2025 ANNUAL REPORT

17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT

WINNEBAGO COUNTY *and* BOONE COUNTY

*State of Illinois*




# 2025
# ANNUAL REPORT

Trial Court Administration Office
Winnebago County Courthouse
400 West State Street, Room 215
Rockford, Illinois 61101

www.17thcircuit.illinoiscourts.gov

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# Message from the Chief Circuit Judge

**The 17th Circuit Court, located in northern Illinois, proudly serves the citizens of Boone and Winnebago County.**

The year of 2025 marked a period of both accomplishment and reaffirmation of the court's core mission: delivering fair, efficient and accessible justice to the people of Boone and Winnebago Counties.

Throughout 2025, the court celebrated tangible successes in its problem-solving court programs, including milestone graduation ceremonies. The circuit also received national recognition through its designation as a Domestic Violence Mentor Court, affirming its leadership role in addressing complex and sensitive cases with expertise and compassion.

Importantly, 2025 saw institutional advancements. The renovation of the Law Library and Self-Help Legal Center reflects an investment in modern, accessible facilities, while the Juvenile Detention Center's federal accreditation signals adherence to high standards in the care and oversight of youth.

As the court enters 2026, it does so with both momentum and purpose. Priority areas include enhancing efficiency, strengthening collaboration across counties, and maintaining the circuit's longstanding tradition of excellence. With dedicated judges, staff, and partners, the 17th Judicial Circuit enters 2026 prepared not only to meet those needs, but to lead with integrity, innovation, and service.



**HON. BRENDAN A. MAHER**

**Chief Circuit Judge**

In Illinois, a chief judge is a circuit judge elected by a majority of their fellow circuit judges to serve as the chief judicial officer of their circuit. The chief judge has general administrative authority within their circuit, and is subject to the Supreme Court's overall administrative authority.

# 2025 Year in *Review*

## Achievements

Among a multitude of individual and collective achievements, highlighted accomplishments for 2025 include the following:

- Karina's Law successfully implemented through the creation of reliable procedures for court ordered removal of guns in Order of Protection cases.
- As a DV Mentor Court, we assisted courts in Wisconsin, Oregon, New York and Sangamon County develop their court response to DV.
- Winnebago County conducted our 19th County Veterans Court Graduation Ceremony, 55th Drug Court Graduation Ceremony and 36th TIP Court Graduation. Boone County conducted our 22nd Drug Court Graduation.
- Awarded over $1.4M in grants to serve our most at-risk defendants through our Problem-Solving Courts, including over $200k in Boone.
- Awarded over $150k in grants to fund initiatives advanced by the Domestic Violence Coordinated Courts.
- Secured over $440k in technology reimbursements and over $520k in language access reimbursements in Winnebago County.
- Juvenile Detention Center became the 4th out of 15 juvenile detention facilities in the state to receive federal PREA certification.
- Groundbreaking and construction started on the new Family Court Center in Winnebago County.
- Groundbreaking and constructed on started at the Boone County Courthouse.
- Winnebago County Law Library refurbished to include new computer terminals and updated furniture.
- Winnebago County Jury Assembly and Jury Rooms freshened up with some "elbow grease".
- Conducted 21st National Adoption Day Ceremony, finalizing 467 adoptions over the years.

**2025: Implementing key court facility upgrades to promote a respectful and dignified environment.**

## Looking Forward

IIn 2026, the Circuit looks forward to opening the Winnebago County Family Courts Center, and enjoying the renovations at the Boone County Courthouse. The Circuit will also continue forging forward with acquiring new waiting area furniture for the Winnebago County Courthouse.

# JUDGES OF THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT

## CIRCUIT JUDGES

Hon. John S. Lowry
Chief Circuit Judge & Supervising Judge of the Winnebago County Juvenile Courts Division

Hon. Joseph P. Bruscato
Presiding Judge of the Family Division & Domestic Violence Coordinated Court

Hon. Lisa R. Fabiano
Presiding Judge of the Civil Division

Hon. Gwyn Gulley
Supervising Judge of Arbitration

Hon. Janet R. Holmgren
Presiding Judge of Juvenile Courts Division & the Problem-Solving Courts Division

Hon. Brendan A. Maher
Presiding Judge of the Criminal Division

Hon. Nicholas O. Meyer

Hon. Scott Robinson

Hon. C. Robert Tobin
Presiding Judge of Boone County

Hon. Kathryn E. Zenoff
Assigned to the 4th District Appellate Court

## ASSOCIATE JUDGES

Hon. Heidi E. Agustsston

Hon. Stephen E. Balogh

Hon. Ronald A. Barch
Supervising Judge of Foreclosure Mediation

Hon. Erin B. Buhl

Hon. Jennifer Clifford

Hon. John T. Gibbons
Administrative Associate Judge

Hon. Donna R. Honzel

Hon. Francis M. Martinez

Hon. Philip J. Nicolosi

Hon. Steven L. Nordquist

Hon. Scott Paccagnini

Hon. Amy Peterman

Hon. Todd A. Ramlow

Hon. Debra Schafer

Hon. Donald P. Shriver

Hon. Ryan Swift

Hon. Tamika Walker

# Administrative Staff

**Winnebago County Courthouse**
400 West State Street, Room 215
Rockford, Illinois 61101

**Phone :**
815-319-4806

**Website :**
17thcircuit.illinoiscourts.gov

**Thomas R. Jakeway**
Trial Court Administrator

Michael Smith
Deputy Court Administrator

Emily Behnke
Deputy Court Administrator

Kimberly Ackmann
Deputy Court Administrator

Nikki Ticknor
Deputy Court Administrator

Kelly Rohrer
Circuit Court Operations Manager

Kristine Gibbons
Boone County Court Operations Assistant

Kathleen L. Fink
Executive Assistant to the Chief Circuit Judge

Kimberly Petrus
Judicial Assistant

Kelsey Schorsch
Judicial Assistant

Toni Hagerman
Judicial Assistant

Kimmy Furlanetto
Judicial Assistant

Angelica King
Administrative Secretary

Monica Minnis
Winnebago County Language Access Facilitator

Margaret Mujica- Ruiz
Boone County Language Access Facilitator

Shawn McLain
Data Analyst / IT Liaison

Melissa Rader
Problem-Solving Courts Supervisor

Catherine Dredge
PSC Coordinator

Zachery Rose
PSC Coordinator

Emily Armendariz
Wellness Court Liaison

Taylor Sagona
Case Docket Coordinator, DVCC

Haley Borchman
DVAC & Mentor Court Coordinator

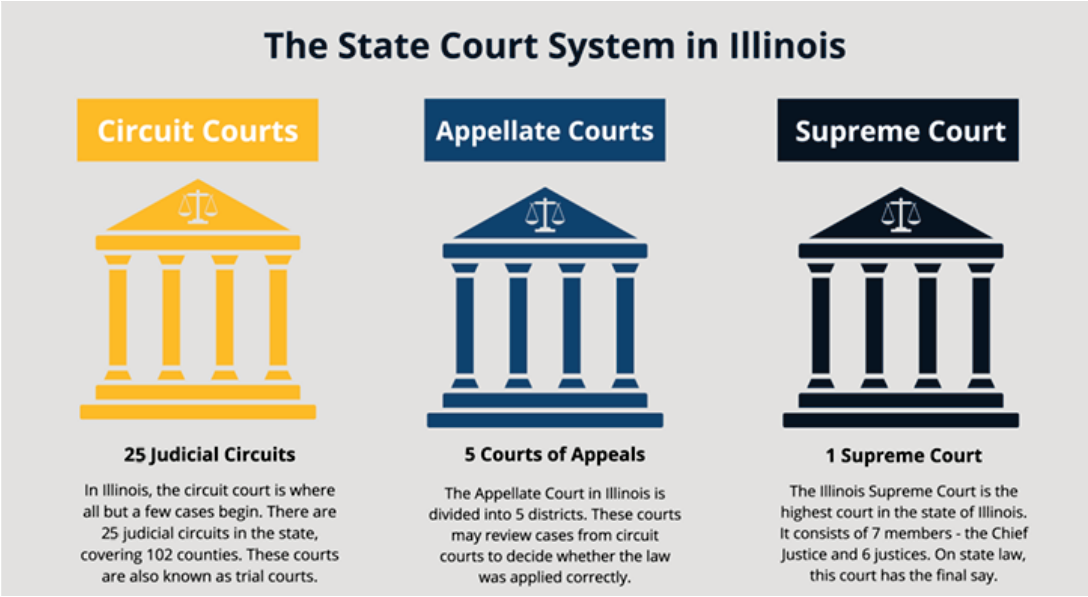
Alysia Maggio
FVCC Coordinator

Shannon Seanor
Improving Criminal Justice Response to Domestic Violence Grant Manager

# About the Seventeenth Circuit

The Illinois Constitution of 1970 (Article 4) provides for a unified, three tiered judiciary consisting of Circuit Courts, Appellate Courts, and a Supreme Court. The highest court in the State is the Illinois Supreme Court. The Illinois Appellate Court is the second tier of the judiciary. The Appellate Court is divided into five Judicial Districts. The Seventeenth Judicial Circuit is part of the Fourth Appellate District of the Appellate Court. Currently, one circuit judge from Winnebago County, the Honorable Kathryn E. Zenoff, serves on the Illinois Appellate Court by assignment.

The first tier of the judiciary is the Circuit Court, which is the trial court level. The State of Illinois is divided into twenty-five Judicial Circuits, including our Seventeenth Judicial Circuit which is comprised of both Winnebago County and Boone County.




Source: www.illinoiscourts.gov

In the Circuit Court there are two types of Judges: Circuit Judges and Associate Judges. The Seventeenth Judicial Circuit has eleven Circuit Judges and seventeen Associate Judges. Circuit Judges are elected by popular vote for an initial six-year term. Thereafter, every six-years Circuit Judges must run for retention. The Circuit Judges elect a Chief Judge to provide administrative guidance to the entire circuit. The Circuit Judges also appoint and vote to retain Associate Judges based on four year terms. Associate Judges may hear all types of cases, deemed suitable by the Chief Judge or designated circuit judge.




## Court Locations

**Winnebago County Courthouse**
400 West State Street
Rockford, Illinois 61101

**Winnebago County Criminal Justice Center**
650 West State Street
Rockford, Illinois 61101

**Winnebago County Juvenile Justice Center**
211 South Court Street
Rockford, Illinois 61101

**Boone County Courthouse**
601 North Main Street
Belvidere, Illinois 61008

**Alternative Dispute Resolution Center**
308 West State Street, Suite 25
Rockford, Illinois 61101

# OPERATIONS

## Judicial Assignments as of December 2025

### Administration

| | |
|---|---|
| Hon. John S. Lowry | Winnebago Co.- 209 |
| Hon. John T. Gibbons | Winnebago Co.- A |

### Appellate Court - Fourth District

Hon. Kathryn E. Zenoff

c/o Fourth District Appellate Courthouse
201 West Monroe Street
Springfield, Illinois 62704

### Civil Division

| | |
|---|---|
| Hon. Lisa Fabiano | Winnebago Co.- 412 |
| Hon. Gwyn Gulley | Winnebago Co.- 314 |
| Hon. Amy Peterman | Winnebago Co.- 216 |
| Hon. Stephen Balogh | Boone Co.- 3 |
| Hon. Ronald A. Barch | Winnebago Co.- 426 |
| Hon. Steven L. Nordquist | Winnebago Co.- 314 |
| Hon. Donald P. Shriver | Winnebago Co.- 209 |

### Family Division

| | |
|---|---|
| Hon. Joseph P. Bruscato | Winnebago Co.- 467 |
| Hon. Nicholas O. Meyer | Winnebago Co.- 451 |
| Hon. Scott Robinson | Winnebago Co.-459 |
| Hon. Stephen Balogh | Boone Co.- 3 |
| Hon. Todd A. Ramlow | Winnebago Co.- 455 |
| Hon. Amy Peterman | Winnebago Co.-216 |
| Hon. Donald P. Shriver | Winnebago Co.- 209 |

### Boone Division

| | |
|---|---|
| Hon. C. Robert Tobin | Boone Co.- 1 |
| Hon. Janet R. Holmgren | Boone Co.- 4 |
| Hon. Stephen Balogh | Boone Co.- 3 |
| Hon. Ryan A. Swift | Boone Co.- 2 |

### Criminal Division

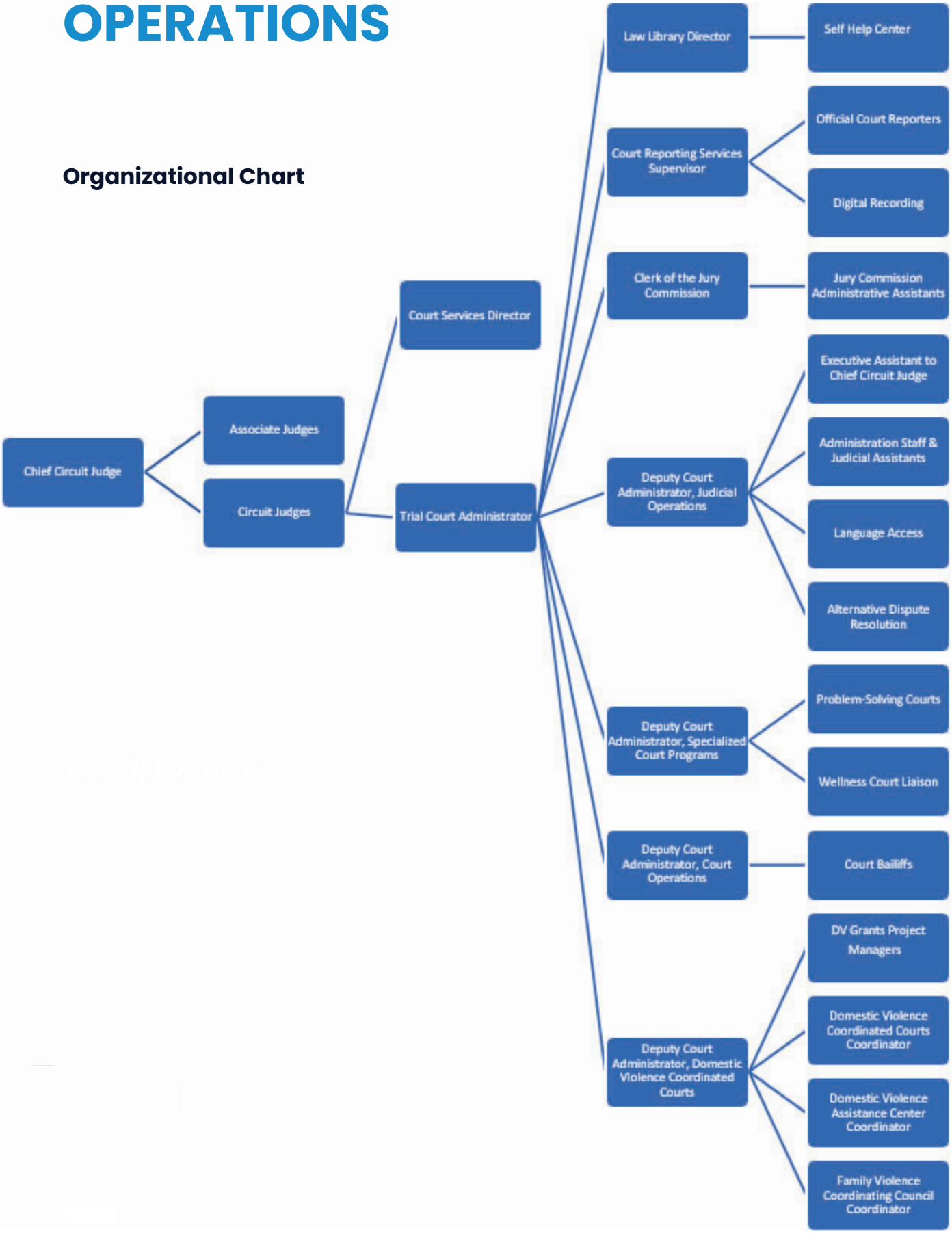
| | |
|---|---|
| Hon. Brendan A. Maher | Winnebago Co.- D |
| Hon. Janet Holmgren | Winnebago Co.- 217 |
| Hon. C. Robert Tobin | Boone Co.- 1 |
| Hon. Ronald J. White | Winnebago Co.- 316 |
| Hon. Heidi Agustsson | Winnebago Co.- B |
| Hon. Jennifer Clifford | Winnebago Co.- C |
| Hon. John T. Gibbons | Winnebago Co. -A |
| Hon. Phillip J. Nicolosi | Winnebago Co.- 311 |
| Hon. Steven Nordquist | Winnebago Co.- 125 |
| Hon. Scott A. Paccagnini | Winnebago Co.- 478 |
| Hon. Debra D. Schafer | Winnebago Co.- 317 |
| Hon. Ryan A. Swift | Boone Co.- 2 |
| Hon. Tamika Walker | Winnebago Co.- 315 |

### Juvenile & Problem Solving Courts Division

| | |
|---|---|
| Hon. Janet R. Holmgren | Winnebago Co.- 217 |
| Hon. Erin Buhl | Winnebago Co.- 2 |
| Hon. John Gibbons | Winnebago Co.- 217 |
| Hon. Donna Honzel | Winnebago Co.- 1 |
| Hon. Francis M. Martinez | Winnebago Co.- 3 |
| Hon. C. Robert Tobin | Boone Co. - 1 |

# OPERATIONS

## Organizational Chart



# OPERATIONS

## TRIAL COURT ADMINISTRATION

**Thomas R. Jakeway, Trial Court Administrator**

The Trial Court Administration Office supports the judges of the Seventeenth Circuit Court. The Court Administration staff works under the supervision and direction of the Chief Judge. The office manages court operations and provides guidance for day-to-day operations and long-term decisions. The office is responsible for collaboration and coordination with judges, court personnel, legal professionals, and other justice system stakeholders to address systemic issues, improve court processes, and implement policies and procedures to ensure the smooth functioning of the court system. Responsibilities include:

- overseeing bailiff, court reporting and judicial assistant teams,
- budgeting/fiscal matters,
- case management processes,
- public relations and community outreach, and
- project leadership.

Court Administration is dedicated to ensuring equal and timely access to the court and related services, conducting performance measurement for purposes of continuous improvement, and maintaining a safe and secure work environment. Court Administration is also actively involved in grant administration, judicial internship programs, and web-site management.



Left: Court Reporting Supervisor, Tammy Gulley, addresses area students.

## COURT REPORTING SERVICES

**Tammy Gulley, Supervisor**

Court Reporting Services employees are responsible for making a full reporting of the courtroom proceedings presented in the trial court. It is the duty of these court reporting employees to record verbatim all that is said during every court proceeding to which they are assigned.

Presently there are a total of twenty-three court reporting employees assigned to the 17th Judicial Circuit Court. Winnebago County maintains a staff of six Official Court Reporters and twelve Court Specialists. Boone County maintains a staff of two Official Court Reporters. One supervisor maintains overall staff operations with two assistant supervisors responsible for daily department operations. All staff are assigned to courtrooms on a rotating schedule to evenly distribute workloads and transcript volume. All Official Court Reporters are Certified Shorthand Reporters licensed by the Illinois Department of Financial & Professional Regulation.

The Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC) has installed digital recording equipment in all of the courtrooms in both Winnebago and Boone Counties. All civil courtrooms and select felony courtrooms are currently using digital recording as the official record. All of the Court Reporting Services employees are to be trained and certified by the AOIC to operate this equipment.

# OPERATIONS

## LAW LIBRARY & SELF-HELP LEGAL CENTER

**John Goss, Law Library Director**

The Winnebago County Law Library is located on the third floor of the Winnebago County Courthouse. Winnebago County has a full time Law Library Director. The facility is available to serve all judges, attorneys, public officials and the public during regular courthouse hours. The Library continues to maintain a core print collection of research materials. For materials outside of Illinois, the library has chosen to steadily reduce its print subscriptions and instead rely on web-based resources. Two public access Westlaw® terminals are available for computer assisted legal research.

The Winnebago County Self-Help Legal Center is located within the law library. The Self-Help Legal Center provides access to court forms and provides general information about court rules, terms and procedures to self-represented litigants. A navigator is present during normal working hours to assist individuals with using the available computer and print resources. The Winnebago County Self-Help Legal Center was opened in May 2007. In calendar year 2025, the Winnebago County Self-Help Legal Center provided assistance to 8,373 individuals.

The Boone County Self-Help Center closed its doors in early 2025.

Additional resources can be found on the Circuit's website at https://illinois17th.com/public-info/court-resources/law-library

In 2025, new furniture, computer terminals, and "pods" were installed in the Law Library, making it a more welcoming environment for its 8,373 visitors.



# OPERATIONS

## COURT BAILIFFS

**Kelly Jurmu, Chief Bailiff**

The Bailiffs of the 17th Judicial Circuit serve a vital function for our courts. Bailiffs maintain order within the courtrooms and aid their assigned judges as needed during court proceedings, both in-person and in virtual hearings. Bailiffs monitor daily court schedules and aid in coordinating the appearance of attorneys, litigants, interpreters, inmates and the public. As primary points of contact within the court system, bailiffs help to promote access to justice by answering questions and helping individuals while within the courthouse.

Currently, there are twenty-three full time Bailiffs, and one Chief Bailiff in Winnebago County. The Chief Bailiff is responsible for work assignments, scheduling, and training. In addition, the Chief Bailiff acts as a liaison with other stakeholders in the court system such as the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office and the City of Rockford Police Department.

In Boone County, the bailiffs are part of the Boone County Sheriff's staff and are under the supervision of the Sheriff.

# OPERATIONS

## WINNEBAGO COUNTY JURY COMMISSION

**Sarah Flores, Clerk of the Jury Commission**

Trial by jury is a fundamental right guaranteed by the constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Illinois. Maintaining this right requires a reliable, impartial system for selecting and managing jurors.

Illinois law mandates that counties with populations over 40,000 establish a three-member Jury Commission appointed by the circuit judges. In the 17th Judicial Circuit Court, the Office of the Jury Commission—led by the Clerk of the Jury Commission, Sarah J. Flores and supported by two full-time assistants—oversees the daily administration of the jury system.

The Office conducts the fair and random selection of prospective jurors from a combined list of registered voters, driver's license holders, Illinois Identification Card holders, and Illinois Disabled Person Identification Card holders. It also manages all aspects of juror summons and service.

In 2025, the Court summoned 35,450 individuals for jury service. Of those, 2,700 were directed to courtrooms for jury selection, resulting in 57 jury trials. These efforts support the Court's commitment to fair and impartial proceedings for all who appear before it.



In 2025, there were 57 jury trials in Winnebago County.

# OPERATIONS



## PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE

Nick Zimmerman, Winnebago County Public Defender
Kathryn J. Cross, Boone County Public Defender

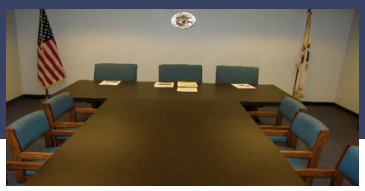
The Public Defender's Office provides legal representation to individuals found to be indigent by the Court.

In Winnebago County, thirty-seven attorneys and twelve support staff handle adult felony, misdemeanor, and traffic cases; juvenile delinquency cases, and represent parents in abuse and neglect cases. The Winnebago County Public Defender's Office also staffs the problem-solving courts including the Therapeutic Intervention Program, Adult Drug Court, Family Recovery Court, Veterans Court, and Youth Recovery Court.

The Boone County office consists of five attorneys, two full-time support staff and a part-time support staff person. The Boone County Public Defender's Office handles adult felony, misdemeanor, and traffic cases; represents minors in juvenile delinquency cases, and parties in abuse and neglect cases; handles extradition and post-conviction matters as appointed by the Court; and staffs the Adult Drug Court and Youth Recovery Court. The Public Defender also represents persons who appear in custody for the initial appearance call each day.

The Public Defender provides a highly competent level of legal representation through the efforts of a staff possessing the greatest concentration of criminal defense experience in the area and a firm belief in the principle that every person is entitled to a fair hearing regardless of their ability to pay.

# OPERATIONS



## ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER

Michael O'Connor, Arbitration Administrator

Mandatory Arbitration was instituted as a pilot program in Winnebago County in the fall of 1987 making it the oldest court-annexed arbitration program in the state. The Boone County program began in February 1995. All civil actions that are filed seeking money damages in excess of $10,000.00, but not greater than $50,000.00, are automatically assigned to non-binding mandatory arbitration. Additionally, all small claims cases with a timely filed jury demand are transferred into the arbitration program. Pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rules, these arbitration cases involve less formal discovery procedures and a hearing before a panel of three trained attorney arbitrators. If any party is not satisfied with the award made by the arbitrators after the hearing they have a right to reject the award and proceed to trial before a judge.

The day-to-day management of the program is the responsibility of the Arbitration Administrator with the assistance of one part-time secretary. The Arbitration Administrator is responsible for tracking the progress and maintaining statistics on all arbitration cases filed in Winnebago and Boone Counties, as well as maintaining a list of approved attorney-arbitrators, and for securing the service of these arbitrators for hearings. In addition to the arbitration program, the Administrator also tracks all major law division cases that have been court-referred to mediation and makes parties aware that the ADR Center is available for holding their mediations. The Alternative Dispute Center is located in Stewart Square in Rockford, approximately one-half block east of the Winnebago County Courthouse.

Arbitration case filings:

| Boone | Winnebago |
|---|---|
| 2023: 81 | 2023: 651 |
| 2024: 155 | 2024: 808 |
| 2025: 188 | 2025: 1079 |

# Problem-Solving Courts

The Problem-Solving Courts are treatment courts that provide intensive court supervision with individualized treatment services to address substance use disorders, mental illness, and the effects of trauma through wrap-around services. Each program has a Multidisciplinary Team that works directly with the clients.

## Drug Court

The Winnebago County Drug Court was established in 1996 to help rebuild the lives of individuals who are charged with felony offenses and suffer from underlying substance use disorder. Drug Court represents the combined efforts of justice and treatment professionals in actively intervening and breaking the cycle of substance abuse, crime, delinquency, and child maltreatment. Many of these individuals have trauma histories that need to be addressed through therapy. The overall benefit to individuals recovering from substance use are immeasurable, including but not limited to improving relationships with their families, increased self-esteem, better health and heightened likelihood for employment and educational success.

The Boone County Drug Court was established in 2013.

In 2025, the Winnebago County Drug Court had an average daily census of 110-120 participants.

## Veterans Court

The Veterans Court in Winnebago County was established in January 2012 to respond to the unique needs of justice involved veterans who are eligible for VA benefits. This specialty court is unique in that Veterans are able to participate in the court with pending and post plea charges. Case management is provided by a Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist who works through the Department of Veterans Affairs. Veterans are linked with a variety of services available through Veterans Affairs in Rockford and in Madison, WI.

# Problem-Solving Courts

## Family Recovery Court (FRC)

The 17th Circuit Court established a Family Recovery Court in the Winnebago County Juvenile Abuse and Neglect Court in December 2009. FRC is a specialized program designed to assist families where at least one parent's substance abuse was the cause of involvement in the child welfare system. Wrap around services are given to the entire family which include substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, housing assistance, trauma therapy and the participants are subject to judicial monitoring and accountability. The goal is to assist the parent(s) to recovery in order that their children can safely remain in their care and end their involvement in the child welfare system and juvenile court.

## Youth Recovery Court (YRC)

The YRC spans both Winnebago and Boone County and is the first juvenile mental health court in Illinois. The Youth Recovery Court was created to serve youth involved with juvenile delinquency court in Winnebago County with non-violent offenses, ages 10 – 17, who have a mental illness or co-occurring disorder. The program provides intensive case management, priority and specialized services and court oversight. Winnebago County Juvenile Probation, Boone County Juvenile Probation and Rosecrance clinicians provide intensive, home-based therapeutic interventions, while under judicial monitoring.

**In 2025, 24 youth were served in Youth Recovery Court, and 12 families were served in Family Recovery Court.**

# Problem-Solving Courts

The Problem-Solving Courts are treatment courts that provide intensive court supervision with individualized treatment services to address substance use disorders and serious mental illness.

## Wellness Track

The Wellness Track is a specialized court program in Winnebago County designed for adults who have been arrested for nonviolent misdemeanor offenses and have underlying mental health issues, substance use disorders, or housing insecurity that may have contributed to their behavior leading to their arrest. The goal is to decrease reoccurring arrests and increase access to community resources like temporary housing, and mental health and substance abuse services.

Since inception in 2023, Wellness Track served 205 individuals. In 2025, 57 individuals completed the program with cases dismissed.

## Therapeutic Intervention Program (TIP)

The Winnebago County Therapeutic Intervention Program (TIP) was instituted in 2005 and is designed for adults with a serious mental illness who have been arrested for misdemeanor or felony offenses. The goal is to decrease reoccurring arrest, decrease days in jail, and increase access and participation in services, so as to enhance public safety by reducing the likelihood that a person will reoffend. TIP is strictly a voluntary program where participants receive wrap around services which include intensive case management services, mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, housing assistance, trauma therapy, and cognitive behavioral therapy while under rigorous judicial monitoring and accountability.



*Judge Holmgren congratulates a Graduate.*

# Domestic Violence Coordinated Court

Established in 2012 with a grant award from the Department of Justice/Office on Violence Against Women, the 17th Judicial Circuit Winnebago County Domestic Violence Coordinated Court (DVCC) has continued to operate with an enhanced focus on victim safety and offender accountability. The DVCC is comprised of a dedicated domestic violence criminal court and a dedicated domestic violence civil court, which adjudicate all levels and types of intimate-partner related criminal and civil cases. Grant funds support victim advocacy within the court setting, offender accountability and compliance monitoring practices, and provide intensive training to judicial and court staff. To date, the DVCC has heard over 17,000 intimate partner domestic violence cases.

## Justice for Families (JFF) Grant Program

The Department of Justice/Office on Violence Against Women's Justice for Families grant program supports the work of the Domestic Violence Coordinated Court through providing funds to support administrative staff, victim advocates, legal assistance, and training. Current Justice for Families grant goals and objectives include increasing access to justice for underserved populations, improving services within the Domestic Violence Assistance Center, and working with the Juvenile courts to enhance domestic violence responses.

## Domestic Violence Mentor Court Initiative

The 17th Judicial Circuit Court Domestic Violence Coordinated Court has been designated as a nationally recognized Domestic Violence Mentor Court four times since 2014. This recognition has allowed the 17th Judicial Circuit DVCC to host several site visits from jurisdictions across the country interested in creating or enhancing their own Domestic Violence Court. As a Mentor Court, the DVCC shares its specialized practices and procedures with courts and technical assistance providers nationwide, and continues to provides guidance to jurisdictions that reach out for assistance. In 2025, The DVCC was awarded continued federal funding to serve as a DV Mentor Court through 2027. This past year, the DVCC hosted courts from Brown Co., WI; Rockland, NY; Marion Co., OR; and Sangamon Co., IL. DVCC staff provided on-site technical assistance to the above jurisdictions and participated in an All Sites Meeting in St. Louis, MO. which brought together all mentor and mentee courts from across the country.

**Right** A team from Brown Co., WI participates in a DVCC Core Team meeting with court stakeholders in March 2025.



# Domestic Violence Coordinated Court

## Electronic Service Protection Order Court Pilot Grant

In 2024, Winnebago County was selected by the Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women as a pilot site to explore implementing legal and practicable service for protective orders. This five year grant involves stakeholders from the Court, Sheriff's Department, Circuit Clerk's Office, Information Technology Department, State's Attorney's Office and Victim Service Providers joining forces to develop policies, systems, and secure permission for electronic service. Developed policies and lessons learned from this pilot will inform nationwide practices around electronic protective order service.

## Multi-Disciplinary Teams and a Coordinated Community Response

The Domestic Violence Coordinated Court and its related initiatives participate in a wide range of Multi-Disciplinary Teams and Coordinated Community Responses focused on ending family and intimate partner violence. These teams include the Stalking and Strangulation Task Force, Firearms Task Force, Juvenile Court Stakeholders Team, Guadian ad litem Workgroup, and the Domestic Violence Coordinated Court Core Team. Regular meetings are held with additional collaborative partners including meetings with Partner Abuse Intervention Program providers and DV Service Providers.

## Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking (ICJR) Grant Program

The ICJR grant program supports the work of the Domestic Violence Coordinated Court through its focus on victim safety, offender accountability, coordinated community response, and specialized training. The ICJR grant program seeks to identify gaps and develop improved responses to violation of protective orders to improve victim safety and offender accountability, strengthen advocacy services, and coordinate training for prosecutors and other members of our community's coordinated community response to domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

# Department of Court Services

*Debbie Jarvis, Director*

The Department of Court Services supervises individuals involved in our criminal justice system. By incorporating core values of integrity, respect, accountability, fairness and professionalism, Court Services strives to promote community safety, reduce recidivism and improve the quality of life for offenders.

Court Services is comprised of an Adult Probation Division, Juvenile Probation Division, Juvenile Detention Division and Pretrial Division. Additionally, the department operates the Resource Intervention Center which enables community service agencies to provide much needed services to the adult and juvenile offenders under one roof.

## Boone County Probation

*Amy Gallano, Deputy Director*

The mission of Boone County Probation is to provide the Court with a system of quality programs which are responsive to constitutional and statutory requirements and reflect judicial priorities and community needs. The focus is to restore the offender to productive citizenship without compromising the safety of the community. Probation Officers provide assistance and guidance to those individuals so that they may be reintegrated into society in a productive and meaningful manner, while holding them accountable to court ordered conditions.

The division consists of a Deputy Director, Senior Probation Officer, two Adult Probation Officers, one Pretrial Officer, one Program Coordinator/Drug Court Senior Probation Officer, one Adult Redeploy Probation Officer, one Juvenile Probation Officer, one Hybrid Officer who supervises both adult and juvenile clients and an Administrative Assistant. In 2013, Drug Court was implemented in Boone County for adult clients whose criminal behavior is directly linked to a substance abuse diagnosis. In 2019 the Department formalized a Pretrial Services Division. In 2023, Adult Redeploy was implemented in Boone County for adults who are assessed as high risk/high need individuals who would benefit by increased contacts, additional supports/services and access to treatment.

The juvenile probation officers supervise a diversion program designed to keep less serious clients from entering the court system. A juvenile officer also participates in Youth Recovery Court; a specialized problem-solving court for juveniles whose delinquent behavior is linked directly to a mental health diagnosis. In 2023, Boone County partnered with Youth Services Network to implement a Juvenile Redeploy program for those juvenile clients that are assessed as high risk/high need that could benefit from additional services, to include individual counseling and case management.

In 2025, Boone County supervised an average of 259 adult probationers and 29 juvenile probationers. There were 221 Pretrial Release Reports completed and an average of 98 pretrial clients supervised.

# Department of Court Services

## Winnebago County Adult Probation

*Lorraine Dixon, Deputy Director*

The mission of Adult Probation is to serve the court, reduce recidivism, facilitate positive change and promote community safety in Winnebago County. Probation officers are able to accomplish this mission through skilled and targeted supervision in collaboration with the court and community service providers. Probation officers also monitor court-ordered conditions which could be remedial (public service, restitution); punitive (incarceration, fines and court costs); or rehabilitative (counseling, community assistance programs).

Winnebago County Adult Probation supervised an average of 2,102 clients in 2025. Adult Probation employs a Deputy Director, four Supervisors, thirty-five Probation Officers, and five support staff. This division of Court Services consists of the following units:

·Intake Unit
·Inter/Intra-State Transfer Unit
·General Unit
·Presentence Investigation Unit
·Domestic Violence Unit
·Sex Offender Unit
·Problem-Solving Courts Programs with specialized Probation Unit

Winnebago County Adult Probation Officers utilize Illinois Probation Casework Standards, which consists of an intake process and case management. After being sentenced to probation, clients complete the Adult Risk Assessment (ARA) with a probation officers. The ARA tool identifies the client's problem/need areas, risk levels, barriers, and strengths. Following the completion of the ARA, the supervising officer provides feedback to the client by applying Core Correctional Practices and by developing an individualized case plan. Throughout a client's term of probation, officers utilize supervision strategies, which include following the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts' contact standards, behavioral change management, and structured sessions to reduce recidivism. Officers also adhere to the Risk, Need, Responsivity Model and incorporate Evidence Based Practices when working with clients.

# Department of Court Services

## Winnebago County Pretrial Services

*Jodi GeRue, Deputy Director*

Pretrial Services was established in July of 1990 to help alleviate jail overcrowding. Our mission is to promote pretrial justice while enhancing community safety. In 2025, we continued to assist the Court in making decisions regarding conditions of pretrial release by providing the court with pretrial reports and assessment on individuals who were arrested and remained in custody prior to arraignment.

The pretrial report prepared by Pretrial Services provides the court with information about a defendant's background, criminal history, behavioral health, marital and family information allowing the Court to make timely and informed release decisions.

Pretrial Services uses the Virginia Pretrial Risk Assessment Instrument-Revised. This pretrial assessment identifies factors related to the individuals likelihood of failure to appear in court and new arrest during the pretrial stage. In addition, Pretrial Services completes the Domestic Violence Screening Instrument (DVSI) in domestic violence cases alleging intimate partner violence. Pretrial Services conducted 3,248 pretrial risk assessments and 1,155 domestic violence screenings in 2025.

Pretrial Services provides supervision and monitors conditions of release including reporting to Pretrial Services, curfew check, urinalysis, assessment, and treatment. In 2025, Pretrial Services supervised 2,388 defendants released with conditions.

The Pretrial Services Division employs a Deputy Director (who also oversees the Resource Intervention Center), one Supervisor, two Senior Pretrial Officers, nine Pretrial Officers, and one support staff.

# Department of Court Services

## Resource Intervention Center (RIC)

*Jodi GeRue, Deputy Director*

The Resource Intervention Center (RIC) opened for service in 2008 housing comprehensive services for individuals being supervised by the Winnebago County Adult Probation Division and the Winnebago County Pretrial Services Division.

The RIC employs a Deputy Director who also oversees the Pretrial Services Division, one Supervisor, four Probation Officers, one Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor, and one support staff.

The mission of the RIC is to enhance community safety by providing evidence-based targeted interventions. Probation Officers complete validated risk/need assessments that identify areas of concern in a person's life and predicts the likelihood of recidivism. Interventions at the RIC target the identified areas of risk and needs.

Pretrial Officers complete pretrial assessments that identify factors related to the likelihood of failure to appear and new arrest during the pretrial stage. Supportive services at the RIC are also available to individuals being supervised by Pretrial Services.

Individuals on probation who are referred to the RIC are assessed for readiness to change using the URICA (University of Rhode Island Change Assessment) tool. Based on this score, many probationers who are identified as not being ready to change are recommended to an integrated cognitive behavioral change program to address treatment readiness.

**RIC staff provide:**

- Thinking for a Change (T4C), a cognitive behavioral change group
- T4C Aftercare
- Beyond Trauma: A Healing Journey for Women
- Exploring Trauma: A Brief Interaction for Men and Gender Diverse People
- Anger Management
- Beyond Violence, using a cognitive based approach
- A New Direction Relapse Prevention
- Grief and loss support groups
- Life skills groups
- Mental Health Assessment and Individual therapy

In 2025, the most utilized programs at the RIC included treatment for substance use disorders and cognitive behavioral programs.

**RIC's collaborative service providers include:**

- High school equivalency (GED) program, by **Rock Valley College Foundation - HEARR** (Higher Education Alliance for the Rock River Valley)
- Substance use assessment and substance use disorder treatment, by **Rosecrance** & **Remedies**
- Parenting classes, by **Youth Services Bureau**
- Partner abuse intervention programs, by **Remedies**
- Wake Up group, providing support and mentoring by **Tommy Meeks**
- Workforce Success Series which include sessions on Exploration and Employment Opportunities, Barriers to Education, Interview & Resumes, Teamwork & Leadership, and Workforce Success Skills, by **Highland Community College's TRIO Program**
- Financial Literacy, **Highland Community College's TRIO Program**

# Department of Court Services

## Winnebago County Juvenile Probation

*Taryn Marko, Deputy Director*

Winnebago County Juvenile Probation provides services and supervision for youth arrested for delinquent behavior. Our mission is to provide for a safer community, to help reduce juvenile delinquency, and to promote quality services to all youth, victims, and families. Winnebago County Juvenile Probation employs a Deputy Director, four Supervisors, sixteen full–time Probation Officers, and two support staff. Juvenile Probation consists of both an Intake Unit and a Field Unit.

- **The Intake Unit** utilizes early intervention strategies that include substantive probation adjustments and informal supervision to address issues and divert certain youth from the Juvenile Justice System while holding the youth accountable for their behavior. In 2025, there were approximately * probation adjustments as well as * minors who were placed on informal supervision.

- **The Field Unit** provides supervision and case management to minors assigned to probation. A probation term may involve treatment referrals and counseling, various internal and community-based programming, public service work, restitution, detention time, foster care, or residential placement with the goal of rehabilitating juvenile offenders. At the end of 2025, there were * active juvenile probation cases with an average caseload of * minors per Probation Officer. The Department has several specialized Probation Officers, including a School-Based Officer and two officers assigned to the Juvenile Redeploy Program.
  - **School-Based Officers** provide on-site prevention and intervention services to area high schools.
  - **Juvenile Redeploy Probation Officers** work with moderate to high-risk youth, both pre-adjudication and post adjudication, alongside a team from Youth Services Network to provide wrap-around services for the youth and their family. With Redeploy, juveniles receive support from a case manager, therapist, & family engagement specialist in addition to the Probation Officer. This program assists the youth to address their risk areas with the goal to surround the youth with community support.

The **Juvenile Intervention Center (JRIC)** is located inside the Juvenile Probation Department. It opened late fall of 2023 and is an on site therapeutic center for youth on probation or court supervision. Similar to the Resource Intervention Center for our adult population, the JRIC consists of a therapist who provides individual therapy and group curriculums ranging from topics such as grief and trauma to Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT). Programs offered through the JRIC target the identified areas of risk and needs that Probation Officers determine through risk assessments and comprehensive assessments from clinicians.

The **Juvenile Assessment Center** is overseen by Juvenile Probation. It is a central reception center for police agencies to bring youth who have been arrested for violating the law or taken into custody for non-criminal reasons, i.e. running away. Probation Officers at this location utilize a screening instrument that determines if the arrested minors should be detained or released back to their guardian, and also conduct assessments to recommend whether the minors should be referred to court or if the cases should be handled informally with no further court action. Illinois Crisis Intervention Services (ICIS) advocates work with the non-arrest cases that require specific family services. Probation Officers from the Juvenile Assessment Center connects youth and their families to community services in effort to decrease future arrests.

# Department of Court Services

## Winnebago County Juvenile Detention Center

*Julie McCray-Grotto, Superintendent*

The Winnebago County Juvenile Detention Center is a secure, 48 bed facility, with an operational capacity of 40, housing minors between the ages of 10 and 20 who are awaiting proceedings in Juvenile and, in some circumstances, Adult Court. The detention center was built in 1992 and was expanded to its current capacity in 1995. In the last couple years, the Winnebago County Board has provided the funding for multiple projects to ensure facility improvements are completed.

In calendar year 2025, the average daily population was 29.8. This was a decrease from 2024 when the facility had an average of 30.9.

The Winnebago County Juvenile Detention Center passed their Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) certification in February 2025. The Winnebago County Juvenile Detention Center has a zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual abuse and sexual harassment within the facility. The **Winnebago County Juvenile Detention Center is only 1 of 4 Detention Centers in the state that has earned this certification so far.**

The Detention Center provides a variety of programming for the lodged minors. Rosecrance provides behavioral health services for the minors in detention through a contract with University of Illinois School of Medicine-Rockford. In 2023, behavioral health services were increased due to funding received through the Winnebago County Community Mental Health Board allowing for the addition of three full time qualified mental health workers through Freedom Behavioral Health. Juveniles in the facility now have behavioral health services available seven days a week. Those services include group therapy providing Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and trauma response, along with individual sessions and crisis response.

Education at the facility is provided by three District 205 special education certified teachers and a para professional. Teachers work with the youth on either their home school curriculum or on a curriculum through Subject.com.

Detention Center staff and outside community volunteers supplement education and therapeutic services by facilitating program related to career exploration, art, therapy dogs and teaching a variety of life skills.

# Court Programs & Activities

## Judicial Speakers Bureau

The 17th Circuit Judicial Speakers Bureau was established to help the community gain an understanding and knowledge of what can be a very complex legal system and the various programs in which the court is involved. The Judicial Speakers Bureau is comprised of judges who preside in both Boone County and Winnebago County. Judges are available to speak to any school, community group or civic organization in the 17th Circuit that would like to further their understanding of our court systems and the administration of justice. In 2025, judges not only visited various grade schools, but they also volunteered at Rockford Public School's Academy Expo and hosted students for the RPS 205's Job Shadow experience.

Guided tours of our court facilities are also available. These tours offer groups the opportunity to see firsthand the operations and inner workings of the several components which make up our Justice System. To arrange for a speaker or schedule a courthouse tour, contact the Court Administration Office.






**Above:** Hon. Amy Peterman visits a third grade class at Stone Creek School.
**Below:** Hon. Tamika Walker hosts students from RPS 205 for a job shadow experience.

## National Adoption Day

National Adoption Day, occurring each November, is celebrated in the 17th Circuit with a gathering and celebration finalizing adoptions of children previously residing in foster care.

National Adoption Day is a collective national effort to raise awareness of the estimated 100,000 children in foster care that are ready for adoption and waiting for a family. On this day, court staff, attorneys and social service agency professionals from all across the United States work together to finalize adoptions and celebrate all of the families participating in adoptions. Over the last twenty-one years on National Adoption Day, a total of 469 children have been adopted into permanent loving families in the 17th Circuit.

# Court Programs & Activities

## Mediation Programs

Mediation programs are a form of alternative dispute resolution where a trained neutral third party, a mediator, facilitates communication between parties to explore options to work towards resolution. The 17th Circuit has a number of mediation programs.



### Family

The 17th Circuit Court Family Mediation Program provides a way for parents to work out child custody and placement agreements with the assistance of a neutral third party. All mediators who participate in this program have extensive training and must be approved by the Presiding Judge of the Family Division



### Small Claims

Since 2006, pro se litigants in small claims in Winnebago County cases have been able to actively resolve disputes through our free voluntary mediation program. At mediation, the parties meet with a neutral, certified mediator, who listens to both sides and helps the parties find their own solution. Mediators do not make any decisions for the parties, but will assist the parties in the preparation of orders to be filed with the court.



### Court-Annexed Major Civil

Any contested civil matter asserting a claim in excess of $50,000.00, or other contested civil matters such as chancery, miscellaneous remedy or probate cases may be referred to mediation by a judge or by stipulation of the parties involved.

## Residential Foreclosure Mediation Program

**Kay Thompson-Taylor, Program Coordinator**

The 17th Circuit Residential Foreclosure Mediation Program helps borrowers and lenders communicate to explore options that may resolve the foreclosure process. In 2025, 64% of homeowners who made it through the pre-mediation phase reached agreements with their lenders in mediation, and over 97% of those agreements allowed the homeowners to retain their homes.

This program is available to homeowners in residential foreclosure cases filed in both Winnebago County and Boone County. Program participation is voluntary and homeowners incur no costs for mediation services.

# Justice Partner Collaborations

*Collaborating with justice partners can improve efficiencies and responses within the justice system.*

The 17th Circuit Court is proud to be a part of a number of collaborative projects, including a number of local Coordinating Councils.

## Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

The Winnebago County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, chaired by the Chief Judge, is a group of various stakeholders in the criminal justice system. Members include representatives from the Court, law enforcement, local prosecutors and defense attorneys, and county and municipal officials. Their task is to ensure that all of the elements of the criminal justice system remain aware of their colleagues' efforts and activities. In addition, local crime and court data are analyzed to ascertain our current status and how improvements might be made.

## Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council

The Winnebago County Juvenile Justice Council, chaired by Hon. Donna Honzel, is a group formed pursuant to the Juvenile Court Act. Members include representatives from the court, local prosecutors and defense attorneys, law enforcement, local service agencies and municipal officials. There are currently three committees: Education, Mental Health and Youth Organization.

The Council is tasked with providing a forum for the development of a community-based assessment of the local juvenile justice system, to develop a juvenile justice plan for the prevention of juvenile delinquency and to make recommendations to the county boards for more effectively utilizing existing community resources in dealing with juveniles found to be involved in crime. Additionally, the Council aims to analyze the risks, needs and characteristics of youth in contact with the juvenile justice system with the aim to develop strategies to prevent or mitigate juvenile delinquency, produce positive youth outcomes and enhance public safety.

## 17th Circuit Human Trafficking Court Response Team (HTCRT)

The 17th Circuit Court formed the HTCRT in 2023. Its mission is to enhance a coordinated response within the justice system to meet the needs of those impacted by human trafficking through trauma-informed practices and to raise awareness of human trafficking among justice system stakeholders by increasing education and training opportunities.

# Justice Partner Collaborations

## The Kids' Place

The Kids' Place is a secure waiting areas for children ages two through twelve. Services are available free of charge to parents and guardians who are required to appear in either the Winnebago County Courthouse or Criminal Justice Center. The Kids' Place facility is located in the lower level of the Winnebago County Courthouse. Children are supervised by professional YMCA staff and provide cheerful atmospheres for children to take part in fun activities like arts, crafts, organized games, reading and music. Since its beginning in 1998, over 53,931 children have used the services of The Kids' Place. In 2025, a total of 634 children were entrusted in the care of the Kids' Place.



## Family Violence Coordinating Council

The 17th Judicial Circuit Family Violence Coordinating Council (FVCC), chaired by Hon. Jennifer Clifford, is a collaborative group of professionals from across disciplines who meet regularly to promote a coordinated response to family violence- including domestic violence, teen dating violence, child abuse, elder abuse, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking. The FVCC's six committees focus their efforts in three primary areas: training, prevention, and awareness.

In April 2025, the FVCC hosted "Hands Around the Courthouse" and "Hands Around the Park" to raise awareness for and support Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month in both Winnebago and Boone Counties. In the summer, both Boone and Winnebago Counties held their annual symposiums which focused on responses to financial abuse of older adults and addressing trauma responses for youth impacted by violence. In October 2025, the FVCC sponsored Domestic Violence Awareness Month events for Winnebago and Boone counties. These events included a weekly virtual lunch and learn series, a Rockford City Market booth, and the annual Shining the Light on Domestic Violence ceremonies in Boone and Winnebago Counties at the end of the month.

## Domestic Violence Assistance Center

The Domestic Violence Assistance Center (DVAC) is located in the Winnebago County Courthouse, on the 3rd floor of the "Old Courthouse" above Traffic Court. The DVAC offers free and confidential Order of Protection assistance for those who qualify. For more information contact 815-962-9980.

In 2025, the DVAC greeted 1,127 patrons. and assisted 65 individuals at kiosks. Remedies assisted in filing 330 petitions.

# Justice Partner Collaborations

## Children's Safe Harbor

Children's Safe Harbor is located at 1340 S. Alpine Road in Rockford, Illinois and provides supervised visitation and safe child exchange services. Children's Safe Harbor focuses on the needs of children who may be experiencing difficulties due to divorce, separation or family violence. Families enrolled at Children's Safe Harbor can be ordered by the court, referred by an agency or self-request use of services. Families may utilize Children's Safe Harbor as long as necessary at no cost.

Children's Safe Harbor provides **supervised visitation services** between a non-custodial parent and their child due to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking and child abuse. Parents are court-ordered for Supervised Visitation when it is deemed unsafe for child to be alone with that parent or for other reasons. Children's Safe Harbor's programming is grounded in the belief that domestic violence impacts the whole family; therefore services are rooted in safety of both adult victims and children. Victim safety is considered whether the parent is custodial or non-custodial. Fair and respectful treatment of all family members is provided while not ignoring the circumstances that bring families to the program.

Children's Safe Harbor provides **safe visitation exchanges** without parents coming into contact with one another. Parents enter and exit the visitation center through separate entrances, park in separate parking lots and arrive and depart at pre-scheduled staggered times. Children are escorted by Children's Safe Harbor Staff between parents.

For more information about Children's Safe Harbor
contact 815-316-7772
or access www.childrenssafeharbor.net.

In 2025, Children's Safe Harbor provided 611 supervised vistations and 670 safe exchanges.

## Volunteer Therapy Dog Program

Coming to court can be a stressful experience, but having a therapy dog with you can help ease some of that anxiety. The program launched late 2017, and since inception the Winnebago County Courthouse has had over 725 visits from the therapy dog teams. In 2025, there were 146 visits. Therapy dog teams visited courthouse facilities to support court patrons as well as visit staff located within the courthouse buildings.



Above: Judge John Gibbons visits with Oscar, a therapy dog volunteer.

# The 17th Circuit is proud to recognize

*judges and Circuit Court staff for their contributions made State and nationwide, including, but not limited to the following:*

## Illinois Supreme Court Committee Involvement

- Hon. Kathryn Zenoff (4th Distr.), chair of Special Advisory Committee on Justice and Mental Health Planning
- Hon. John S. Lowry, Committee on Equal Justice; Supreme Court Juvenile Detention Practices Task Force; Data Task Force
- Hon. Janet R. Holmgren, Special Advisory Committee on Justice and Mental Health Planning and co-chair of Standards/Certification sub-committee; Illinois Judicial College Probation Education's Problem Solving Courts Training Workgroup
- Hon. Brendan A. Maher, Illinois Supreme Court Judicial Performance Evaluation Committee
- Hon. Jennifer Clifford, Re-appointed chair of Domestic Violence & Human Trafficking; Illinois Judicial College's Committee on Probation Education
- Hon. John Gibbons, Illinois Judicial College's Committee on Trial Court Administrator Education (TCAE)
- Hon. Debra Schafer, Illinois Judicial College Committee on PreTrial Education (CPTE)
- Hon. Tamika Walker, Illinois Judicial College Committee on Judicial Education (COJE)
- Court Services Director Debbie Jarvis, chair of Illinois Judicial College's Committee on PreTrial Education (CPTE); Chair of Probation Policy Advisory Board
- TCA Tom Jakeway, Illinois Judicial Conference Task Forces: Dogs in the Courthouse, Crisis Communication; Illinois Judicial College's Committee on Pretrial Education (CPTE); Data Task Force
- Kim Ackmann, Illinois Judicial Conference Task Force member: Alternative Dispute Resolution; Commission on Access to Justice Language Access Committee
- Nikki Ticknor, Illinois Supreme Court's Access to Justice Rules and Policies Review Committee

## Appointments

- Hon. Janet R. Holmgren, President of Illinois Association of Problem-Solving Courts
- Hon. John Gibbons, State Council for Interstate Compacts for the State of Illinois
- Hon. Tamika Walker, Illinois Bar Foundation
- Emily Behnke, ICJIA Adult Redeploy Illinois Training Advisory Group

## Presentations

- 17th Circuit Court Judicial Retreat with S. Ct. Commission on Professionalism- Hon. John S. Lowry & Hon. Erin Buhl
- Human Trafficking Court Response Team (HTCRT): "STAR: Standing Together Awareness is Raised" and "Circles Discussion: Child Sexual Exploitation in our Community and How to Facilitate Change" -Hon. John S. Lowry & Hon. Jennifer Clifford
- CJCC Spring Symposium: "Recognize, Respond, Repair." -Hon. John S. Lowry & Hon. Jennifer Clifford
- ISBA: "Forewarned is Forewarned, A view from the Bench, Family Law Contracts- Drafting Enforceable Agreements" - Hon. Tamika Walker
- National Conference on Domestic Violence *and* Wisconsin Serving Victims of Crime Conference: "Survivor Perspectives and Outcomes Following Engagement with a Domestic Violence Court" -Nikki Ticknor
- Winnebago County Bar Association: "Foreclosure Mediation Update" - Hon. Ronald A. Barch & Kyle "Kay" Thompson-Taylor
- Winnebago County Bar Association: Family Law CLE - Hon. Joseph P. Bruscato, Hon. Jennifer Clifford, Hon. Amy Peterman, Hon. Nicholas Meyer
- Winnebago County Bar Association: "Karina's Law" -Hon. Jennifer Clifford
- Winnebago County Bar Association: "Criminal Orders of Protection" -Hon. Jennifer Clifford
- Court Reporting Services Seminar: "To the Control Room and Beyond-Court Specialists and New Hires" – Tammy Gulley & Robin Winters
- National Association of Court Management: "Telling Your Court's Data Story" – Nicole Ticknor

## Special Recognitions

- TCA Tom Jakeway, and Deputy TCAs Mike Smith and Emily Behnke: Institute of Court Management Certified Court Manager
- Court Reporting Services Supervisor Tammy Gulley: Judith A. Loro Memorial Award, recognizing innovate spirit and lasting contributions to the field
- Juvenile Detention Center PREA Coordinator Rachael Carmack: Center Receives Federal PREA Accreditation
- RIC Supervisor Karen Mohr: Graduate of Illinois Probation and Court Services Association's Leadership Academy
- Bailiff of the Year: Don Prine (2024)
- Deputy TCA Kim Ackmann: People Manager Qualification (PMQ) from SHRM

# 2025 Court Data

The **Manual on Recordkeeping**, providing uniform procedures for creation of files and case numbering for Circuit Clerk's Offices throughout Illinois, was modified January 1, 2022. The modifications made have an impact on how the court collects its statistics.

Revisions of the Manual include several new and revised case category designations:

-LA: Law: Damages over $50,000. Previously known as the "L" casetype
-FC: Foreclosure. New, previously part of Chancery or "CH" casetypes
-EV: Eviction. New, previously part of Law Minor or "LM" casetypes
-GC: Government Corporation. New. Previously known as the "MC" casetype
-GR: Guardianship. New, previously part of Probate casetypes.
-PR: Probate. Previously known as the "P" casetypes
-DC & DN: Divorce with Children and Divorce without Children, respectively. Previously part of the Dissolution or "D" casetype.
-FA: Family. Previously known as the "F" casetype.
-JV: Previously known as the "J" casetype.
-DV: Domestic Violence. New, previously could be CF or CM casetypes.
-MT: Major Traffic. New, previously could be TR or CM casetypes.
-MX: Miscellaneous Criminal. Previously known as MR.

Additionally, the Manual indicates that in criminal cases, when a complaint, indictment or information contains more than one count, the highest classified charge shall direct the case category assigned to all counts. The hierarchy is: (1) CF, (2) DV, (3) DT, (4) CM, (5) MT, (6) TR, (7) CV, (8) QC, & (9) OV. Multiple charges issued to a defendant out of the same occurrence are now assigned one case number. Previously, before 2022, multiple case numbers would have been assigned. For example, there may have been a Criminal Felony (CF) case and a Traffic (TR) case out of the same occurrence and would have received two case numbers. For the year 2022 and beyond, just one case number would be assigned.

**In 2025, total new case filings increased in both Winnebago and Boone Counties.**

# Cases Filed & Closed

| | 2021 Filings | 2022 Filings | 2023 Filings | 2024 Filings | 2025 Filings |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Boone County | 7,316 | 5,846 | 7,500 | 9,593 | 9,673 |
| Winnebago County | 49,259 | 39,679 | 41,532 | 48,208 | 48,899 |

| | 2021 Cases Closed | 2022 Cases Closed | 2023 Cases Closed | 2024 Cases Closed | 2025 Cases Closed |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Boone County | 7,913 | 6,957 | 8,052 | 9,624 | 9,574 |
| Winnebago County | 50,527 | 43,257 | 40,962 | 48,385 | 51,168 |

# Clearance Rates

Courts use "Clearance Rates" as a performance measurement tool. A clearance rate is the measure of the number of cases closed as compared to the number of newly filed cases over a given period of time. It is a measurement of whether the court is keeping up with the pace of newly filed cases or if the court is falling behind and a backlog of cases is developing. A clearance rate of 100% or higher indicates that the court is keeping up with its incoming caseload.

These numbers can be closely monitored by court administrators, which in turn helps the Chief Judge make important decisions about allocation of the circuit court's resources. Clearance rates for 2025 are included on the next two pages.

# 2025 Clearance Rates

Winnebago County Year End 2025

**Winnebago 1st-4th Quarters 2025**

| CASE TYPE | | FILED 1-1-25 to 12-31-25 | CLOSED 1-1-25 to 12-31-25 | Difference | Percent of Cases Closed | PENDING as of 12-31-24 | Cases Reinstated | Adjustment | PENDING as of 12-31-25 | Difference | Percent of Pending Closed |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Law | L | 0 | 57 | -57 | #DIV/0! | 165 | 0 | -18 | 90 | 75 | 45.45% |
| Law | LA | 441 | 374 | 67 | 84.81% | 627 | 5 | -12 | 687 | -60 | -9.57% |
| Law Magistrate | LM | 138 | 102 | 36 | 73.91% | 383 | 1 | 0 | 420 | -37 | -9.66% |
| Arbitration | AR | 1,079 | 809 | 270 | 74.98% | 469 | 13 | -22 | 730 | -261 | -55.65% |
| Small Claims | SC | 5,071 | 4,157 | 914 | 81.98% | 3,873 | 37 | -99 | 4,725 | -852 | -22.00% |
| Chancery | CH | 125 | 135 | -10 | 108.00% | 161 | 1 | -1 | 151 | 10 | 6.21% |
| Eminent Domain | ED | 3 | 2 | 1 | 66.67% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | -1 | #DIV/0! |
| Foreclosure | FC | 502 | 411 | 91 | 81.87% | 299 | 3 | -16 | 377 | -78 | -26.09% |
| Eviction | EV | 1,976 | 2,027 | -51 | 102.58% | 437 | 39 | -168 | 257 | 180 | 41.19% |
| Tax | TX | 295 | 243 | 52 | 82.37% | 74 | 1 | -3 | 124 | -50 | -67.57% |
| Gov. Corporation | GC | 3 | 3 | 0 | 100.00% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! |
| Municipal Corporation | MC | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! |
| Misc. Remedy | MR | 614 | 619 | -5 | 100.81% | 442 | 6 | -6 | 437 | 5 | 1.13% |
| Mental Health | MH | 604 | 609 | -5 | 100.83% | 21 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 5 | 23.81% |
| Guardianship | GR | 313 | 355 | -42 | 113.42% | 288 | 0 | -132 | 114 | 174 | 60.42% |
| Probate | P | 0 | 1,733 | -1,733 | #DIV/0! | 4,882 | 1 | -133 | 3,017 | 1,865 | 38.20% |
| Probate | PR | 354 | 268 | 86 | 75.71% | 597 | 2 | -17 | 668 | -71 | -11.89% |
| Adoption | AD | 191 | 178 | 13 | 93.19% | 65 | 0 | -5 | 73 | -8 | -12.31% |
| Dissolution | D | 0 | 19 | -19 | #DIV/0! | 97 | 0 | -9 | 69 | 28 | 28.87% |
| Dissolution w/ Children | DC | 437 | 432 | 5 | 98.86% | 325 | 10 | -14 | 326 | -1 | -0.31% |
| Dissolution w/o Children | DN | 494 | 493 | 1 | 99.80% | 272 | 7 | -19 | 261 | 11 | 4.04% |
| Family | F | 0 | 103 | -103 | #DIV/0! | 593 | 0 | -28 | 462 | 131 | 22.09% |
| Family | FA | 963 | 766 | 197 | 79.54% | 566 | 6 | -95 | 674 | -108 | -19.08% |
| Order of Protection | OP | 3,422 | 3,422 | 0 | 100.00% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! |
| Juvenile | J | 0 | 4 | -4 | #DIV/0! | 87 | 0 | 1 | 84 | 3 | 3.45% |
| Juvenile | JV | 9 | 9 | 0 | 100.00% | 5 | 0 | -2 | 3 | 2 | 40.00% |
| Juvenile Abuse & Neg. | JA | 488 | 433 | 55 | 88.73% | 914 | 7 | 10 | 986 | -72 | -7.88% |
| Juvenile Delinquent | JD | 376 | 400 | -24 | 106.38% | 354 | 0 | 22 | 352 | 2 | 0.56% |
| Criminal Felony | CF | 3,410 | 3,133 | 277 | 91.88% | 4,695 | 6 | 4 | 4,982 | -287 | -6.11% |
| Criminal Misdemeanor | CM | 2,396 | 2,737 | -341 | 114.23% | 5,978 | 1 | -10 | 5,628 | 350 | 5.85% |
| Domestic Violence | DV | 711 | 835 | -124 | 117.44% | 605 | 1 | 0 | 482 | 123 | 20.33% |
| DUI | DT | 862 | 881 | -19 | 102.20% | 1,716 | 0 | -5 | 1,692 | 24 | 1.40% |
| Major Traffic | MT | 3,824 | 3,844 | -20 | 100.52% | 2,320 | 1 | -8 | 2,293 | 27 | 1.16% |
| Minor Traffic | TR | 16,809 | 18,591 | -1,782 | 110.60% | 27,259 | 1 | -49 | 25,429 | 1,830 | 6.71% |
| Ordinance Violation | OV | 528 | 537 | -9 | 101.70% | 486 | 0 | -2 | 475 | 11 | 2.26% |
| Quasi-Criminal | QC | 6 | 8 | -2 | 133.33% | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 100.00% |
| Conservation | CV | 135 | 137 | -2 | 101.48% | 183 | 0 | 0 | 181 | 2 | 1.09% |
| Civil Law | CL | 19 | 27 | -8 | 142.11% | 42 | 0 | -1 | 33 | 9 | 21.43% |
| Contempt of Court | CC | 45 | 43 | 2 | 95.56% | 48 | 0 | -2 | 48 | 0 | 0.00% |
| Misc. Criminal | MX | 2,256 | 2,232 | 24 | 98.94% | 42 | 0 | 1 | 67 | -25 | -59.52% |
| **TOTAL CASES** | | **48,899** | **51,168** | **-2,269** | **104.64%** | **59,372** | **149** | **-838** | **56,414** | **2,958** | **4.98%** |

# 2025 Clearance Rates

Boone County Year End 2025

**Boone 1st-4th Quarters 2025**

| CASE TYPE | | FILED 1-1-25 to 12-31-25 | CLOSED 1-1-25 to 12-31-25 | Difference | Percent of Cases Closed | PENDING as of 12-31-24 | Cases Reinstated | Adjustment | PENDING as of 12-31-25 | Difference | Percent of Pending Closed |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Law | L | 0 | 2 | -2 | #DIV/0! | 5 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 40.00% |
| Law | LA | 47 | 42 | 5 | 89.36% | 72 | 0 | -1 | 76 | -4 | -5.56% |
| Law Magistrate | LM | 24 | 19 | 5 | 79.17% | 8 | 0 | 0 | 13 | -5 | -62.50% |
| Arbitration | AR | 188 | 180 | 8 | 95.74% | 70 | 0 | 0 | 78 | -8 | -11.43% |
| Small Claims | SC | 842 | 765 | 77 | 90.86% | 185 | 0 | 25 | 287 | -102 | -55.14% |
| Chancery | CH | 19 | 21 | -2 | 110.53% | 22 | 0 | -2 | 18 | 4 | 18.18% |
| Eminent Domain | ED | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! |
| Foreclosure | FC | 91 | 79 | 12 | 86.81% | 51 | 0 | 0 | 63 | -12 | -23.53% |
| Eviction | EV | 93 | 89 | 4 | 95.70% | 10 | 0 | 0 | 14 | -4 | -40.00% |
| Tax | TX | 23 | 25 | -2 | 108.70% | 12 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 2 | 16.67% |
| Gov. Corporation | GC | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! |
| Municipal Corporation | MC | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! |
| Misc. Remedy | MR | 53 | 48 | 5 | 90.57% | 9 | 0 | 0 | 14 | -5 | -55.56% |
| Mental Health | MH | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! |
| Guardianship | GR | 38 | 12 | 26 | 31.58% | 67 | 0 | 0 | 93 | -26 | -38.81% |
| Probate | P | 0 | 7 | -7 | #DIV/0! | 45 | 0 | 7 | 45 | 0 | 0.00% |
| Probate | PR | 79 | 41 | 38 | 51.90% | 84 | 0 | 1 | 123 | -39 | -46.43% |
| Adoption | AD | 7 | 9 | -2 | 128.57% | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 50.00% |
| Dissolution | D | 0 | 6 | -6 | #DIV/0! | 3 | 0 | 8 | 5 | -2 | -66.67% |
| Dissolution w/ Children | DC | 70 | 63 | 7 | 90.00% | 48 | 0 | 8 | 63 | -15 | -31.25% |
| Dissolution w/o Children | DN | 69 | 74 | -5 | 107.25% | 31 | 1 | 1 | 28 | 3 | 9.68% |
| Family | F | 0 | 33 | -33 | #DIV/0! | 0 | 0 | 37 | 4 | -4 | #DIV/0! |
| Family | FA | 72 | 77 | -5 | 106.94% | 47 | 0 | 1 | 43 | 4 | 8.51% |
| Order of Protection | OP | 241 | 241 | 0 | 100.00% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! |
| Juvenile | J | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0.00% |
| Juvenile | JV | 0 | 1 | -1 | #DIV/0! | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 100.00% |
| Juvenile Abuse & Neg. | JA | 23 | 18 | 5 | 78.26% | 57 | 0 | -1 | 61 | -4 | -7.02% |
| Juvenile Delinquent | JD | 47 | 51 | -4 | 108.51% | 33 | 1 | 3 | 33 | 0 | 0.00% |
| Criminal Felony | CF | 318 | 274 | 44 | 86.16% | 496 | 0 | 4 | 544 | -48 | -9.68% |
| Criminal Misdemeanor | CM | 194 | 179 | 15 | 92.27% | 648 | 0 | 0 | 663 | -15 | -2.31% |
| Domestic Violence | DV | 76 | 84 | -8 | 110.53% | 52 | 0 | 0 | 44 | 8 | 15.38% |
| DUI | DT | 232 | 255 | -23 | 109.91% | 406 | 0 | 0 | 383 | 23 | 5.67% |
| Major Traffic | MT | 1,160 | 1,110 | 50 | 95.69% | 334 | 0 | -1 | 383 | -49 | -14.67% |
| Minor Traffic | TR | 5,304 | 5,466 | -162 | 103.05% | 7,944 | 1 | -2 | 7,781 | 163 | 2.05% |
| Ordinance Violation | OV | 166 | 169 | -3 | 101.81% | 26 | 0 | 0 | 23 | 3 | 11.54% |
| Quasi-Criminal | QC | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | #DIV/0! |
| Conservation | CV | 8 | 5 | 3 | 62.50% | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | -3 | -300.00% |
| Civil Law | CL | 2 | 3 | -1 | 150.00% | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 100.00% |
| Contempt of Court | CC | 4 | 4 | 0 | 100.00% | 4 | 0 | -2 | 2 | 2 | 50.00% |
| Misc. Criminal | MX | 183 | 122 | 61 | 66.67% | 6 | 0 | -32 | 35 | -29 | -483.33% |
| **TOTAL CASES** | | **9,673** | **9,574** | **99** | **98.98%** | **10,783** | **3** | **54** | **10,939** | **-156** | **-1.45%** |

# Winnebago County Pretrial Data Dashboard

On September 18, 2023, the Pretrial Fairness Act (PFA) went into effect. It modified the Illinois' pretrial justice system for court- involved individuals  in the criminal justice system. It eliminated the cash bail system. The PFA defines what offenses are detainable, and a hearing must be held if the prosecutor asks the court to detain an individual pretrial.

In 2025, the Winnebago County State's Attorney filed **610** Petitions to Detain, and **426** Petitions were granted.

You may access the Pretrial Fairness Act Data Dashboard at:
https://pfa.wincoil.gov/

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