rosa, Motor Vehicle, Northwest

*“Allie and Rosa went above and beyond to help. I witnessed Allie handle a disgruntled customer and she handled it like a champ with kindness.”*

**Thank you to all employees for being kind and helpful to our customers and for providing EXCELLENT customer service.**



## **VISION:**

We are a professional team of positive and dedicated individuals who serve with integrity, tenacity, and compassion in an innovative and inclusive environment.

## **MISSION:**

We will serve the citizens of Tarrant County with pride, courtesy, respect, and determination. We will achieve excellence in what we do by providing accurate, efficient, and timely service consistent with the laws of the State of Texas and the highest ethical standard.



Scan Here to Visit our Website:  
[www.tarrantcountytexas.gov/en/tax](http://www.tarrantcountytexas.gov/en/tax)