



ABOUT THIS REPORT

Delivering a high-performing court workforce

Part of delivering a high performance court organization is acknowledging that our employees are our greatest asset. Adapting for high performance includes helping all court employees to become actively engaged in finding ways to improve personal and organizational performance. Successfully finding and implementing better ways of doing business is a task requiring commitment from all employees throughout the court organization. It is for this reason that the Circuit Court of Lake County, Illinois Court Employee Engagement Survey focuses on employee perceptions regarding critical areas of their work lives – areas which drive employee satisfaction, commitment, and ultimately retention in the workplace.

Becoming a high performance court organization depends on attracting, developing, and retaining talented court staff and ensuring that they have a direct line of sight between the work they do and the mission of the court organization.

Assessing the court organization's strengths and challenges

Results from the 2014 Court Employee Engagement Survey offer unique insights into employees' perceptions of workplace conditions, culture, and relations with management. The results provide a useful tool for understanding how employees view the workplace and to identify where court managers might best focus their efforts. Using this survey provides insights and suggestions to court leaders and managers on how to increase employee engagement. They include the following:

- Provide a forum for receiving helpful and practical suggestions from staff members.
- Identify areas of strengths and weaknesses and target improvement programs to meet priority needs in order to enhance organizational performance.
- Help court staff members feel valued, by showing concern and respect for their views.
- Provide a benchmark against which to measure improvements.
- Enable employees to express valid concerns.

The goal is to better integrate all employees into the process of organizational improvement. Simply stated, people support what they help create.

Beyond Employee Satisfaction

Multiple indicators of performance allow organizations to better respond to the needs of various user groups, such clients, employees, managers, and funding authorities. By clarifying and measuring key outcomes relevant to the needs of individuals and groups being served, court organizations can avoid making incorrect assumptions about what activities will best serve the public. The CourTools performance measures were designed by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to support the

efforts of local jurisdictions towards improving court performance. The Circuit Court of Lake County has incorporated many of the CourTools measures into its own performance management system, including a tri-annual cycle of the Access and Fairness Survey, quarterly caseload and clearance rate measures, and continuous assessments regarding the effective use of jurors. Court employees' job performance and satisfaction are also considered key variables that affect justice system customers' perceptions and compliance, and therefore impact the overall performance of the court organization. The Court Employee Survey (CourTools Measure Nine) was developed in order to assess the thoughts and attitudes of court employees regarding the quality of their work environments and the relations between staff and management. The Circuit Court of Lake County had used the Court Employee Survey annually with all non-judicial court employees from 2006 through 2010. In 2012, the Senior Management Team of the Circuit Court of Lake County released a substantial revision to this format – The Court Employee Engagement Survey.

High-performance court organizations strive to identify those factors that influence the performance and job satisfaction of court employees. The NCSC Court Employee Survey is designed to address issues related to both employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction, but does not link those characteristics of employees' work experiences with those factors that encourage engagement in the workplace. Satisfied employees simply fulfill their obligations (i.e., their job description) because their motivation is the rational elements of the job – wages, hours, convenience to where one lives, shifts, benefits, etc. While these are all important elements, even satisfied employees are easily lured away by the enticements of another job. Employee engagement takes this one step further and moves into the emotional area. An engaged employee is willing to go the extra mile to ensure a customer has their expectations exceeded. Engaged employees deliver at a higher level of performance than satisfied employees because they have an emotional connection with the organization. They have an emotional connection based on an alignment with their core values and those of the organization. They feel good about their job, but also about where the organization is going, what the organization stands for and how it does its business.

When employees feel engaged or emotionally committed to the success of their organization, they perform at significantly higher levels. Engagement is a multi-faceted construct, which includes the workplace, relationships with co-workers and managers, communication from senior leaders, and a clear sense that the organization is effective at achieving its mission. Surveys remain the most effective means for managers to learn about how employees feel about the organization, their jobs, and their supervisors. The Court Employee Engagement Survey provides a snapshot related to employee engagement. A number of survey instruments were evaluated by the Senior Management Team, including the CourTools Employee Satisfaction Survey, the Gallop Q12, and the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey, each of which has been used for a number of years with public sector organization employees. Many of the items on these surveys overlap with one another. The senior Management Team chose a hybrid model based on those items that were: 1) important to the whole court organization, and 2) under the influence of court managers to affect change.

THE 2012 CIRCUIT COURT OF LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS COURT EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

In 2012 - our first year of conducting the Court Employee Engagement Survey - 180 Lake County court employees participated. In 2014, 209 employees participated in the survey – a response rate of 82.3%

What did the survey measure?

The survey represents a snapshot in time of the perceptions of non-judicial court employees in the Circuit Court of Lake County, Illinois. The 54-item survey includes 4 demographic questions, regarding assigned division & work unit, primary campus location, and tenure as a court employee, and 50 items that measured employees' perceptions about how effectively the organization manages the court workforce. Scalable Items: 42. The survey was grouped into seven topic areas:

Survey Clusters:

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|------------------------------------|---|
| ➤ Personal Work Experiences | 12 five-point Likert-scale items; 1 open-ended comment |
| ➤ The Work Unit | 3 five-point Likert-scale items; 1 open-ended comment |
| ➤ Immediate Supervision | 8 five-point Likert-scale items; 1 open-ended comment |
| ➤ The Court Organization | 5 five-point Likert-scale items; 1 open-ended comment |
| ➤ Court Leadership | 7 five-point Likert-scale items; 1 open-ended comment |
| ➤ Overall Job Satisfaction | 7 ten-point Likert-scale items; 3 directed open-ended items |

Embedded within each of the above clusters are five indices adopted by the Circuit Court of Lake County from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey: four Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework (HCAAF) indices and the Employee Engagement Index. The HCAAF Indices focus on those areas that organizations can utilize to transform the workplace into a high-performance arena where every employee is able to maximize his or her contribution to the mission and vision of the organization. These indices include:

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| ❖ Leadership and Knowledge Management | 7 Items |
| ❖ Results-Oriented Performance Culture | 7 Items |
| ❖ Talent Management | 3 Items |
| ❖ Job Satisfaction | 4 Items |

The Employee Engagement Index is based on a theoretical model that states that organizational conditions lead to feeling of engagement, which in turn lead to engagement behaviors (e.g., discretionary effort), and then to optimum organizational performance. The model is comprised of the three following sub-factors:

- 🚦 **Leaders Lead:** Employees' perceptions of the integrity of leadership, as well as leadership behaviors such as communication and workforce motivation.
- 🚦 **Supervisors:** The interpersonal relationship between worker and supervisor, including trust, respect, and support.
- 🚦 **Intrinsic Work Experiences:** Employees' feelings of motivation and competency related to their role in the workplace.

When were court employees surveyed?

The Administrative Office of the Circuit Court of Lake County, Illinois conducted the 2014 Court Employee Engagement Survey during the month of February 2014. All non-judicial court employees were given access to a website to respond to the survey. Paper versions of the survey were available upon request, although no requests for an alternative version were made.

Which court employees participated in the survey?

At the time the survey was administered, there were 232 non-judicial staff employed by the Circuit Court of Lake County, Illinois. Survey respondents included employees from each of the Administrative Office's six functional divisions. Court Reporters were included as part of the Division of Judicial Operations during this survey cycle. 209 court employees participated in the survey during the response window. The overall response rate was **82.3%**. The response rate is comparable (and in most cases better than) previous employee surveys administered by the Circuit Court of Lake County in recent years.

Return Rates

	2012		2014	
	<u>Number of Respondents</u>	<u>Divisional Response Rate</u>	<u>Number of Respondents</u>	<u>Divisional Response Rate</u>
➤ Division of Administrative Services / Core Support Units	13	100%	13	100%
➤ Division of Adult Probation Services	60	71.4%	62	77.5%
➤ Division of Judicial Information & Technology	9	100%	9	90.0%
➤ Division of Judicial Operations / Court Reporters (2014 Only)	22	84.6%	37	77.1%
➤ Division of Juvenile Probation & Detention Services	61	70.1%	74	83.1%
➤ Division of Psychological Services	13	100%	14	100%
➤ <i>Division Not Identified</i>	2			
➤ OVERALL RESPONSES	180		209	82.3%

2014 Court Employee Survey – Overall Performance

Percent Positive Responses – Circuit Court of Lake County

I. MY WORK EXPERIENCES – Percent Positive Responses	Circuit Court of Lake County		
	2012	2014	Change
I understand the connection between the work I do and the mission and objectives of the court organization.	93.2%	92.8%	- 0.4%
I have enough job-related information to do my job well.	81.9%	88.9%	+ 7.0%
I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of performing my job.	65.0%	71.5%	+ 6.5%
My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.	83.0%	84.5%	+ 1.5%
I know what is expected of me to be successful at doing my job.	85.9%	87.4%	+ 1.5%
I have sufficient resources to get my job done.	70.3%	74.4%	+ 4.1%
My workload is reasonable.	80.5%	73.9%	- 6.6%
I feel that the work I do is important.	92.6%	94.2%	+ 1.6%
My working conditions and surroundings enable me to do my job well.	55.4%	61.3%	+ 5.9%
I am held accountable for achieving results.	79.0%	88.8%	+ 9.8%
My talents are used well in the workplace.	67.6%	75.4%	+ 7.8%
I am able to do my best on the job every day.	76.8%	85.0%	+ 8.2%
My Work Experiences - Average Positive Responses	77.6%	81.5%	+ 3.9%

II. MY WORK UNIT – Percent Positive Responses	Circuit Court of Lake County		
	2012	2014	Change
The people I work with cooperate to get work assignments done.	68.4%	82.0%	+ 13.6%
Employees in my work unit share job knowledge with one another.	79.1%	85.0%	+ 5.9%
My co-workers care about the quality of services and programs that we provide.	75.0%	83.6%	+ 8.6%
My Work Unit - Average Positive Responses	74.2%	83.5%	+ 9.3%

III. MY IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR – Percent Positive Responses	Circuit Court of Lake County		
	2012	2014	Change
Discussions with my immediate supervisor (direct report) about my performance are worthwhile.	63.6%	81.2%	+ 17.6%
My immediate supervisor (direct report) provides me with constructive suggestions to improve my work performance.	60.8%	79.7%	+ 18.9%
My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my job performance.	69.6%	79.6%	+ 10.0%
My immediate supervisor (direct report) provides me with opportunities to demonstrate my leadership skills.	64.9%	78.8%	+ 13.9%

MY IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR (cont.)		2012	2014	Change
My immediate supervisor (direct report) supports my professional development.		64.2%	83.4%	+ 19.2%
My immediate supervisor (direct report) listens to what I have to say.		70.3%	86.5%	+ 16.2%
My immediate supervisor (direct report) treats me with respect.		77.8%	89.4%	+ 11.6%
In the past twelve months, outside of my annual performance appraisal, my immediate supervisor (direct report) has talked with me about my performance.		67.5%	85.6%	+ 18.1%
My Immediate Supervisor - Average Positive Responses		67.4%	83.0%	+ 15.6%

IV. OUR COURT ORGANIZATION – Percent Positive Responses		Circuit Court of Lake County		
		2012	2014	Change
Employees in the court organization have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to work processes and services.		71.8%	65.7%	- 6.1%
Employees in the court organization are recognized for providing high quality services.		65.7%	70.9%	+ 5.2%
Employees in the court organization are protected from health and safety risks on the job.		59.0%	65.4%	+ 6.4%
Our court organization is successful at accomplishing its mission.		72.0%	78.7%	+ 6.7%
I would recommend our court organization as a good place to work.		73.1%	83.5%	+ 10.4%
Our Court Organization - Average Positive Responses		68.3%	72.8%	+ 4.5%

V. COURT LEADERSHIP – Percent Positive Responses		Circuit Court of Lake County		
		2012	2014	Change
In our court organization, directors and managers generate high levels of motivation and commitment to the workforce.		48.3%	59.7%	+ 11.4%
Our court organization's directors and managers maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.		57.1%	63.7%	+ 6.6%
Directors and managers work well with employees of different backgrounds.		61.1%	66.0%	+ 4.9%
Directors and managers effectively communicate the objectives and priorities of the court organization.		61.1%	64.9%	+ 3.8%
Directors and managers regularly review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its objectives and strategic goals.		59.9%	58.7%	- 1.2%
Directors and managers promote communication about projects, resources, and outcomes among different work units and organizational divisions.		51.2%	61.7%	+ 10.5%
Directors and managers support collaboration across work units and divisions to accomplish organizational objectives.		55.7%	62.3%	+ 6.6%
Court Leadership - Average Positive Responses		56.5%	62.4%	+ 5.9%

VI. MY OVERALL JOB SATISFACTION – Percent Positive Responses	Circuit Court of Lake County		
	2012	2014	Change
I am satisfied with my level of involvement in the decisions that affect me at work.	53.2%	70.1%	+ 6.9%
I am satisfied with the amount of information that I receive from management about what's going on with the organization.	45.9%	65.3%	+ 19.4%
I am satisfied with the recognition that I receive at work for doing a good job.	52.9%	68.1%	+ 15.2%
I am satisfied with the quality of training that I receive for my present job.	57.2%	68.5%	+ 11.3%
I am proud that I work in the judicial system.	78.5%	90.6%	+ 12.1%
Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job?	70.2%	85.2%	+ 15.0%
Considering everything, how satisfied are you with the court organization?	62.6%	76.8%	+ 14.2%
My Overall Job Satisfaction - Average Positive Responses	60.0%	74.9%	+ 14.9%

COURT EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY Average Positive Responses	Lake County Circuit Court		
	2012	2014	Change
	67.9%	75.4%	+ 7.5%