

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

The Executive Office is comprised of the Administrative Director, the Executive Assistant to the Director, the Senior Attorney, supporting attorney(s), and administrative staff. Through the Administrative Director, the Executive Office is responsible for coordinating and guiding the operations of each of the divisions of the Administrative Office and serves as a central resource for a multitude of operational issues which impact the administration of the judicial branch.



The **Executive Office**, on behalf of the Supreme Court, manages and coordinates liaison activities with executive and legislative branch officials and agencies. One of the major duties performed for the Supreme Court is the consideration of non-routine administrative matters, which are presented during each of the Court's terms. The Administrative Director, in collaboration with the Chief Justice, prepares and presents agenda issues to the Court for discussion and deliberation to assure that the business of the judicial branch is thoroughly managed. Agenda items approved by the Court for action are then implemented by the Director through the Executive Office.

The Executive Office plans and directs Administrative office staff support for the Supreme Court Committees and the Committees of the Illinois Judicial Conference. The study and recommendations which flow from each Judicial Conference Committee to the Supreme Court greatly impact matters related to improving the administration of justice in Illinois. Consistent with the Court's reliance on the work of the Judicial Conference committees to examine and make recommendations on matters of judicial branch policy and practice, the Court again

assigned specific tasks and projects to each Judicial Conference Committee in 2008. The Administrative Director assigns senior level staff with subject matter expertise to serve as liaisons to assist each committee in their assignments.

In its administration of Supreme Court Rule 39 (Appointment of Associate Judges), the Executive Office conducted twenty-five associate judge elections in fourteen of Illinois' twenty-three judicial circuits during 2008. The Executive Office also processes applications filed under Supreme Court Rule 295, which authorizes the assignment of associate judges to hear felony matters. Additionally, applications for licenses issued to those law students seeking to provide limited legal representation under Supreme Court Rule 711 are processed through the Executive Office.

The Executive Office's activities and responsibilities also include securing and tracking legal representation through the Office of the Attorney General for members of the judicial branch named in a case or controversy arising out of the performance of their official duties. Executive Office staff negotiates, prepares, and manages office leases and contracts for the Supreme and Appellate Courts, mandatory arbitration programs, and the Administrative

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE DIRECTORY

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Cynthia Y. Cobbs, Director
Michael Tardy, Executive Assistant
Marcia Meis, Senior Attorney

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE DIVISIONS

Administrative Services Division - Kathleen L. O'Hara, Assistant Director

Court Services Division - James W. Redlich, Assistant Director

Judicial Education Division - Michael Tardy, Executive Assistant

Judicial Management Information Services (JMIS) - Skip Robertson, Assistant Director

Probation Services Division - Cheryl Barrett, Assistant Director

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Office. All vendor contracts generated by the Administrative Office for use in securing goods and services are reviewed and approved by the Executive Office. Written summaries of recent Supreme Court opinions are prepared by legal staff within the Executive Office for distribution to all Illinois Judges. Additionally, the Executive Office serves as secretary to the Illinois Courts Commission, managing the filing and preservation of Commission records, distributing the Official Illinois Courts Commission Reports, and performing all other duties typically executed by a clerk of a court of record. Executive Office Staff also prepares and executes grants which provide for programming funded through the Lawyers' Assistance Program Act.

The **Administrative Services Division** provides technical and support services to the judicial branch through its five operational units; the Payroll/Benefits Unit, the Accounting Unit, the Budget Unit, the Human Resources Unit, and Mail/Reprographics Unit.

The Payroll/Benefits Unit maintains all payroll

records for current state-paid judicial branch employees, as well as records for all previous employees. Staff of this unit work with the Office of the Comptroller to produce both monthly and semi-monthly payrolls for over 1,500 current judicial branch employees. Staff also coordinate the state's varied employee benefit programs, including health, dental, and life insurance.

The Accounting Unit consistently and accurately processes all payment vouchers for the Supreme Court, the Appellate Court, the state-paid functions of the circuit courts, and the Administrative Office. The Accounting Unit also maintains all financial records for the expenditure of resources appropriated by the General Assembly. Staff of this unit work closely with staff of the Comptroller's Office to reconcile payment information and provide that office any additional information needed to facilitate the payment of judicial branch bills.

In addition to overseeing procurement and inventory controls, the Budget Unit produces highly technical and analytical financial reports used by judicial branch managers and the



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Administrative Director. These reports track daily spending, contractual obligations, and projected needs. This unit also prepares the comprehensive documentation utilized in the development and implementation of the annual judicial branch budget. The Budget Unit monitors the number of authorized judicial and non-judicial positions within the judicial branch and coordinates the flow of information among the Secretary of State's Office and the State Board of Elections regarding judicial election.

The Human Resource Unit provides personnel services to judicial branch employees and managers. Staff within this unit maintain comprehensive attendance records for all judicial branch personnel covered by the Supreme Court's Leave of Absence Policies and assist individuals with questions regarding the associated paid and unpaid leaves of absences. Staff interact with CMS personnel to coordinate the state's workers' compensation program. The Human Resource Unit also works with judicial branch employees and managers in administering the judicial branch's classification and compensation plan. When requested, staff of this unit also assist judicial branch managers in their recruitment and selection process, including the placement of advertisements, the dissemination, collection, and review of applications, administering proficiency testing, and securing reference checks. The Mail/Reprographics Unit oversees the distribution of mail and parcel services for the Administrative Office. Acting as its own print shop, staff of this unit review materials presented for copying and determine the best method to replicate the originals. In many instances, the Unit produces print quality manuals, brochures, and publications.

The Court Services

Division is organized into four working groups (the Child Welfare Unit; the Program Unit; the Recordkeeping and Technology Unit; and the Labor Unit) and is involved in a diverse and wide range of activities and projects affecting judges, circuit clerks, and other components of the judicial branch of government. The Division is responsible for staffing a variety of Supreme Court committees, Judicial Conference committees, and the Conference of Chief Circuit Judges. It produces the Judicial Conference Report, the

Court-Annexed Mandatory Arbitration Report and this annual report. The Division also serves as the primary liaison for addressing concerns and initiatives relating to circuit court clerks. It assists with local labor negotiations that impact the judicial branch. In addition, a number of specific-topic programs, such as management of the Capital Litigation Trial Bar (CLTB) and maintenance of judicial branch long-range capital development plans are administered by the Division. Child protection projects, including management of related federal grants, are also one of its responsibilities. The Division provides legislative support services to the Supreme Court, and prepares legislative summaries for Chief Circuit Judges and circuit clerks.

In coordination with the Division, and pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 58, voluntary judicial performance evaluations were completed in 2008 in the Second, Fourth, Eighth and Twenty-Second Judicial Circuits. In 2008, Court Services staff processed 76 applications for membership into the CLTB and processed 14 applications for certification as an approved provider of programs for mandated CLTB Continuing Legal Education Training Programs. As of December 31, 2008, there were 828 members in the CLTB. Pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 714(g), the Division processed the removal of 20 members from the active roster of the CLTB for failure to comply with continuing education requirements. The Division assisted in the reinstatement of 27 members to the active roster of the CTLB pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 714(i). In 2008, staff coordinated 17 impartial medical examination orders pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 215(d). The Labor

Unit represented judicial employers in negotiating approximately 35 collective bargaining agreements and in advising judges and circuit clerks on matters of contract interpretation and administration.

The Division is responsible for a number of tasks and projects associated with child protection issues in the Illinois courts, including the management of the federally-funded statewide Court Improvement Program (CIP). There are currently three grant awards (general, data and training) in which the staff manages all technical, fiscal and program components. In the summer of 2008, CIP funds were used to conduct a Data Collection Analysis Needs Assessment in collaboration with the National Center for State Courts to examine the current status of the trial courts' information technology and their data collection practices with respect to juvenile abuse and neglect cases. Findings and recommendations from the assessment will guide future CIP data and technology efforts.

The Division provides a wide range of guidance and technical support services to circuit clerks and their staff. Division staff worked with the Oversight Board for Continuing Education of the Illinois Association of Court Clerks to develop educational programs for circuit clerks and their staff, and coordination of the New Clerk Mentor Program. Specific and detailed assistance was provided to the 23 circuit clerks who were newly elected in 2008. Division staff continues to prepare for a New Clerk Orientation planned for January 13 - 15, 2009. An update of the *Manual on Fines and Fees* is being developed and will be distributed electronically to Chief Circuit Judges and Circuit Clerks upon completion in 2009. The Division coordinated activities relating to implementation of the Supreme Court approved Electronic Business Initiative, providing a framework for specific statewide e-Business services in the trial courts. In 2008, Cook and DuPage Counties were approved to accept electronic pleas of guilty as stated in the Standards for accepting pleas of guilty in minor traffic and conservation offenses pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 529. Madison County was authorized to begin an electronic filing pilot program in Law and Arbitration cases in October 2008. The AOIC provided merged jury lists to 97

counties in 2008, and petit juror and grand jury handbooks were supplied to counties as needed. The Division continues to manage the Offense Code Table (OFT) to identify offenses reported through the Automated Disposition Reporting (ADR) Program. A complete, updated version of the OFT was issued in July 2008, and is currently used for ADR reporting in 83 Illinois counties.

The **Judicial Education Division** is responsible for the development of judicial education resources to ensure that Illinois judges can acquire the knowledge and skills they need to be effective jurists. In that regard, the Division provides guidance and administrative support to the Illinois Judicial Conference Committee on Education, the Supreme Court Committee on Capital Cases, the Judicial Mentor Committee and to other committees and groups convened for the purpose of developing judicial education resources.

In conjunction with the Supreme Court's adoption of continuing judicial education requirements for all Appellate, Circuit and Associate Judges, the Division coordinated development of the new 30-hour curriculum that was presented to all Illinois judges in 2008 at the Judicial Education Conference. Over 950 judges attended the two sessions of Education Conference 2008 which offered training in four core tracks: Professionalism and Ethics; Civil Law and Procedure; Criminal Law and Procedure; and, Family Law and Procedure. Six "judicial benchbooks" were prepared to address distinct areas of Illinois law, with five having been published and distributed. Over 2,700 copies of the Domestic Violence, Civil Law and Procedure, DUI/Traffic, Evidence, and Family Law and



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Procedures Benchbooks were distributed either in notebook or digital format. Pending completion in 2009 is the Criminal Law and Procedures Benchbook. The Division, in coordination with the Committee on Education, also initiated planning for the 2009 biennial Advanced Judicial Academy entitled “Judicial Decision-Making in a Democratic Society.” The Division oversaw the presentation of the annual seminar series which included two regional (two day) seminars, one mini-seminar (one day), and one specialized DUI/Traffic program. Also in 2008, the Division presented the annual New Judge Seminar and conducted a Faculty Development Workshop for judges serving as faculty for Judicial Conference programs. In addition to its work with the Committee on Education, the Division assists the Supreme Court Committee on Capital Cases in presenting two Capital Cases Seminars each year, in accordance with Supreme Court Rule 43, for Illinois judges hearing death penalty cases.

The Division also staffs the Judicial Mentor Committee and administers the Judicial Mentoring Program, which provides an experienced judicial mentor for all new Illinois judges. Lastly, the Division collaborates with other Divisions of the Administrative Office to develop customized judicial education programs on such topics as effective child protection practices, at risk youth and families in the justice system and evidence-based practices to reduce recidivism of adult and juvenile offenders.

The **Judicial Management Information Services (JMIS)** division is one of five divisions within the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC). The JMIS division is charged with providing technology to the offices and staff of the Illinois Supreme and Appellate Courts, Supreme Court supporting units and all divisions within the AOIC. The JMIS division consists of four groups organized to respond to the technology initiatives assigned by the Administrative Director.

The Hardware/Software group manages the Courts’ local and wide area networks, servers, personal computers and peripherals, computer security policies, and productivity software. The Hardware/Software group is also responsible for the installation and support of the state-provided digital recording systems in the supreme, appellate and trial courts. The Internet Services group is responsible for the design and upkeep of the Court’s website (www.state.il.us/court) as well as the use of Internet technologies that enhance the exchange of information throughout the judiciary.

The User Services group staffs JMIS’ Help Desk, is responsible for database administration, provides telecommunication services, and manages the inventory and asset tracking of IT equipment. The Applications Group designs and supports more than twenty enterprise database applications written using an Oracle or Progress database system.

In 2008, the Court continued its support of digital recording systems in the judiciary. At the Court’s direction, audio and video recordings of the Supreme Court oral arguments are posted on the Court’s website. The installation and support of digital audio recording systems in Illinois’ trial court continued and expanded into the appellate district courtrooms.

At the direction of the Administrative Director, the AOIC continued its work on planning and implementation of the electronic business initiative to provide statewide electronic filing, electronic pleas of guilty for traffic citations, and a central repository of probation and trial court case information. Using information received from a target assessment study, an infrastructure prototype, and discussions with technology-specific vendors, the e-Business initiative is expected to progress with the implementation of a database platform and infrastructure standards to govern the Court’s e-Business model.

The **Probation Services Division** provides services to Chief Judges and their probation staff in all circuits. The Probation and Probation Officer’s Act, at 730 ILCS 110/15 (1) states: “The Supreme Court of Illinois may establish a Division of Probation Services whose purpose shall be the development, establishment, promulgation, and enforcement of uniform standards for probation services in the State, and otherwise carry out the intent of this Act.” Consistent with its statutory responsibility, the mission of the Probation Division is to improve the quality, effectiveness, and professionalism of probation and detention services in Illinois. In carrying out this mission, the Division’s training, monitoring, standards-setting, and technical assistance activities extend to all aspects of the administration and operation of Illinois probation and court services departments. These activities include the administration of state reimbursement to counties for probation and detention services, review and approval of annual probation plans submitted by each department, collection and analysis of statewide probation data, administration of probation employment and compensation standards, development

and implementation of effective correctional intervention strategies for offenders on probation, monitoring and evaluation of probation programs and operations, administration of the interstate compact for probationers transferring into and out of the state, design and delivery of basic and advanced training for probation and detention personnel, and provision of technical assistance and staff support to circuit courts to improve the administration and operation of probation services in Illinois.

In 2008, the Division continued to focus on the implementation of Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) and the development of an infrastructure to sustain effective strategies and interventions to change offender behavior and improve community safety. Follow-up training and technical assistance on both juvenile and adult offender risk assessment and effective case management strategies was provided in circuits across the state. Division staff worked in concert with circuit probation staff on the planning and delivery of regional training events to meet individual department needs. Quality assurance and outcome measures continued to be Division priorities. In 2008 the Division trained probation and court service department personnel on intermediate measures to obtain data on the implementation of effective practices, such as the percentage of probationers completing court ordered treatment. Division staff also assisted departments in the review and analysis of local system data related to case processing and outcomes.

The Division sponsored over 100 training events in 2008 that served over 3500 participants. Highlights included additional Effective Casework Model training for adult officers, including the scoring of the LSI-R risk assessment; the development of a video and workbook to provide new officers with an overview of the fundamentals of EBP that was disseminated to all departments; a training of trainers event for adult probation personnel to deliver segments of the Adult Probation Officer Basic Training; and leadership training for probation and juvenile detention managers. Of particular note was an advanced session on EBP for Judges, probation managers and service providers that was held in August 2008.

In response to the passage of Public Act 95-0773, known as the Cindy Bischof Law, the Division developed and promulgated standards for the new Domestic Violence Surveillance Program and worked with multiple stakeholders to plan for the implementation of the Act in 2009. The Division also successfully implemented the Interstate Compact Offender Tracking System (ICOTS) in the Fall of 2008 which streamlines the process of transferring offenders in and out of Illinois. Four regional training events were held on the new national rules and protocols for the interstate transfer of offenders, which are designed to enhance efficiency and accountability of the Interstate Compact.



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