



Tax offices to take over driver's licenses

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The Marcus Pointe office of the Escambia County tax collector is being expanded to accommodate the state's plans to fully turn over driver license services to tax collector offices in the spring of next year.

The state-run Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles driver's license service center at 100 Stumpfield Road will close, Tax Collector Janet Holley said.

The tax collector's four local offices have been processing driver's license services for years by appointment only, but the state's Stumpfield site is still the most popular site because walk-ins are welcome.

Holley anticipates the Tax Collector's Offices doubling their transactions from about 60,000 to more than 120,000 annually when the Stumpfield office closes.

After the change, all four tax collector sites will continue to offer the same driver's license services by appointment only, and the Marcus Pointe office on W Street also will create a walk-ins section.

The Marcus Pointe office will become the site for the driver's license road test and other services now handled at the state's

Stumpfield location.

"The good thing for the consumer is that this will create more options, more places for them to go for these services," Holley said.

Construction on the 3,500-square-foot office expansion at Marcus Pointe is expected to be complete by January, and the expanded site is expected to fully take over the Stumpfield services in March.

The tax collector's lessor, W Street Properties, is handling the contracting of the expansion project, which will increase the tax collector's rent by about \$5,000 per month.

The state has committed to allow a portion of the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles' budget to be transferred to tax collectors to cover added costs, such as the estimated 12 new employees the tax collector expects to hire.

It's unclear how much the tax collectors will

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get, but Holley said she hopes it will be enough to cover the local costs of taking over the services.

State employees from the Stumpfield Road location will not automatically be transferred to the new facility, but Holley's office is interviewing employees there who have shown an interest in working for the Tax Collector's Office.

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