**Plain Language Policy**

Santa Cruz County Clerk

**Goal:** We want our readers to understand all written materials the first time they read or hear them. In addition, documents written in plain language will translate better into other languages.

To accomplish that goal, our Department has adopted a Plain Language Policy.

**What is Plain Language?**

* Logical organization
* Active voice
* Common, everyday words
* Short sentences
* “You” and other pronouns
* Lists and tables
* Easy-to-read design features
* Easy-to-find information
* Easy-to-read information
* Use symbols, icons
* White space
* Use short paragraphs
* One topic per paragraph
* Aim for no more than 7 lines

Always run a spell check of your document and look for the following:

* Flesch Reading Ease – should be between 60 and 70
* Flesch-Kincaid grade level – should be 7 or 8