

# Understanding Your Court System

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An Informational Guidebook  
to the  
Nineteenth Judicial Circuit

Provided by the Judges of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit of  
Lake County, Illinois

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Produced by the Administrative Office of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit  
2015





## A Message from the Circuit Judges of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit

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We in the United States are blessed to have a judicial system founded upon democratic principle. Our system of justice provides us with a peaceful and orderly method to resolve civil disputes, adjudicate criminal cases, impose punishment upon the guilty, and protect civil rights. The judges who hear cases bear the awesome duty to uphold the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Illinois and to interpret and enforce our laws in individual cases.

To meet the responsibilities imposed upon the court system, the judges and staff of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit Court, Lake County, are committed to maintaining a court system that meets the highest standards of judicial performance. We endeavor to process cases in a timely and expeditious fashion; we pledge to reach decisions in a fair and just manner; and we strive to maintain our independence while remaining accessible and accountable to those we serve.

A well informed public is essential to keeping our court system strong. The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with information about how our courts work and to give you an understanding of the duties and responsibilities of those who work in the court system. We hope that the information in this booklet will promote a better understanding of the court system and will inspire a greater public trust and confidence in the work of the judiciary.

It is the goal of those who work in the court system to provide the residents of Lake County with one of the best court systems in the country.

### *CIRCUIT JUDGES OF LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS*

*JAMES K. BOORAS  
GEORGE BRIDGES  
VALERIE BOETTLE CECKOWSKI  
PATRICIA S. FIX  
MITCHELL L. HOFFMAN  
MARK L. LEVITT  
MARGARET J. MULLEN  
JORGE L. ORTIZ  
JOHN T. PHILLIPS  
VICTORIA A. ROSSETTI  
THOMAS M. SCHIPPERS  
DANIEL B. SHANES  
CHRISTOPHER C. STARCK  
JAY W. UKENA  
DIANE E. WINTER*

## Introduction

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Laws affect our lives every day. The more we understand them, the better we can function as law-abiding citizens. Laws can protect your rights and courts can enforce your responsibilities. There are many reasons why you may be required to appear in court. Some of these circumstances may include:

- ❖ you want to be married by a judge
- ❖ you are a party to a lawsuit
- ❖ you are a witness to an accident or to a crime
- ❖ you are accused of committing a criminal offense
- ❖ you are a victim of a crime
- ❖ you are summoned to be a juror

This handbook was prepared to assist you in better understanding the Illinois judicial system, a system designed and maintained in order to protect your rights.

In the pages ahead you will discover:

- ❖ an overview of your state court system and its jurisdiction
- ❖ a directory of the officers of the court in the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit
- ❖ an in-depth view of the court operations in Lake County
- ❖ a glossary of terms commonly used in the court system

Since federal courts are an entirely different judicial system from state courts, they will not be included in this handbook, though many of the words found in the glossary section of this handbook apply to both systems.

Most state proceedings are open to the public and citizens are invited and encouraged to observe these court hearings. For more information about the court system, or a specific law related subject, schools, organizations, etc. are invited to visit our website located at <http://19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us>. You may also request additional information by calling 847.377.3600. We hope that you find this book informative and helpful.

### ***The Supreme Court***

The Illinois Supreme Court is the highest court in the state. Cases are normally channeled to the Supreme Court from the Appellate Court, however, the Supreme Court may provide by rule for direct appeal cases.

Under Illinois law, the Supreme Court has original and exclusive jurisdiction in matters involving legislative redistricting and in determining the ability of the Governor to serve in office. The Supreme Court also has discretionary original jurisdiction in cases relating to state revenue, and writs of mandamus, prohibition or habeas corpus.

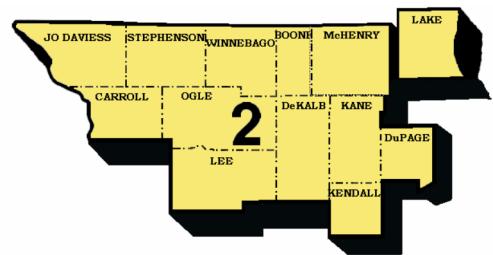
The Illinois Supreme Court is comprised of seven justices: three elected from the First Judicial District (Cook County) and one elected from each of the remaining four Judicial Districts. In the Supreme Court, a majority vote of four is required to decide a case.

### ***The Appellate Court***

The Illinois Constitution provides for an Illinois Appellate Court, which is divided into five Judicial Districts.

Cook County comprises the entire First Judicial District, with the rest of the State being divided into the remaining four Judicial Districts of “substantially equal population, each of which shall be compact and composed of contiguous counties.” The Nineteenth Judicial Circuit and seven other circuits comprise the Second Judicial District of the Appellate Court.

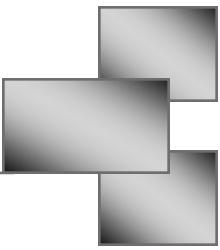
Any person has a right to appeal a decision of the Circuit Court to the Appellate Court. Attorneys present arguments before the Appellate Court as to whether an error in the application of the law had been made in the trial court. They do not retry the facts of the original trial. Three judges hear an appellate case, and a majority vote of two is requested to decide the case.



The Appellate Court affirms the trial court decision if it finds there has been no error committed in the application of the law, or if the error was so minimal that it made little difference in the outcome of the trial. The Appellate Court may reverse or remand the trial court decision if there has been substantive error in the application of the law. In this instance, the Appellate Court sends the case back to the Circuit Court with instructions for further action.

## Court Organization

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### ***The Circuit Court***

The State of Illinois is divided into twenty-four judicial circuits and 102 counties. Six circuits are single county circuits while the remaining eighteen circuits are composed of two to twelve counties per circuit. Circuit Courts, also known as trial courts, are established within each judicial circuit. Lake County is a single county circuit and is known as the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit.

Circuit Courts are courts of general jurisdiction. This means they have original jurisdiction in all matters except those certain limited situations where the Supreme Court has original jurisdiction, such as redistricting and whether the Governor may stay in or enter office.

The trial courts hear two types of cases: civil and criminal. A civil case is one, for example, involving a disagreement between two people; between people and companies; or between people and government agencies. Either a judge alone (bench trial) or a judge and jury (jury trial) will hear the case and reach a decision based on the facts that are presented. Examples of civil lawsuits include damage to property; personal injury; divorce; or breach of a written or oral contract. Monetary considerations to be paid for these damages are determined by the judge or jury.

A criminal case is one where an individual is charged with committing a crime. The state or federal government brings this action against the individual, and these cases may be tried as bench trials or as jury trials. Persons found guilty in a criminal case may be required to pay a fine; repay those who have been victims; and/or spend time in prison. Examples of criminal offenses include arson; assault; burglary; fraud; murder; and selling or using illegal drugs.

Decisions reached in the trial courts may be appealed to the Appellate Court or the Supreme Court depending upon the nature of the case. No judge of the Circuit Court has the power to review or change the decision of another.

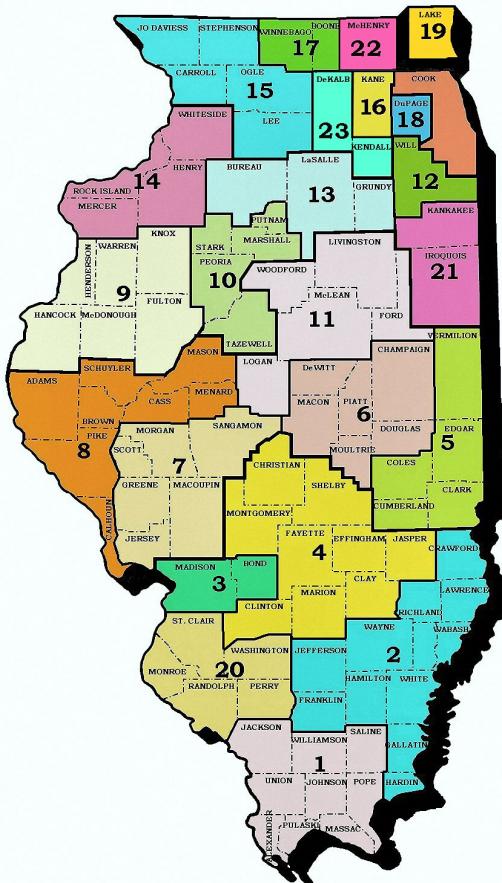
There are two classifications of judges in the Circuit Court: Circuit Judges and Associate Judges. All judges must be licensed attorneys and are considered officials of this state. The Supreme Court can assign Circuit and Associate Judges to hear all types of cases in any county in the state.

Circuit Judges are elected for a six-year term and may be retained by voters for additional six-year terms. Circuit Judges are initially elected either circuit-wide, from the county where they reside or from a subcircuit within a county, depending on the type of vacancy they are filling. Annually, the Circuit Judges elect a Chief Judge who provides administrative guidance to the entire circuit.

The Circuit Judges appoint Associate Judges on a merit basis for a four-year term. Thereafter, the Circuit Judges consider them for reappointment every four years. Associate Judges may hear all types of cases but must obtain special authorization from the Supreme Court to handle felony cases.

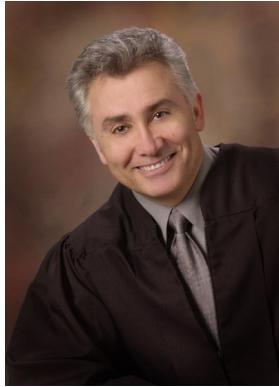
## Court Organization

The Circuit Court is part of the judicial branch of government. Financing is provided from three sources: State funding finances the Mandatory Arbitration Program and salaries and benefits of judges and court reporters. The State provides reimbursement to the counties to offset the costs of several Probation Department salaries. County revenues provide for all other financing of the Circuit Court. In order to maintain a productive organization, the judges and their staff work closely with the County Board and County Administrator's Office, in the areas of automation, personnel management, budgeting, purchasing and building maintenance.



Circuit Courts	Counties Served
Cook County	Cook
First Judicial Circuit	Williamson, Alexander, Jackson, Johnson, Massac, Saline, Pope, Pulaski and Union
Second Judicial Circuit	Jefferson, Crawford, Edwards, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Lawrence, Richland, Wabash, Wayne and White
Third Judicial Circuit	Madison and Bond
Fourth Judicial Circuit	Montgomery, Christian, Clay, Clinton, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper, Marion and Shelby
Fifth Judicial Circuit	Edgar, Clark, Coles, Cumberland and Vermilion
Sixth Judicial Circuit	Piatt, Champaign, DeWitt, Douglas, Macon and Moultrie
Seventh Judicial Circuit	Sangamon, Greene, Jersey, Macoupin, Morgan and Scott
Eighth Judicial Circuit	Adams, Brown, Calhoun, Cass, Mason, Menard, Pike and Schuyler
Ninth Judicial Circuit	McDonough, Fulton, Hancock, Henderson, Knox and Warren
Tenth Judicial Circuit	Peoria, Marshall, Putnam, Stark and Tazewell
Eleventh Judicial Circuit	McLean, Ford, Livingston, Logan and Woodford
Twelfth Judicial Circuit	Will
Thirteenth Judicial Circuit	LaSalle, Bureau and Grundy
Fourteenth Judicial Circuit	Rock Island, Henry, Mercer and Whiteside
Fifteenth Judicial Circuit	Carroll, Jo Daviess, Ogle, Lee and Stephenson
Sixteenth Judicial Circuit	Kane
Seventeenth Judicial Circuit	Winnebago and Boone
Eighteenth Judicial Circuit	DuPage
Nineteenth Judicial Circuit	Lake
Twentieth Judicial Circuit	St. Claire, Monroe, Washington, Perry and Randolph
Twenty-first Judicial Circuit	Kankakee and Iroquois
Twenty-second Judicial Circuit	McHenry
Twenty-third Judicial Circuit	DeKalb and Kendall

## Circuit Judges



### ***Judge James K. Booras***

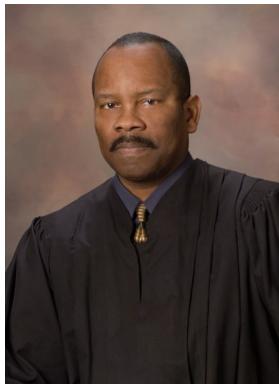
Born January 1, 1952 in Nestani-Tripolis, Greece, Judge Booras graduated from high school in 1970 in Greece. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Northern Illinois University in 1975 and a Juris Doctor degree from Lewis University College of Law in 1979. Admitted to

practice in 1979, he was appointed Associate Judge in March, 1991. Judge Booras was appointed Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court in August, 2000. He was elected Circuit Judge in the 2002 general election and took his oath of office on December 2, 2002. Judge Booras was elected Chief Judge in May 2008 and re-elected as Chief Judge for one year terms from December 1, 2008 to November 30, 2009 and December 1, 2009 to April 30, 2010.

### ***Judge Valerie Boettle Ceckowski***

Born January 11, 1959 in Waukegan, Judge Ceckowski graduated from Warren Township High School. She received her Bachelor of Science degree graduating with Honors from Southern Illinois University in 1980. In 1983, Judge Ceckowski

earned her Juris Doctor degree from Southern Illinois University School of Law. Admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1983, she was appointed Associate Judge in 1997. In February 2007, the Illinois Supreme Court appointed her as Circuit Judge. Judge Ceckowski was elected Circuit Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, Second Subcircuit in the 2008 general election and took her oath of office on December 1, 2008.



### ***Judge George Bridges***

Born February 5, 1952 in Chicago, Judge Bridges graduated from John Marshall High School in 1970. He attended National Lewis University in Evanston and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honors in 1982. He obtained his Juris Doctor degree from Chicago-Kent

College of Law in 1987 and was admitted to the Illinois Bar the same year. He served as Police Chief of Waukegan from 1988 to 1990 and again from 1993 to 1995, when he was appointed Associate Judge. In 2012, the IL Supreme Court appointed Judge Bridges as Circuit Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, First Subcircuit. He was elected Circuit Judge in the November 2014 general election and took his oath of office on December 1, 2014.

### ***Judge Patricia S. Fix***

Born September 11, 1966 in Oak Park, Illinois, Judge Fix graduated from Trinity High School in River Forest. She attended the University of Illinois where she received a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honors in 1988. Judge Fix earned a Juris Doctor degree from Loyola University School of Law in 1991, and she was admitted to practice law in Illinois in the same year. Judge Fix was elected Circuit Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, Second Subcircuit in the November 2012 general election and took her oath of office on December 3, 2012.

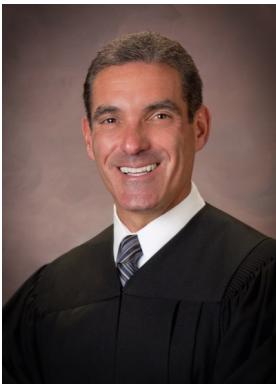


***Judge Mitchell L. Hoffman***

Born July 11, 1959, in Chicago, Judge Hoffman graduated from New Trier East High School in Winnetka. He attended Colorado College in Colorado Springs where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1981. He earned his Juris Doctor in 1984 from the University of Illinois College of Law. Admitted to practice in 1984, Judge Hoffman was appointed Associate Judge in April 2001. In January 2014, the Illinois Supreme Court appointed Judge Hoffman Circuit Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, Fourth Subcircuit, effective February 3, 2014.

***Judge Margaret J. Mullen***

Born December 3, 1955, Judge Mullen graduated from Woodland Academy in 1973. She graduated from Illinois State University in 1977. Judge Mullen attended the John Marshall Law School and served on the Editorial Board for its Law Review, graduating with Honors in 1980. She was appointed Associate Judge on March 1, 1992 and was appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court to the office of Circuit Judge on December 15, 1997. She was elected to that office in the 1998 general election and took her oath of office on December 1, 1998. Judge Mullen was elected Chief Judge from December 1, 2002 to November 30, 2003 and re-elected to serve as Chief Judge from December 1, 2003 to November 30, 2004.

***Judge Mark L. Levitt***

Born November 16, 1964 in Dayton, Ohio, Judge Levitt graduated from Highland Park High School in 1983. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1987 from the University of Illinois and earned his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Illinois College of Law in 1990.

Admitted to practice in 1990, Judge Levitt worked in the Cook County Public Defender's Office from August 1990 through the fall of 2010. He was elected Circuit Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, Fourth Subcircuit in the November 2010 general election and took his oath of office on December 6, 2010.

***Judge Jorge L. Ortiz***

Born September 24, 1962 in Chicago, Illinois, Judge Ortiz graduated from St. Ignatius High School in 1980. In 1985 he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Loyola University and in 1989 he received his Juris Doctor degree from John Marshall Law School. Admitted to practice in 1990, Judge Ortiz was appointed Associate Judge on December 2, 2002. Appointed Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court in August 2008, Judge Ortiz was elected Circuit Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, Sixth Subcircuit in November 2010 and took his oath of office on December 6, 2010.

## Circuit Judges



### ***Judge John T. Phillips***

Born July 2, 1947, Judge Phillips graduated from East Leyden High School in Franklin Park. He attended Coe College in Cedar Rapids where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1969. He earned his Juris Doctor degree with distinction from the University of Iowa

College of Law in 1972. He retired as a lieutenant colonel in 1997 after 28 years with the U.S.A.F. and Air Force Reserve where he spent most of his time as a judge advocate. Appointed Associate Judge in 1993, Judge Phillips was elected Circuit Judge and took his oath of office on December 4, 2006. Judge Phillips was elected Chief Judge from January 6, 2014 to January 4, 2015 and re-elected as Chief Judge to serve from January 5, 2015 to January 3, 2016.



### ***Judge Victoria A. Rossetti***

Born September 24, 1952 in Chicago, Judge Rossetti graduated from Regina Dominican High School, Wilmette, in 1976. Judge Rossetti attended Louis University, Missouri and obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1974 and a Masters Degree in Social Work in

1975. She earned her Juris Doctor degree from Lewis University College of Law in 1979. Admitted to practice in 1979, she was appointed Associate Judge in 1990. Appointed by the Supreme Court to the office of Circuit Judge in December 2002, Judge Rossetti was elected Circuit Judge in the 2004 general election and took her oath of office on December 6, 2004. She was elected Chief Judge from May 1, 2010 to April 30, 2011 and re-elected to serve as Chief Judge from May 1, 2011 to April 30, 2012.

### ***Judge Thomas M. Schippers***

Born July 29, 1960 in Chicago, Judge Schippers graduated from Glenbrook North High School in 1978. He received a Bachelor of Science degree from Northern Michigan University, Marquette, Michigan in 1984. Judge Schippers earned his Juris Doctor degree graduating with Honors in 1993 from Loyola University School of Law. Admitted to practice law in 1993, he was appointed as Associate Judge in March 2007. Judge Schippers was elected Circuit Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, Third Subcircuit in the November 2012 general election and took his oath of office on December 3, 2012.



### ***Judge Daniel B. Shanes***

Born June 25, 1967 in Chicago, Judge Shanes graduated from Highland Park High School in 1985. He attended the University of Iowa where he served as student body president and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1989. He earned a Juris Doctor degree in 1993 from DePaul University College of Law where he served on the writing and research staff for its Law Review. Admitted to practice in 1993, he was appointed Associate Judge in March 2007. Appointed Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court in December 2010, Judge Shanes was elected Circuit Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, Third Subcircuit in November 2012 and took his oath of office on December 3, 2012.

## Circuit Judges

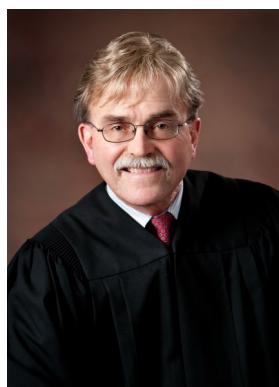


**Judge Christopher C. Starck**  
Born May 6, 1954 in Chicago, Illinois, Judge Starck graduated from Deerfield High School in 1972. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in 1976 from Carroll College in Waukesha. He attended Loyola University School of Law and received his Juris Doctor degree in

1979. Admitted to practice in 1979, he was appointed Associate Judge in April, 1989. Appointed Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court in March 2000, Judge Starck was elected Circuit Judge in the November 2002 general election. He was elected Chief Judge serving from December 1, 2004 to November 30, 2006. In April 2006, he was elected to a third year as Chief Judge thereby extending his term to November 30, 2007.

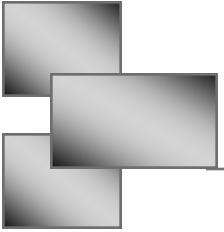
### **Judge Diane E. Winter**

Born January 15, 1956 in Geneva, Illinois, Judge Winter graduated from Glenbard North High School in 1974. She attended DePaul University where she received a Bachelor of Science degree in 1978. She earned a Juris Doctor degree from Northern Illinois University College of Law in 1981. Admitted to practice in 1981, she was appointed Associate Judge on July 7, 2000. Appointed Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court in December 2008, Judge Winter was elected Circuit Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, Fifth Subcircuit in the November 2010 general election and took her oath of office on December 6, 2010.



**Judge Jay W. Ukena**  
Born May 7, 1947 in St. Johns, Michigan, Judge Ukena graduated from Northwest Classen High School in Oklahoma City in 1965. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1969 from Lake Forest College and earned his Juris Doctor degree from John Marshall Law School in 1979.

Admitted into practice in 1979, Judge Ukena was elected Circuit Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, First Subcircuit in the 2008 general election and took his oath of office on December 1, 2008.



## *Associate Judges*

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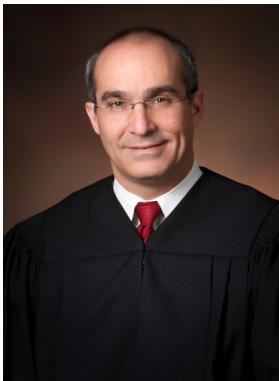
Luis A. Berrones  
Appointed October 29, 2007  
J.D., DePaul University  
College of Law, 1983



Michael B. Betar  
Appointed February 19, 2008  
J.D., Northern Illinois University  
School of Law, 1992



Christen L. Bishop  
Appointed Sept. 28, 2012  
J.D., University of Illinois  
College of Law, 1994



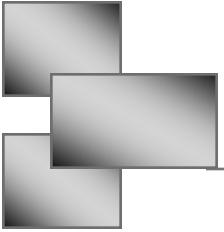
David P. Brodsky  
Appointed March 1, 2007  
J.D., Chicago-Kent  
College of Law, 1985



Raymond D. Collins  
Appointed Nov. 1, 2004  
J.D., Chicago-Kent  
College of Law, 1989



Michael J. Fusz  
Appointed Sept. 1, 2004  
J.D., Chicago-Kent  
College of Law, 1977



## *Associate Judges*

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Brian P. Hughes  
Appointed July 7, 2000  
J.D., John Marshall  
Law School, 1979



Daniel L. Jasica  
Appointed Sept. 15, 2014  
J.D., Northwestern Univ.  
School of Law, 1991



Charles D. Johnson  
Appointed Jan. 19, 2005  
J.D., Valparaiso University  
School of Law, 1986



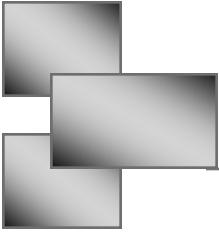
Sarah P. Lessman  
Appointed Jan. 16, 2001  
J.D., Loyola University  
School of Law, 1973



D. Christopher Lombardo  
Appointed June 16, 2014  
J.D., St. Louis University  
School of Law, 1991



Margaret A. Marcouiller  
Appointed January 4, 2010  
J.D., Loyola University  
School of Law, 1990



## *Associate Judges*

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Christopher B. Morozin  
Appointed March 1, 2010  
J.D., DePaul University  
College of Law, 1990



Veronica M. O'Malley  
Appointed October 29, 2007  
J.D., University of Illinois  
College of Law, 1990



Theodore S. Potkonjak  
Appointed April 1, 2002  
J.D., California Western  
Law School, 1982



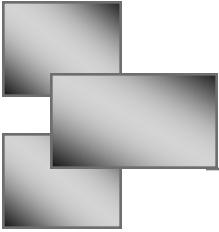
Elizabeth M. Rochford  
Appointed Dec. 27, 2012  
J.D., Loyola University  
School of Law, 1986



Helen S. Rozenberg  
Appointed Feb. 1, 1992  
J.D., University of Detroit  
Law School, 1979



Joseph V. Salvi  
Appointed January 2, 2013  
J.D., IIT-Chicago Kent  
College of Law, 1991



## *Associate Judges*

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John J. Scully  
Appointed February 24, 2009  
J.D., University of San Diego  
School of Law, 1974



James K. Simonian  
Appointed Dec. 27, 2010  
J.D., Indiana University  
School of Law, 1989



George D. Strickland  
Appointed July 12, 2006  
J.D., John Marshall  
Law School, 1983



Christopher R. Stride  
Appointed August 22, 2005  
J.D., Valparaiso University  
School of Law, 1991



Donna-Jo Vorderstrasse  
Appointed March 9, 2009  
J.D., Washington University  
School of Law, 1984

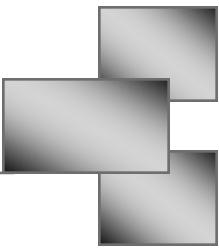


Nancy Schuster Waites  
Appointed Jan. 18, 2005  
J.D., John Marshall  
Law School, 1986

# ***Criminal Charges and Trials***

## ***Your Rights in Court***

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If you are arrested or charged with a crime, you have certain constitutional rights. It is often wise to consult with an attorney before waiving any of these rights.

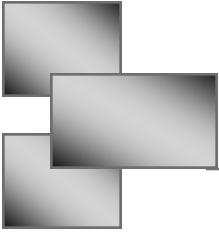
### **What are these rights?**

#### **Criminal Cases**

- ❖ You have the right to remain silent and to refuse to answer any questions about the event asked by police officers or other officials;
- ❖ You have the right in criminal prosecutions to have a lawyer represent you; if you cannot afford to pay for a lawyer, you can ask the judge to appoint one for you;
- ❖ You have the right to a public and speedy trial, either by a jury or by a judge alone;
- ❖ You are not required to prove your innocence; instead, you are presumed innocent of any crime until the State's Attorney presents sufficient evidence to a judge or a jury to prove your guilt beyond a reasonable doubt;
- ❖ You are entitled to testify in your own defense if you want to, but you cannot be forced to testify;
- ❖ You or your attorney may cross-examine any person who testifies against you;
- ❖ You are allowed to bring in witnesses, and the judge can order any person you need as a witness to appear in court;
- ❖ If you are found guilty, you have the right to appeal. You also have the right to make a statement or present additional information to the judge at the time of sentencing. The judge then decides the sentence.

#### **Civil Cases**

- ❖ Violation of private rights and duties are considered civil cases. Suits can be brought for such matters as the recovery of damages from negligence, breach of contract, or violation of civil rights. The court does not appoint attorneys in civil matters; however, there are legal aid services available for individuals who cannot afford a lawyer to represent them in civil matters.



## *Administrative Office of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit*

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Robert A. Zastany  
Executive Director

*Administrative Office of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit*  
**847.377.3600**

The Administrative Office of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit relieves the judges, specifically, the Chief Judge, of the routine, non-judicial functions necessary to the efficient operation of the Courts. Conceived in the mid-1970's as a pilot program in the State of Illinois, the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit's Administrative Office has grown in size, service, and support to the court and the community. Currently, the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit has fifteen Circuit Judges and twenty-four Associate Circuit Judges.

The Executive Director of the Administrative Office is charged with the responsibilities of personnel management, fiscal coordination, court automation planning, calendar coordination, jury management, legislative monitoring for the Court, space and equipment management, public information and report coordination, and interdepartmental and intergovernmental relations. The Executive Director and his professional staff are appointed by the Circuit Judges and work directly under the supervision of the Chief Judge.

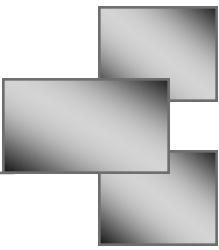
The Administrative Office is structured so that all administrative functions operate within a unified

system, providing better coordination, communication and efficiencies. This structure also enhances the capacity of the court to be more flexible and adaptable in providing quality service and programs to our constituents while meeting the ever-changing needs of the community.

The current structure of the Administrative Office was adopted by the Court in 1988, refined in 1995 and again in 2008. Headed by the Executive Director, it is comprised of six separate divisions: Administrative Services, Adult Probation, Judicial Information, Judicial Operations, Juvenile Detention and Probation Services, and Psychological Services.

The Administrative Office is also involved in assisting the judiciary in planning to meet the administrative challenges of the future. Statistical data and information relative to judicial, non-judicial and financial operations are collected and analyzed in the preparation of investigative studies into the methods, systems and activities of the Court. These studies are used to evaluate the effectiveness of current programs and propose alternatives for the consideration of the Court.

# ***Adult Probation, Juvenile Detention and Probation Services and Psychological Services Law Library***



***Adult Probation*** 847.377.4504  
***Juvenile Detention and Probation Services*** 847.377.7800  
***Psychological Services*** 847.377.4504

The Executive Director of the Circuit also supervises the operations of Adult Probation, Juvenile Detention and Probation Services and the Psychological Services Division.

Adult Probation is responsible to the Court for investigating and supervising offenders and alleged offenders. These services are provided by staff in the Domestic Violence., DUI, Gender Specific, General Field, Intensive Probation Supervision (IPS), Presentence Investigation, Pretrial, Public Service, Sex Offender, Specialty Courts, and Support Units.

## **Juvenile Detention and Probation Services**

provides supervision, intervention and prevention services to delinquent minors and their families as well as secure custody for up to 48 youth in the Hulse Detention Center. These services are designed to curtail delinquent behavior and halt the potential development of an adult criminal career.

Psychological Services conducts psychological evaluations for the Courts. It provides individual, family, and group psychotherapy to adult and juvenile probation clients. It also monitors community resources available for juvenile and adult probation clients and coordinates referrals for those services.

## ***Law Library***

847.377.2800

Pursuant to Illinois state law, the County Board of any county may establish and maintain a county law library (55 ILCS 5/5-39001). The facilities of such libraries are available to the public, professionals and pro se litigants when the courthouse is open. Law libraries are self-sustaining through user fees which are collected when civil cases are filed.

Lake County's William D. Block Memorial Law Library has seven computer workstations dedicated to public use. Online resources include word processing software, spreadsheet software, on-line legal research, and general Internet access. Patrons may print from the library's computers at a cost of 10 cents per page. The law library also has an incoming and outgoing fax service at a cost of \$1.00 per page.

The library collection includes over 20,000 items in

print, which includes Illinois case law and statutes, federal statutes, U.S. Supreme Court cases, legal encyclopedias, digests, dictionaries, self-representation materials, legal form books, local law school journals, and legal magazines and newspapers.

The Law Library also houses the Illinois JusticeCorps program at the Lake County Courthouse. The Illinois JusticeCorps program serves visitors to the Lake County Courthouse by escorting people to courtrooms and other court-related facilities and helping people complete basic court forms. JusticeCorps members do not provide legal advice, but are able to answer general and procedural questions, connect patrons with web-based resources, and make referrals to legal aid and social services.

The Center for Self-Representation offers information, forms, and practice materials for people who want to represent themselves in Court. The Center for Self-Representation is located in the William D. Block Memorial Law Library. The Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. There are no fees to access the resources but the fees for photocopying, printing, and faxing materials are the same as the Law Library.

The Center for Self-Representation is staffed by a law librarian, senior clerk, and a paralegal available to provide information and help users access print and electronic resources. The staff cannot give legal advice.

There are seven public computers available for the public to use. Online access is available to the Center for Self-Representation's website, the Lake County Circuit Clerk's website, and other law related sites such as Illinois Legal Aid. Patrons can also use the computers to draft pleadings for the Court.

Visitors to the Center have access to the same resources attorneys can use, including form books, and print materials on Illinois law and procedures. The Center distributes ready to use court forms from the Lake County Circuit Clerk's office and can provide form templates from legal form books.

Much of the Center for Self-Representation information is available 24 hours a day online at [http://19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us](http://19thcircircuitcourt.state.il.us).

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### **HELPING YOU HELP YOURSELF**

#### **Services Available:**

User-Friendly Forms & Instructions

Staff Assistance

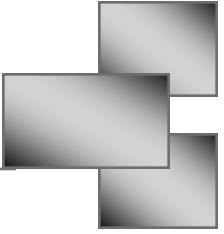
Self-Help Website

Public Access to Computers

Legal Research Materials

Procedural Information

## Public Defender



### Public Defender

847.377.3360

The Sixth Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees the right of every American “in criminal prosecution...to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.” The United States Supreme Court has interpreted this to mean that if a person cannot afford to hire a lawyer to defend him or her in a criminal case, then a lawyer will be provided at public expense. This is true in every case where the accused faces the possibility of a jail or prison sentence.

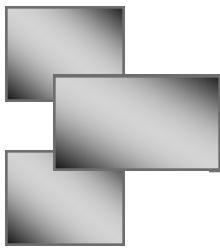
In Lake County, this right to counsel is provided through a Public Defender’s Office. The Public Defender is appointed by the Circuit Judges and is paid by the county. The Public Defender employs a

staff of dedicated professional lawyers, investigators and clerical personnel to protect the rights of persons accused of felony, misdemeanor, juvenile or serious traffic offenses.

Individuals may receive the services of the Public Defender’s Office if found financially eligible by the Court. In addition, the Public Defender may be appointed to represent respondents in mental health commitment cases, children in abuse or neglect cases, and those accused in paternity cases.

Unless there is a dismissal or acquittal, a modest fee may be recovered from the client at the termination of the case, based upon what the client can afford.





## *The Jury System*

847.377.4600

Jury service is a vital function of democracy and is one of the most important duties of citizenship. It will give the juror an opportunity to see the court in action and to participate in the fundamental democratic process.

The right of trial by jury is guaranteed by the Illinois Constitution and by the United States Constitution. This is the right to have the facts in controversy determined by a unanimous verdict of impartial jurors acting under the direction of the judge.

Jury lists in Lake County are made up of names selected from holders of Illinois Driver's Licenses, Illinois State Identification Cards, Illinois Disabled Person's Identification Cards, registered Lake County voters, and names drawn from unemployment records. These names are entered into a computer. When a panel of jurors is needed, the computer is used to select a number of names at random. Juror summonses are then sent to those persons whose names are drawn, and they may be called into court to serve on one of the following types of juries:

*Jury Trials* - - Persons who have been summoned and chosen to sit on a criminal or civil jury will listen to testimony and evidence presented and then render a verdict. Civil juries consists of six selected persons while twelve people serve as jurors in criminal cases. In most cases, two additional jurors are selected as alternates.

*Grand Jury* - - Grand Jury is so named because it is comprised of a greater number of persons (sixteen), than a petit jury. Twelve of the sixteen jurors must be present in order to conduct business. Grand jurors do not hear actual trials but are sworn to hear evidence presented by the prosecutor, or State's Attorney, and, based upon this evidence, determine whether the accused should stand trial.

Approximately ninety percent of all jury trials in the world take place in the United States. Those who have served as jurors often express feelings of pride and respect for our system of justice, along with an appreciation of the chance to be part of the judicial process. Deciding the fate of the accused in a criminal trial or resolving a dispute between parties in a civil trial can be a difficult task, but the process of reaching a verdict is a unique lesson in democracy.

In published reports, Lake County continues to be a leader in disposition of cases.

The opportunity to serve on a jury in the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit allows you to become a better informed and more responsible citizen. It also allows you to learn more about your court system and the law. Jurors receive a small stipend as established by law.

◆ “Those who have served as jurors often express feelings of pride and respect for our system of justice...”

*Circuit Judge Victoria A. Rossetti*

## Court Interpreters

A court interpreter is appointed when the Court determines that the person cannot understand the English language and is incapable of being understood by the Court, counsel and jury. The Court then enters an order appointing an interpreter who is sworn to interpret and translate all questions and answers directed by the Court and expressed by the defendant.

Whenever a hearing impaired person is a party to any legal proceeding of any nature, or is a juror or witness, the Court is required to appoint a qualified interpreter of sign language to interpret the proceedings. In the case of a hearing impaired juror, the interpreter shall be available throughout the actual trial and may accompany and communicate with such juror

throughout any period during which the jury is sequestered or engaged in its deliberations. Interpreter fees are determined by the Court and paid out of the county's general funds.

Spanish is the language requested most often throughout the State, as well as in Lake County; requests for sign interpreters rank second, with Polish ranking third.

Lake County has three full-time and two part-time Spanish interpreters. In addition, the Administrative Office of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit will contract for foreign language interpreters when the Court determines that one is required.

## Official Court Reporters

The Official Court Reporter (OCR) makes a stenographic report of the evidence and all other proceedings presented in the trial court. The primary function of an OCR is to take down verbatim record of all audible utterances in a court proceeding, without altering or editing the transcript. In an average day, an OCR may write anywhere from 30,000 to 50,000 words.

The majority of court reporters in the country today utilize computer aided transcription (C.A.T.). The strokes from the "stenotype" machine are electronically recorded on tape or diskette and then fed into a microcomputer where the reporter has stored a "dictionary." The "dictionary" is a list of "stenotype" strokes matched with their English equivalent. The computer transmits the translation directly into the terminals on the judge's bench and attorney tables in the courtroom enabling them to see and read the transcript as it is being spoken.

Instant translation is not the only benefit of the C.A.T. system. Reporters use this process, also known as "real time captioning," in court cases involving hearing-impaired participants. Through this

technology the court reporter's symbols are translated into English on the computer screen allowing the deaf or hearing impaired person to read the testimony as it is being spoken in the court proceeding.

Lake County is authorized to employ one court reporting services supervisor and 21 official court reporters.

Qualifications for official court reporters in Illinois include: a Certified Shorthand Reporters Certificate issued by the Department of Professional Regulation and the passing of a proficiency examination administered through the State of Illinois Court Reporting Services. In order to be certified in Illinois a court reporter must attain a 95% accuracy rate of 225 words per minute for a set period of time and demonstrate knowledge of legal and medical terminology and court procedure.

These qualifications protect the public by ensuring that all court reporters meet minimum professional standards. A total of approximately 65,000 pages of transcript are produced annually by Lake County reporters.

Kids' Korner is the children's waiting room in the Lake County Courthouse. It provides a fun and structured environment for children ages 2 through 12 who are in the courthouse to testify in court or whose parents or guardians are conducting court business. Parents can be assured that their children are secure and protected from inappropriate adult business or behavior.

Kids' Korner provides a safe haven for approximately 200 children a month who are involved in the court system. Kids' Korner has provided temporary care for over 45,000 children since opening their doors in 1994.

Prior to opening Kids' Korner, children in the courthouse were often left unattended while their parents conducted court business. These children were at risk of being adversely impacted by court proceedings affecting themselves or their families.

While the primary focus of Kids' Korner is to protect the children, the program is also of great benefit to the operation of the court system. With fewer children present in the hallways and courtrooms of the courthouse, court time and resources can be utilized more effectively.

Kids' Korner "Give-A-Book" project continues to be one of its most popular success stories. Each child cared for in Kids' Korner chooses a special book to take home. These books are given in an effort to encourage parents to read to their children and to promote a life long love of reading in children. New and gently used books for this project are provided through donations.

Our holiday "Give-An-Animal-A-Home" project takes place in the months of December and January. Each child cared for in Kids' Korner chooses a new stuffed animal to give a new home. This can be a stressful time in these children's lives and this holiday project brings a smile to many young faces. New stuffed animals for this project are also provided by donations.

The success of the "Give-A-Book" and "Give-An-Animal-A-Home" projects rely on individual and community generosity and commitment to the children of Lake County.

Kids' Korner also has a special quilt project - several community quilting/crocheting groups kindly donate handmade quilts/blankets to give to the children we care for to provide the extra comfort and security the children are needing at this time in their young lives.

Both parents and children attest to the success of Kids' Korner - parents through their positive comments and children through their joyful play. While at Kids' Korner, the children are made to feel safe and secure. They receive sustained and encouraging adult contact and guidance through trained staff and volunteers at a stressful time in their young lives. Kids' Korner is a very special way the Lake County Courthouse shows its concern for children and families.

Kids' Korner is located on the first floor near the Court Administration Office in the County Courthouse Building. There is no fee for this service.

## Glossary of Terms

### A

**Acquit** - to find a defendant not guilty in a criminal trial.

**Affidavit** - a written statement of fact, signed and sworn to before a person having authority to administer an oath.

**Affirm** - the declaration of an Appellate Court that the judgment of a lower court is correct and should stand.

**Allegation** - the assertion, declaration, or statement of a party to a cause made to the court in a pleading, stating what that party expects to prove.

**Answer** - a written statement of the defendant's case, wherein the plaintiff's claims are admitted or denied.

**Appeal** - process by which a case is brought from one court to a higher court for review.

**Appearance** - the formal proceeding by which a defendant submits to the jurisdiction of the court.

**Appellate Court** - a court that reviews matters brought before it on appeal from lower courts, and having the authority to affirm or reverse lower court decisions.

**Arraignment** - in criminal cases, a court hearing where the defendant is advised of the charges and asked to plead guilty or not guilty.

**Associate Judge** - appointed on a merit basis by the Circuit Judges for a four-year term. They may hear all cases except felonies, unless certified by the Illinois Supreme Court. All judges must be licensed attorneys and are considered officials of this state.

### B

**Bail** - an amount of money determined by the judge and posted with the court as security to ensure the defendant's appearance in court at a specific time.

**Burden of Proof** - obligation of a party to prove facts at issue in the trial of a case. In criminal cases, the

state has the burden of proof.

### C

**Cause** - a suit, litigation or action - civil or criminal.

**Challenge for Cause** - excusing a juror from a trial for a stated, specific reason, such as the juror knows the parties or witnesses in a case. Each side has an unlimited number of challenges for cause.

**Chambers** - a judge's private office.

**Charge** - formal accusation against an individual suspected of having committed a criminal offense. It is not evidence.

**Chief Judge** - Presiding or Administrative Judge of the circuit.

**Circuit Clerk** - this elected official is responsible for maintaining the court records, issuing summons and subpoenas, collecting fines, and carrying out other business activities which support the Circuit Court.

**Circuit Judge** - a member of the judiciary who is elected to a six-year term of office. He or she must be a licensed attorney. Every six years Circuit Judges must run for retention on a circuit-wide basis, or from the county where they reside or from a subcircuit within a county. They may hear all types of cases with statewide jurisdiction.

**Civil Case** - when one person, group of persons, or corporation sues another for personal injury, damages to property, or failure to complete a contract.

**Common Law** - the system of laws originally developed in England which are based upon court decisions and customs and usages, rather than on a body of written laws or statutes.

**Complaint (Civil)** - initial document filed by the plaintiff in a civil case stating the claims against the defendant.

**Complaint (Criminal)** - the formal accusation charging that a person has committed an offense. It is not evidence.

**Continuance** - adjournment of the proceedings in a case from one day or term to another.

**Counterclaim** - claim presented by a defendant against the plaintiff following the claim of the plaintiff.

**Court Administrator** - manager of the administrative, nonjudicial affairs of a court, such as budgets, personnel, and court schedules.

**Court Officer** - a deputy of the Lake County Sheriff assigned to a courtroom to preserve order as well as provide security for those in attendance.

**Court Reporter** - the reporter records and transcribes a verbatim record, that is, a word by word record of all testimony and all other statements made during court proceedings.

**Courtroom Clerk** - a member of the Circuit Clerk's staff who keeps the files for the court and maintains the judge's trial and motion schedules.

**Criminal Case** - this is an action brought in the name of the State of Illinois, contending that a crime has been committed.

**Cross-Examination** - questioning of a witness during a trial, or during the taking of a deposition, by the party opposed to the one who produced the witness.

## D

**Damages** - compensation recovered in the courts by a person who has suffered loss, detriment, and/or injury to his person, property, or rights through the unlawful act or negligence of another.

**De Novo** - (*Latin for Anew!*) A trial de novo is a completely new trial held as if the original trial had never taken place.

**Defendant** - in a criminal case this is the person

charged with committing a crime. In a civil case it is the person(s) or corporation from which the plaintiff wants to collect damages.

**Deposition** - testimony taken under oath and recorded in an authorized place outside the courtroom.

**Direct Examination** - questioning of a witness in a trial, or at the taking of a deposition, by the party for whom the witness is testifying.

**Discovery** - The pre-trial proceedings where a party to an action may be informed about (or "discover") the facts known by other parties or witnesses.

**Due Process** - the constitutional guarantee that an accused person receives a fair and impartial trial.

## E

**Evidence** - any form of proof presented by a party for the purpose of supporting its arguments before the court.

**Exhibit** - the paper, document or other physical object received by the court as evidence during a trial.

## G

**Grand Jury** - a group of citizens sworn to inquire into crime and bring accusations (indictments) against suspected criminals.

## H

**Habeas Corpus** - (*Latin for You have the body!*) A writ of habeas corpus required a person be brought before a judge. It is usually used to direct an official to produce a prisoner so that the court may determine if such a person has been denied his liberty without due process.

**Hearsay** - evidence based on what a witness has heard someone else say rather than what the witness has personally experienced.

## Glossary of Terms

**Hung Jury** - a jury that cannot agree on a verdict.

### I

**Impeachment of Witness** - an attack on the credibility of a witness.

**Inadmissible** - that which, under the established rules of evidence, cannot be admitted or received in court.

**Indictment** - written accusation of a grand jury, charging that a person or business committed a crime.

**Indigent** - meeting certain standards of poverty, qualifying a criminal defendant to a public defender.

**Information** - an accusation of some criminal offense, in the nature of an indictment, that is presented by a State's Attorney instead of a Grand Jury.

### J

**Judgment** - a final determination by a court of the rights of the parties in an action.

### M

**Mandatory Arbitration** - Process whereby cases filed in the Trial Court have an expedited hearing by a panel of arbitrators (attorneys trained and certified, acting with limited authority) instead of a Judge/jury. In Illinois, Circuits/Counties must be authorized by the Illinois Supreme Court to enact an arbitration program.

**Mitigating Circumstances** - those which do not constitute a justification or excuse for an offense but which may be considered as reasons for reducing the penalties imposed.

**Mistrial** - erroneous or invalid trial. Usually declared because of prejudicial error in the proceedings, a hung jury, or when the proceedings must be interrupted.

**Motions** - oral or written requests made by a party to an action and brought before a judge prior to, during or after a trial.

### N

**Negligence** - absence of ordinary care.

### O

**Objection** - statement by an attorney in opposition to testimony, or the attempted admission of evidence, and opposing its consideration as evidence.

**Overruled** - 1) The court's denial of any motion or objection. 2) To overturn or void a decision in a prior case.

### P

**Parties** - persons, corporations, or associations who have brought a lawsuit or who are defendants.

**Peremptory Challenge** - the right to excuse a juror without specifying a reason. Each side has a limited number of peremptory challenges, after which the attorney is required to furnish a reason.

**Perjury** - criminal offense of making false statements under oath.

**Petit Jury** - a group of citizens sworn to hear testimony and determine facts in a trial.

**Plaintiff** - in a civil case the person(s) or corporation asserting a claim for damages allegedly sustained as result of the conduct of the defendant.

**Plea** - statement made by the defendant as to his/her guilt or innocence to the charge made against him or her.

**Plea-Bargaining** - process in which the accused and the prosecutor negotiate a mutually satisfactory disposition of the case. Such bargains are not binding on the court.

**Pleadings** - formal written allegations by the parties of their respective claims and defenses for the judgment of the court.

**Preponderance of Evidence** - a standard of judging evidence by which the judge or the jury determines whether an issue of fact is more probable than not probable.

**Probable Cause** - reasonable cause; having more evidence by which the judge or the jury determines whether an issue of fact is more probable than not probable.

**Probation** - set of conditions and regulations under which a person found guilty of a criminal offense is allowed to remain in the community, generally under the supervision of a probation officer and custody of the court.

**Pro Se** - Latin meaning "*for himself; in his own behalf; in person*" or as in appearing for oneself. To act as one's own attorney in a civil or criminal matter.

### R

**Redirect examination** - follows cross-examination and is exercised by the party who first examined the witness.

**Remand** - a disposition by an appellate court which sends a case back to the trial court for further proceedings.

### S

**Statute** - the law as enacted by the legislature.

**Statute of Limitations** - law that specifies the time within which judicial action must be taken.

**Stipulation** - voluntary agreement by the attorneys and parties on opposite sides of a case regarding any matter in the trial proceedings, so as to eliminate the need for proof of the matter.

**Subpoena** - a document issued by the Court to compel a witness to appear and give testimony or to procure documentary evidence in a proceeding.

**Sustain** - when the Court allows an objection to testimony or evidence.

### T

**Testimony** - the sworn evidence presented by witnesses.

**Transcript** - the official record of proceedings in a trial, prepared by the court reporter.

### V

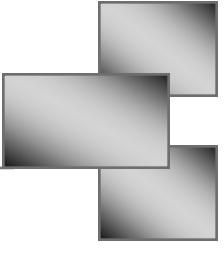
**Venire** - the entire panel of citizens called for jury service from which a jury will be picked for a particular case.

**Venue** - a specific geographical area in which a court with jurisdiction may hear a case.

**Verdict** - formal decision made by a jury, read before the court and accepted by the judge.

**Voir Dire** - (*French for 'to speak the truth'*) The process by which citizens are questioned before being selected to hear evidence as jurors.





## ***Marriage Information Line***

The court sponsors a *Marriage Information Line* to assist in answering questions concerning *Marriages by a Judge*. Please call 1.847.377.3999. Selections are recorded in both English and Spanish.

***Additional copies are available from:***

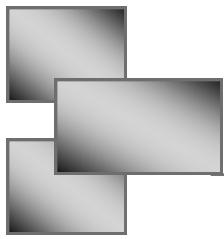
Administrative Office of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit  
18 North County Street  
Waukegan, Illinois 60085-4359  
847.377.3600

Or by downloading from our Web Page:

[http://19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us](http://19thcircircuitcourt.state.il.us)

**Other Publications available from the  
Nineteenth Judicial Circuit Court**

Judicial Speakers Bureau Brochure  
Understanding Your Court System  
Learning the Law Coloring Book, Volume 1  
Learning More About the Law Coloring Book, Volume 2  
Learning About Judges Coloring Book, Volume 3  
Learning About Judges (English/Spanish), Volume 4  
Small Claims Booklet  
Probate Court Booklet  
Guardianship of Minors Brochure  
Glossary of Terms  
Jury Service in Lake County  
Jury Service: Information for Employers  
Gang Alert: Information on Gangs  
Residential Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation Program Brochure



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Administrative Office of the  
Nineteenth Judicial Circuit  
18 North County Street  
Waukegan, Illinois 60085-4359

