



WILLIAM M. GLADSON, STATE ATTORNEY
Fifth Judicial Circuit of Florida

Serving Marion, Lake, Citrus, Sumter, Hernando Counties

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**State Attorney and Clermont Police
Introduce Adult Civil Citation Program**

OCALA, FL – The State Attorney’s Office for the Fifth Judicial Circuit and the Clermont Police Department have partnered to launch an Adult Civil Citation Program to afford qualifying adults who fulfill specified intervention and community service obligations the opportunity to avoid an arrest record.

The Adult Civil Citation Program allows officers to use their discretion to issue a civil citation to an adult who has committed certain non-violent misdemeanor offenses instead of issuing a Notice to Appear or making a physical arrest. Individuals given a citation will pay a program fee, participate in a crime-specific educational program, and complete community service hours. Once completed, the person is issued a certificate of completion and no charges are filed.

“The program holds citizens accountable, while keeping them out of the court system,” said Chief Assistant State Attorney Walter Forgie. “If they satisfactorily complete the requirements of the program, participants will avoid an arrest record.”

The program comes at a time when courts are faced with a backlog of cases due to pandemic related shutdowns. The Fifth Judicial Circuit, which includes Lake County, has been in Phase Two since mid-March, which means only essential court proceedings like arraignments, first appearances and bond hearings are allowed. Jury trials and grand jury proceedings have been suspended indefinitely.

Only first-time offenders on designated non-violent misdemeanor crimes are eligible for the Adult Civil Citation Program. If the adult does not successfully complete the requirements of the program, the state attorney will review the case to determine whether prosecution is appropriate.

William “Bill” Gladson was elected State Attorney for the Fifth Judicial Circuit in November 2020 and took office January 2021. He is a former law enforcement officer and career prosecutor with over 20 years of trial experience. As State Attorney, Gladson leads a team of over 250 employees who serve the citizens of Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Marion, and Sumter counties, an area encompassing more than 1.2 million people.

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