

What is a Property Deed?

A **deed** is a legal document that transfers property ownership rights in real estate. Deeds in their most basic form contain: a description of the property or real estate involved; names of the parties; signature of the person transferring the real estate.

Why does the County Clerk's Office have so many deeds?

Our office serves as the official registrar of deeds, mortgages, assignments of mortgages, satisfactions of mortgages, judgments and liens. The County Clerk has the duty of indexing and preserving these documents. Whenever a real estate transaction occurs in Monroe County, State Law requires a deed to be filed with our office.

Important Terms to Know

- Grantor— seller of the property
- Grantee— purchaser of the property
- Liber—Latin word for “book” and used to track public records such as deeds
- Page—the page the document or deed is found in a liber
- Deed – a legal document used to deliver and transfer property rights



What is a Racially Restrictive Covenant?

A written restriction included in a legal document, typically attached to a piece of property that prohibits future ownership and occupancy of that property based on race, creed, color, national origin, and/or ancestry. During the early part of the 20th Century, these covenants prevented people of color from purchasing or moving into new neighborhoods built in parts of Monroe County.

Illegal and Unenforceable

Racially restrictive covenants were deemed unenforceable by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1948 and outlawed in 1968 by the Fair Housing Act. However, neither of these acts provided a mechanism for the removal of these covenants from the original deeds.

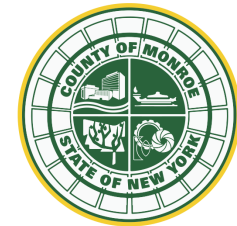


Monroe County Clerk
JAMIE ROMEO

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GUIDE TO SEARCH FOR HISTORICAL PROPERTY DEEDS

(UPDATED 2020)



Monroe County Clerk
JAMIE ROMEO

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COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
39 WEST MAIN STREET, ROOM 101
ROCHESTER, NY 14614
MCCLERK@MONROECOUNTY.GOV
MONROECOUNTY.GOV/CLERK-INDEX.PHP

Online County Clerk



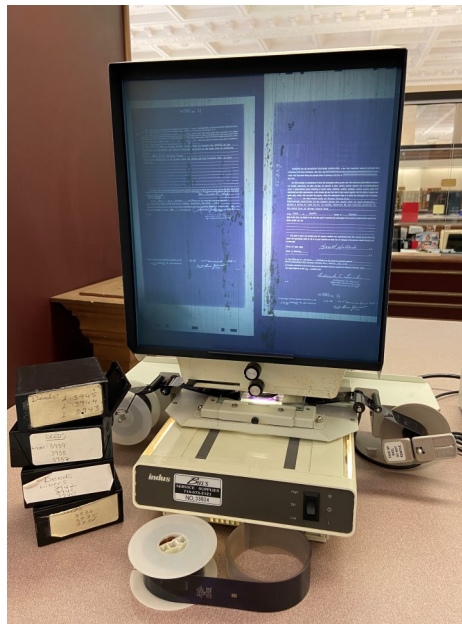
Use our County Clerk database, **CountyFusion** to easily search for public and court records.

DEEDS RECORDED AFTER 1975 SEARCH DIGITAL RECORDS

- Go to our County Clerk website and use our online public database called CountyFusion. This can be accessed at home or on our public terminals.
- The website address is—monroecounty.gov/clerk-index.php
- Search CountyFusion by property address or name of property owner.
- If tracing property deeds back in time, look for the oldest deed in CountyFusion. Read through the deed and find the liber and page for the previous deed.

DEEDS RECORDED PRIOR TO 1975 SEARCH MICROFILM

- Visit us at the Downtown Filing Office on the first floor of the County Office Building, 39 West Main Street, Room 105, in Downtown Rochester.
- Film is organized by liber. Look for the film role with corresponding liber number.
- Load the film on the microfilm machine. If you do not know how to use the machine, please ask our staff for assistance.
- Look for the page number while scrolling through the film to find the deed.



DEEDS RECORDED PRIOR TO 1975 SEARCH INDEX BOOKS

- Some older records do not reference previous deeds with a liber and page. Instead they only list the grantor (seller) and grantee (buyer) and generally provide a date of transfer.
- Using the year of transfer and the initial of the Grantee's last name, find the corresponding Grantee Index book. Look up the Grantee's name and find the liber and page of the deed.
- Go back to the microfilm with the liber and page found in the Index book and proceed as you did before with the microfilm.

Need Help?

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General Phone:

(585) 753-1600