INTRODUCTION

Government Protocol Services as it is known today, had its origins in the early 1980's under the leadership of then, Dade County Mayor Stephen P. Clark. With Greater Miami’s growing stature as an International Center for trade, commerce, tourism and travel, Mayor Clark recognized the need for establishing this office for official representation of Miami-Dade County and related protocol issues.

Since it was established this Department has played a role in several historic South Florida events which have projected Miami-Dade County upon the international stage, including the Papal visit in 1987 and the Summit of the America’s in 1994.

With the advent of the Executive Mayor form of Government in 1996, the Department was incorporated as a section under Office of the Mayor where it evolved in personnel and outreach, now serving the increased nature of Protocol service for the Board of County Commissioners and a cosmopolitan metropolis poised on the brink of the millennium.

In December, of 1999, Government Protocol Services was transferred under the aegis of the Communications Department were it has taken the necessary technological steps to more efficiently and effectively meet the challenges of 21st Century government in the global community.

The Miami-Dade County Office of Government Protocol Services is located on the second floor of the Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 N.W. 1 St Street Suite 250 Miami, Florida 33128. The phone number is 375-3611 and the fax number is 372-6029. (GPS e-mail)

GUIDELINES FOR DOCUMENT REQUESTS

Government Protocol Services works with the Mayor and the County Commission to honor visiting dignitaries, extraordinary civic achievements, and outstanding individual or group contributions to the economic, social and cultural well-being of Miami-Dade County.

Government Protocol Services serves the mayor and the members of the Board of County Commissioners in preparing appropriate official documents of tribute for formal presentations encompassing a vast assortment of functions of local, national and international consequence.

These documents of tribute bear the official Seal of Miami-Dade County and the signature of one or more members of the Board of County Commissioners depending on the occasion. By virtue of their official nature and the prestige of the office of the elected representative signing the document, these instruments extend intrinsic validation upon an individual or event in an official capacity.

The Mayors Office and Board of Miami-Dade County Commissioners have several types of awards and honors for formal presentations at its disposal.
**TYPES OF DOCUMENTS**

**PROCLAMATION:**
A proclamation designates a specific day, week or year in honor of an individual, group, event or purpose. Proclamations should be reserved for the most significant of occasions. Each year, events of national importance are designated by federal, state and county or city proclamations. These include Women's History Month, Black History Month, Hispanic History Month, United States Constitution Week, Jose Martí Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Flag Day among others. (see appendix I)

**COMMENDATION/DISTRICT COMMENDATION:**
Commendations recognize individuals or groups who demonstrate exceptional strength of mind and/or spirit toward humankind. An extraordinary act of valor, an uplifting act of humanitarianism or philanthropy or an inspirational artistic or intellectual accomplishment are examples suited for the presentation of this document. (see appendix I)

**SYMPATHY RESOLUTION:**
A Sympathy Resolution is signed by each member of the Board of County Commissioners to express condolences to bereaved families on behalf of the community. These documents are prepared for presentation to families of fallen Officers of the Law, individuals who left an indelible mark on the fabric of this community, victims of tragedy and others. (see appendix I)

**CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION:**
This document expresses the appreciation of the community for an extraordinary service rendered, a noteworthy contribution to the improvement of local life (whether social, cultural, economic or other or an act of selfless dedication (see appendix I)

**DISTINGUISHED VISITOR CERTIFICATE:**
This document is reserved exclusively to recognize visiting dignitaries or officials and personalities from all walks of life of national and international stature to enhance bonds of cooperation between our respective nations. (see appendix I)

**CONGRATULATORY CERTIFICATE (BIRTHDAY, ETC.):**
This document expresses congratulatory sentiments to those celebrating milestone Birthday's, Anniversary's, Family Reunions and other occasions where celebrations of landmark significance unite local citizens and visitors alike in bonds of social harmony.
PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

KEY TO THE COUNTY:
A Key to the County extends an official welcome to those receiving it and also recognizes proven leaders whose contributions have enriched our society immeasurably. Note- it is imperative that Commission offices issuing keys keep a running log of those receiving these items and supply the Protocol office with that list at the end of each month. On numerous occasions, public figures and dignitaries have been presented more than one key from different Commission offices.

MEDAL OF MERIT AWARD
A Medal of Merit recognizes exceptional leadership and contributions of local citizens who distinguish themselves through their superlative personal or professional leadership in commerce, the arts, politics and philanthropy. This award salutes the pinnacle of achievement among those who make Miami-Dade County their home.

PROTOCOL GIFT ITEMS:
These are keepsakes and mementos representing Miami-Dade County. Items such as lapel pins, tie clips, key chains, pens, pencils, etc. are available for the mayor and the Commissioners to present to visitors to their office. These items are all emblazoned with the County Seal.

PROCEDURES FOR DOCUMENT REQUESTS

To obtain an official document or award for presentation the initiating office must submit a document request form, (attached to the back of each manual) to the Government Protocol Services, adhering to the following criteria:

For a narrative document a biography, not a resume (see sample of biography as it is to be delivered to this department appendix I) must be submitted and should include enough information to enable the writer to prepare a text at least five to six paragraphs in length.

Special care should be taken to provide accurately spelled names of individuals and organizations to prevent potential for embarrassment. The request must be made ten working days in advance to permit adequate preparation time. A contact person and phone number must be provided for research purposes. In the event where the organization or individual has received a scroll of the type requested within the past year, this office will suggest alternate means of officially recognizing the event. Also, all collateral motive, information regarding the event, invitation, media kit, newspaper article, etc. should be forwarded with request to ensure the writer has a full understanding of occasion when preparing text.

In cases where more than one Commissioner requests the same document the office initiating the request retains precedence. If another Commissioner wishes to co-sign the document, they will be referred to the office initiating request for coordination.
RULES AND REGULATIONS

EMERGENCIES: Rush Orders (Less Than 72 Hours)
Cannot be Guaranteed! The unexpected is a fact of political life and emergencies arise. It is incumbent upon Commission staff to keep emergencies when requesting protocol documents to a minimum. When Mayor’s Office or Commission staff receive a protocol request from constituents these should be forwarded immediately for processing to curb unnecessary glitches.

FRAMES:
Frames are available for presentations and will be charged to the requesting office’s index budget code. It is recommended that Distinguished Visitors Certificates not be framed as accidents have occurred in the past and recipients harmed by shattered glass while traveling.

MULTIPLE REQUESTS:
All request exceeding 10 preprinted documents per event (certificates of appreciation - distinguished visitors certificates) must be made 10 working days in advance. Each of these documents is prepared individually and multiple requests warrant adequate time for preparation.