

## News from SALEM COUNTY

## Office of Public Information

Mr. Robin B. Weinstein, Public Information Officer Office Phone: (856) 935-7510 ext. 8202

Cell: (856) 297-5433

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## COUNTY AWARDED OVER \$1 MILLION IN PARIS GRANT FUNDING

Salem County is awarded \$1,055,290 for grant programs to meet the strategic records management, preservation, storage needs and shared services with local municipalities

(SALEM, NJ) – Freeholder Director Lee Ware today announced that the County has been awarded over \$1 million dollars to fund continuing efforts to preserve and manage County records through the Office of Archives and Records. Additionally, the funding will also go towards developing strategic partnerships with municipalities. The grant was awarded to Salem County by the New Jersey Division of Archives and Records Management, whose funds come from document filing and recording fees collected by County Clerks.

"We are very excited to receive this funding," said Director Ware. "Last year we received a little less than the amount that we are receiving this year. The fact that the State is increasing our grant award beyond what we received last year shows that we are on the right track with this project. Under the direction of Curtis Harker, the County Office of Archives and Records is assisting all county departments in streamlining records management and bringing in cutting edge technology to advance this end."

The first year of the project involved establishing a strong foundation for subsequent years. Specifically, the 2005 funding supported: 1) assessing county needs and strategic planning services; 2) grants-in-aid for document imaging systems and services, electronic records management systems, and electronic filing portal development and expansion; 3) grants-in-aid for archival records and preservation services.

"Lost or illegible documents are of no use to anyone," said Curtis Harker. "The Freeholders have given us the goal of quality storage of vital records and ease of access for both government employees and the public. We have laid a strong groundwork for the next phase in this project. We have been competitively awarded a second year of funding to provide ongoing staffing to oversee new municipal shared services, document preservation/conservation, electronic document management system expansion, creation of public/employee portals and microfilming deeds/imaging mortgages."

Salem County ranked 12 out of 21 counties and fourth in Southern New Jersey in regards to the amount of overall funding for this project. The second year grant will focus on shared services with the County's 15 municipalities. Each municipality will receive an inventory of their stored paper and electronic records, as well as storage recommendations.

"The PARIS project for the County is truly a team effort," said Director Ware. "The increase in funding demonstrates that when we all work together towards a common goal great things can happen here in Salem County. The State sees that Salem County is committed to this effort. We will continue to use this funding to improve service to the residents of the County."