



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2021-2022



SAM C. STEELE, CFC

Constitutional Tax Collector
Monroe County, Florida

**SAM C. STEELE, CFC**

CONSTITUTIONAL TAX COLLECTOR
MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA

I am pleased to present to you the 2021-2022 Annual Report. As your Constitutional Tax Collector, my team and I are honored to provide you with a wide variety of services, including real estate property and tangible personal property tax services, driver license services, motor vehicle and vessel registrations, and much more.

In this report, you will learn about our performance and accomplishments for fiscal year 2022, and an easy-to-read accounting of the collection and distribution of your tax dollars for the benefit of Monroe County.

Since being duly sworn into office in January 2021, I have diligently worked to modernize and innovate office operations, improve efficiency, and expand access to services for Monroe County residents and taxpayers.

We collected a **record-breaking \$11,360,944 in commissions and fees**, of which our agency **returned \$5,444,959** back to the taxing authorities to the benefit of Monroe County's 82,000 residents. As an independent agency funded by the fees and commissions collected, we continue to strive to exceed expectations in customer service.

I hope you find the information in this report valuable and insightful. I greatly appreciate the trust and confidence you have placed in my team and me. I am honored for the opportunity to serve as your Constitutional Tax Collector.

Respectfully,



ABOUT THE TAX COLLECTOR

The Florida Constitution established the Tax Collector's Office as an independent agency in 1885. Constitutional offices are part of a system that limits (checks) the County Commission's power by having constitutional officers carry out governmental duties (balances). This separation frees the Tax Collector's Office from influence by local or state agencies that have the power to levy taxes.

In 2020, Sam C. Steele was elected unopposed to serve a four-year term. He officially became the youngest Constitutional Tax Collector to be elected in Monroe County and is currently the youngest Constitutional Tax Collector in the State of Florida.

Other constitutional officers serving Monroe County are the Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller, Property Appraiser, Sheriff, and Supervisor of Elections.

OUR SERVICES

The Constitutional Tax Collector's Office employs 60 dedicated and highly skilled professionals who serve Monroe County from six offices conveniently located from Key Largo to Key West.

The Constitutional Tax Collector serves as a limited, specialized agent for the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Florida Department of Revenue, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and the Florida Department of Health.

We provide the following services for the convenience of Monroe County residents:

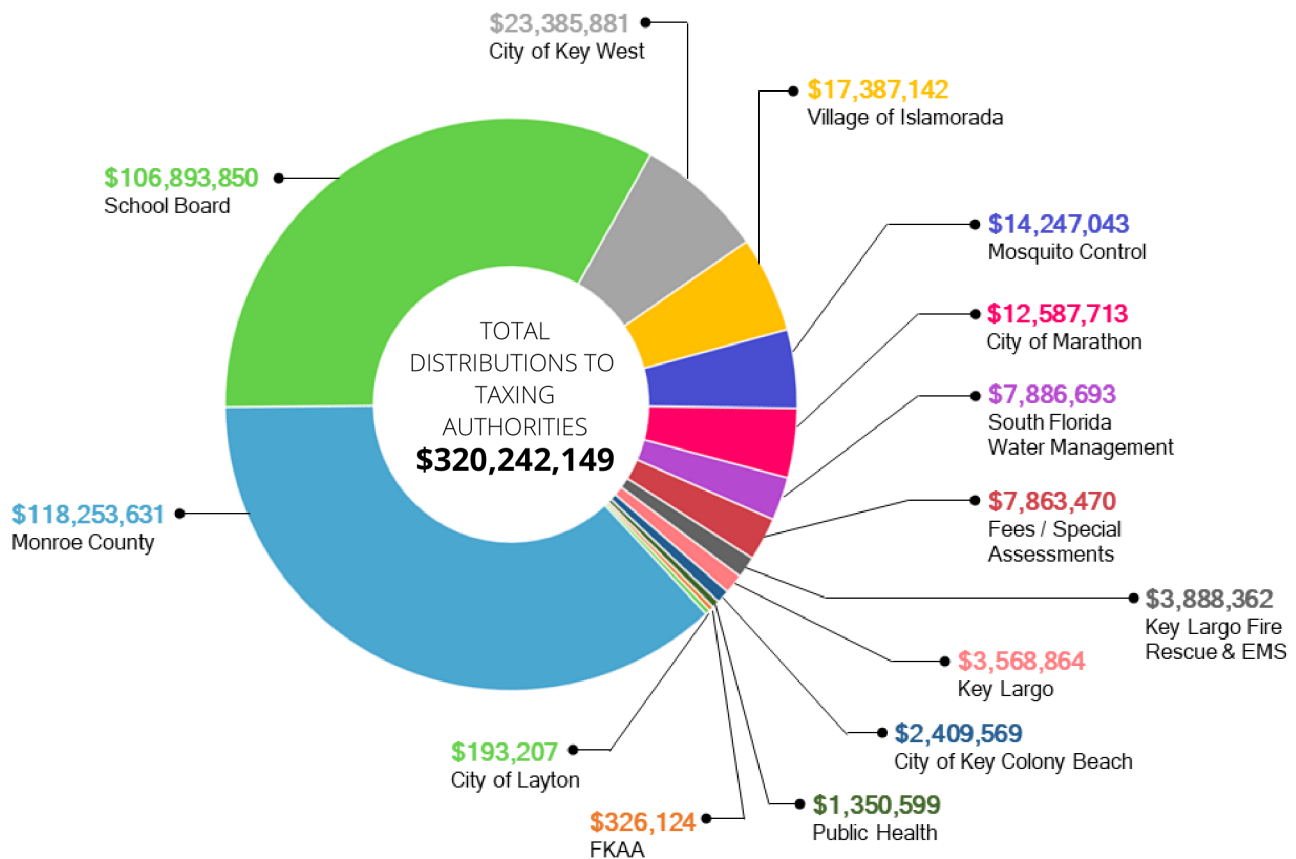
- Real estate and tangible personal property tax
- Local business tax receipts
- Tourist development tax
- United States passport applications
- Motor vehicle and vessel registration and title services
- Driver licenses and state identification cards
- Concealed weapon permits
- Hunting and fishing licenses
- Hurricane re-entry decals
- Florida birth certificates

**NEED YOUR
DRIVER
LICENSE?**

SEE OUR CHECKLIST
AND BRING THE RIGHT
DOCUMENTS

www.MonroeTaxCollector.com

DISTRIBUTION TO TAXING AUTHORITIES



2021 PROPERTY TAX CYCLE

JANUARY 1

Property Appraiser assesses property values

OCTOBER

Property Appraiser certifies tax roll to the Tax Collector

NOVEMBER

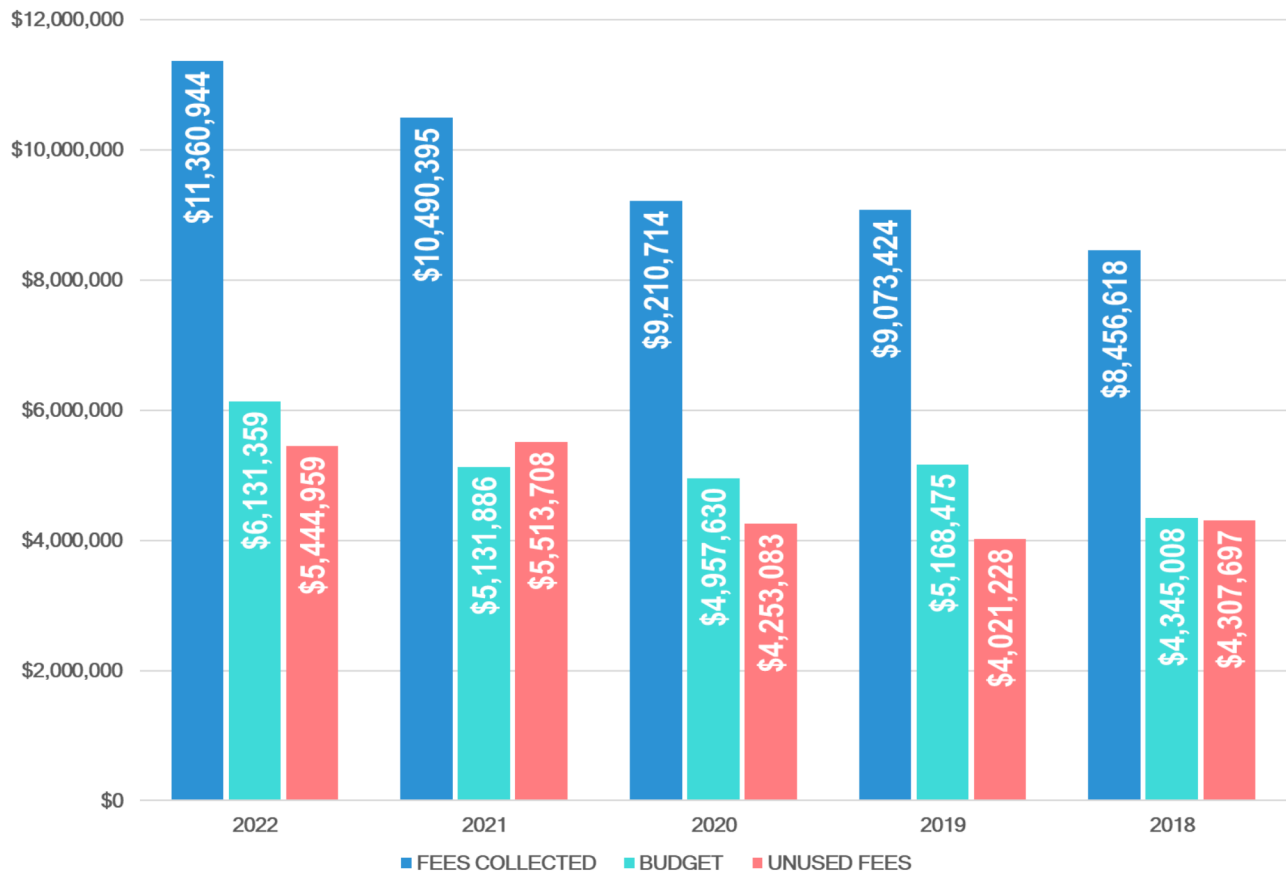
Tax Collector mails tax bills

During the 2021 property tax cycle, the Constitutional Tax Collector's Office collected over \$320 million in property taxes and fees.

This revenue was efficiently distributed to Monroe County's taxing authorities to fund essential public services.

Revenue from property taxes pays for county and municipal services, hospitals, school district, law enforcement, fire and medical emergency services, mosquito control, and additional services that are critical to the operation of our county.

TAX COLLECTOR'S BUDGET



COMMISSIONS AND FEES

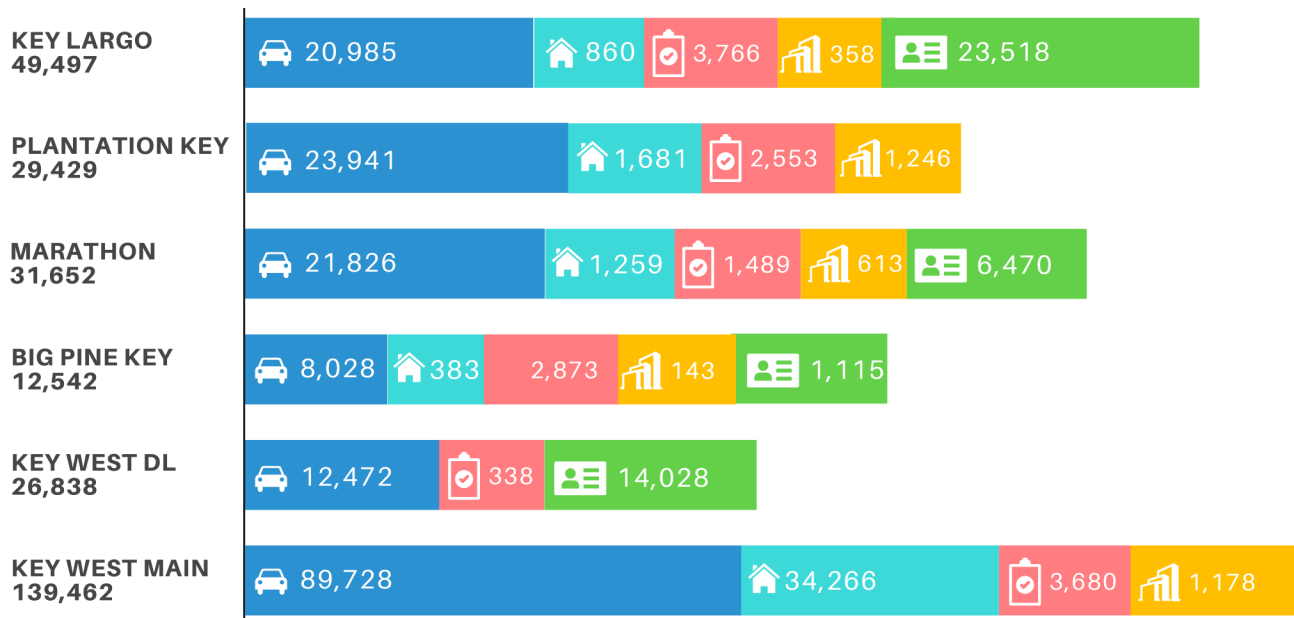
PROPERTY TAX	\$6,980,291
TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX	\$2,710,858
MOTOR VEHICLE SERVICES	\$622,613
DRIVER LICENSES	\$391,364
TAX CERTIFICATE SALE	\$346,672
LOCAL BUSINESS TAX	\$154,245
MISCELLANEOUS REVENUE	\$92,873
CONCEALED WEAPONS	\$37,599
PASSPORTS	\$24,428

AN INDEPENDENT AGENCY *i*

The Constitutional Tax Collector's Office is a fee-based office. The fees collected for the services we provide are used to fund our operating budget, which is approved by the Florida Department of Revenue.

This year, our office collected **\$11.4 million** in fees and commissions. As a result of our cost-effective operations, we returned **\$5.4 million** of unused fees to the taxing authorities of Monroe County.

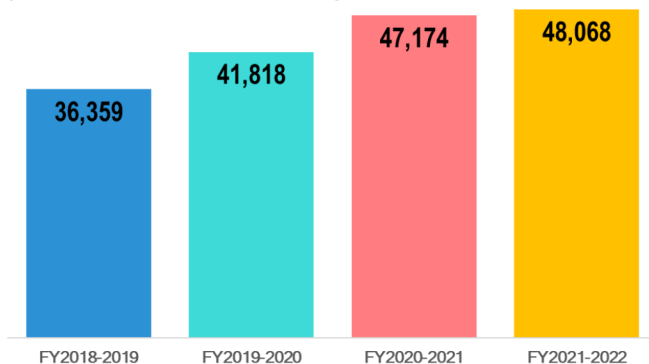
TOTAL TRANSACTIONS BY OFFICE



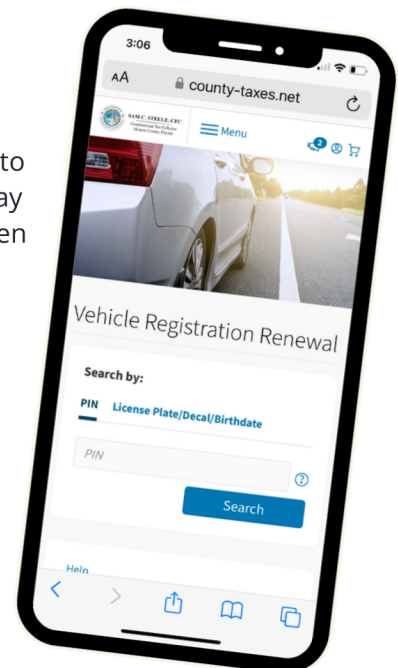
ONLINE TRANSACTIONS

SAME DAY REGISTRATION RENEWAL

Renewing vehicle and vessel registrations has never been easier thanks to RenewExpress and ExpressLane, our latest online services. Residents may now renew and prepay for their registrations directly on our website, then pick up their decals the same day at the office location of their choice.



TOTAL ONLINE TRANSACTIONS FOR ALL SERVICES



SERVING YOU ONLINE

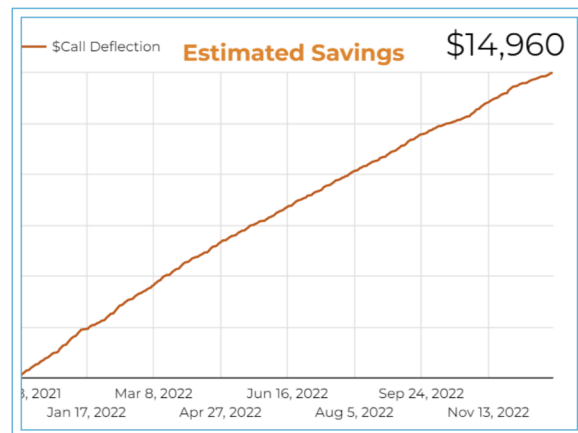
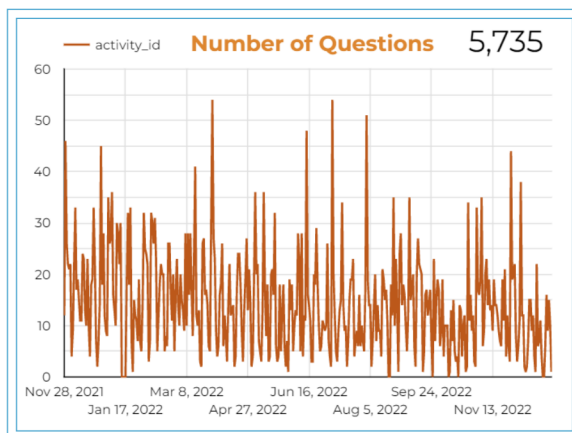
CONVENIENT. SECURE. COST EFFECTIVE.

Our website is more than an online payment portal, it also offers robust account management. Business owners enjoy the convenience of managing their local business tax account using BExpress, while short-term rental property owners manage their tourist development tax account through TouristExpress. And don't forget the option to sign up for BillExpress the next time you're online. It is the cost-effective, environmentally-friendly way to have your tax bills delivered directly to your inbox.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

We are seeing great success with our digital employee "Monroe" which was implemented in November 2021. This new communication channel provides taxpayers another convenient method for getting answers to their questions and working with our office. We are pleased that customer usage remains steady and satisfaction is consistently high.



CUSTOMER FEEDBACK



Let us know how we are doing! Please complete a feedback card the next time you visit our office, or take our quick online survey by scanning the QR code or visiting our survey website here:

<https://surveymonkey.com/r/mctcreviews>

IN DEPTH

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX

Tourist development tax is used to promote the Florida Keys through activities such as marketing, advertising, public relations, and market research. These funds also support capital projects that help conserve our natural environment and cultural assets. The activities and projects funded by tourist development tax help ensure the long-term economic stability of visitor-related revenues.

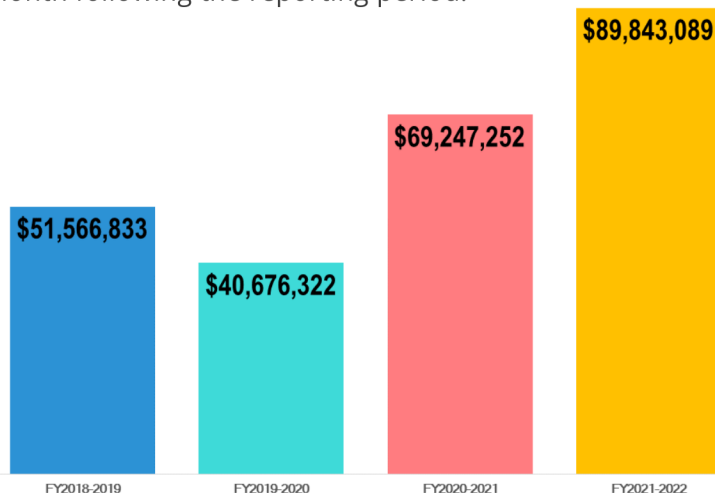
Tourist development tax is a 5% tax on the total rental amount charged to a guest for the privilege of operating a short-term rental (rental duration is six months or less). It is paid by the guest (renter), not the property owner. It is the property owner's responsibility to collect the tax from the guest and remit it to the Monroe County Tax Collector each month.



TOURIST EXPRESS

We make it easy for property owners to apply for an account, file monthly returns, and remit payment online using TouristExpress. They can also save money by doing so.

Through TouristExpress, property owners may deduct 2.5% of the first \$1,200 due, or a maximum of \$30 if the return is filed by the 20th day of the month following the reporting period.



TOTAL TDT COLLECTIONS



RENTAL PROPERTY REQUIREMENTS

Local business tax receipt is required for all properties regardless of rental duration.

A **tourist development tax** account is required for all short-term rental properties (rental duration is six months or less).

A state license from the **Department of Business and Professional Regulation** (DBPR) is required for all properties that are rented for less than 30 days or one month.

Remember to check with your local planning and zoning department for any other requirements.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Scan this QR code or visit our website.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

As stewards of public funds, we have a fiduciary duty to be fiscally responsible in the collection and distribution of taxpayers' money. We are extremely honored to have earned the **Excellence in Financial Operations Award** from the Florida Tax Collectors Association.

\$431,314,206 Highest collection and distribution of annual revenue on record. The second highest amount was \$404,355,234 in FY 2021.

\$11,360,944 Highest amount of tax collector fees and commissions ever collected.

\$5,444,959 Second largest distribution of unused fees to the taxing authorities on record. The largest amount ever returned was \$5,513,708 in FY 2021.

\$89,843,089 Highest collection of tourist development tax on record.



Received the **2022 Excellence in Financial Operations Award** from the Florida Tax Collectors Association. This was a first for the Monroe County Tax Collector's Office.



Installed specialized fast title printers in all offices, eliminating the need for residents in the Middle Keys to drive to Plantation Key or Key West to have their title printed.



Modernized the process to renew vehicle and vessel registrations online, providing Monroe County residents the ability to prepay and pick up their decals the same day from any office location of their choice.



Each year, a team of independent auditors examines our financial operations and practices. This year, our Finance Department celebrated another perfect audit.



Tax Collector Steele receives the 2022 Excellence in Financial Operations Award from The Honorable Rhonda Skipper, President of the Florida Tax Collectors Association.

CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Each year, our employees come together to volunteer their time and talents for a variety of causes. We look forward to connecting with the community in person and online on our Facebook page.



During the United Way's first annual "Be Like Mike" Week, we collected and donated non-perishable food for the Feeding the Keys Food Drive.



Each year we collect new toys for the Wesley House Family Services Holiday Helpers toy drive.



We took teamwork to a new level when we participated in the Rotary Club's "Kicking for a Cause" Tournament.



We participated in the Reef Relief beach clean up.



293 NEW FOLLOWERS
49,435 USERS REACHED

You can find us on Facebook where we share Tax Collector Tips, friendly reminders, and employee accomplishments. Our page is just one more way we connect and celebrate our unique Keys lifestyle.



During the month of October, we promote breast cancer awareness through the sale of "End Breast Cancer" specialty license plates.

LOCATIONS

KEY WEST MAIN OFFICE

Harvey Government Center
1200 Truman Ave., Suite 101
Key West, FL 33040
(305) 295-5000

KEY WEST DRIVER LICENSE OFFICE

Searstown Shopping Center
3304 N. Roosevelt Blvd.
Key West, FL 33040
(305) 293-6338

BIG PINE KEY SATELLITE OFFICE

Winn-Dixie Shopping Center
247 Key Deer Blvd.
Big Pine Key, FL 33043
(305) 872-4751

MARATHON BRANCH OFFICE

3015 Overseas Highway
Marathon, FL 33050
(305) 289-6034

PLANTATION KEY BRANCH OFFICE

The Jerry Ellis Building
88800 Overseas Highway
Plantation Key, FL 33070
(305) 852-7150

KEY LARGO BRANCH OFFICE

Tradewinds Shopping Center
101487 Overseas Highway
Key Largo, FL 33037
(305) 853-3562

(305) 295-5000 Main | (305) 295-5020 Fax

P.O. Box 1129

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CONTACT US

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DIRECTOR OF AUDIT AND ENFORCEMENT

Pamela Sellers | (305) 295-5062

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS COLLECTIONS

Patti Atwell | (305) 295-5063

BRANCH MANAGER - KEY WEST DRIVER LICENSE

Debra Sawyer | (305) 293-6338

BRANCH MANAGER - BIG PINE KEY

Mark Sweeting | (305) 872-4751

BRANCH MANAGER - MARATHON

Melissa Vargas | (305) 289-6034

BRANCH MANAGER - PLANTATION KEY

Ivette Chao | (305) 852-7150

BRANCH MANAGER - KEY LARGO

Nancy Reyes | (305) 853-3562



OUR MISSION

Exceeding expectations
in customer service

OUR VALUES

Accountability • Collaboration • Fun

Fiscal Responsibility • Communication • Integrity



www.MonroeTaxCollector.com