



# 17<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT

State of Illinois  
Counties of Winnebago and Boone

## 2020 Annual Report



Trial Court Administration Office  
Winnebago County Courthouse  
400 West State Street, Room 215  
Rockford, Illinois 61101  
[www.17thcircuit.illinoiscourts.gov](http://www.17thcircuit.illinoiscourts.gov)

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## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit Court is to serve the public by providing access to a fair and efficient system of justice in accordance with the law.



## **A Message from the Chief Judge**

*Hon. Eugene G. Doherty*

The judges and court staff within the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit are vested with an important responsibility. It is our job, guided by the rule of law, to ensure access to justice, due process, and procedural fairness to all who come before the court. We recognize the importance of these responsibilities and are humbled by the trust and confidence placed in us by the community we serve.

The achievements of the Seventeenth Circuit Court during 2020 are summarized in this Annual Report. This has been a year without precedent. The COVID-19 pandemic required fast and dramatic changes in how we do business in order to help our community contain the spread. With selective shutdown/slowdown of activities when required, as well as increased reliance on virtual court proceedings, we came through it without missing a beat.

Thank you for your interest in the Seventeenth Circuit Court.

*Eugene G. Doherty*

# Judges of the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit Court

As of December 31, 2020

## Circuit Judges

Hon. Eugene G. Doherty,  
Chief Judge & Supervising Judge of Arbitration and Foreclosure Mediation

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

Hon. Gwyn Gulley,  
Presiding Judge of the Family Division

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

Hon. John Lowry  
Supervising Judge of the Winnebago County Juvenile Courts Division

Hon. Brendan A. Maher

Hon. Joseph G. McGraw  
Presiding Judge of the Criminal Division

Hon. C. Robert Tobin  
Presiding Judge of Boone County

Hon. Ronald J. White

Hon. Kathryn E. Zenoff,  
Assigned to the 2<sup>nd</sup> District Appellate Court

## Associate Judges

Hon. Donald P. Shriver,  
Administrative Associate Judge

Hon. Ronald A. Barch

Hon. Jennifer Clifford

Hon. Mary Linn Green

Hon. Francis M. Martinez

Hon. Steven Nordquist

Hon. Ryan A. Swift

Hon. John H. Young

Hon. Stephen E. Balogh

Hon. Joseph J. Bruce

Hon. John T. Gibbons

Hon. Donna R. Honzel

Hon. Phillip J. Nicolosi

Hon. Debra Schafer

Hon. Randy Wilt,  
Presiding Judge of the Domestic  
Violence Coordinated Courts

**Winnebago County Courthouse**  
400 West State Street, Room 215  
Rockford, Illinois 61101  
815-319-4806

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

Michael Smith,  
Deputy Court Administrator

Kimberly Ackmann,  
Deputy Court Administrator

Kelly Rohrer,  
Administrative Assistant

Kathleen L. Fink,  
Administrative Assistant to the Chief Judge

Nina Ferris,  
Administrative Secretary

Kristine Gibbons,  
Boone County Court Operations Assistant

Beverly Goodson,  
Administrative Secretary

Kelsey Schorsch  
Administrative Secretary

Monica Minnis,  
Language Access Facilitator

Margaret Mujica-Ruiz,  
Boone County Language Access Facilitator

Myriam Hendrix  
Court Interpreter, Winnebago County

Kelly Johnson,  
Court Reporting Services Supervisor

**Problem-Solving Courts**

Emily Behnke,  
Deputy Administrator of  
Problem-Solving Courts

Natasha Houi,  
Senior Database Assistant

Meg Rasmussen and Morgan Wandell,  
Database Assistants

**Alternative Dispute Resolution**

Christine Hawley,  
Arbitration Administrator

Catherine Kosek  
Administrative Assistant

**Domestic Violence Coordinated Courts**

Nikki Ticknor,  
Project Manager

Anna Grzelak,  
Abuse in Later Life Project Coordinator

Kelsey Hart  
Improving Criminal Justice Response to  
Domestic Violence Grant Manager

Teresa McMahon,  
Case Docket Resource Coordinator

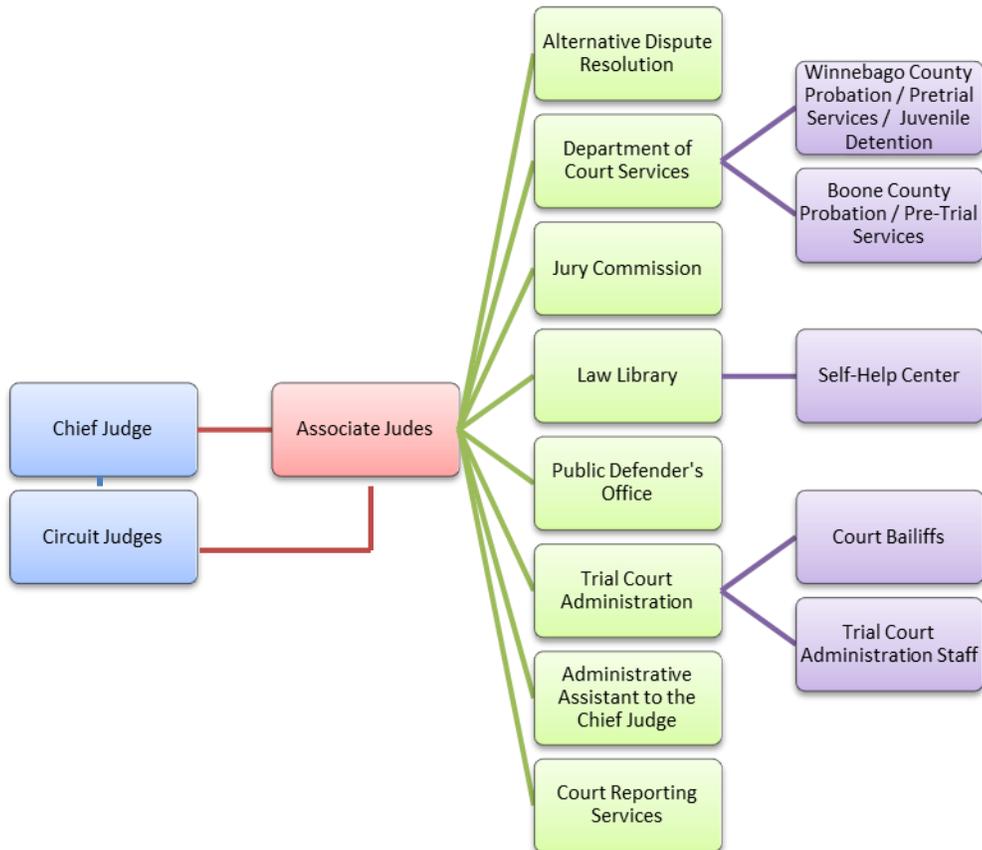
## About the Seventeenth Circuit

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 and five other circuits comprise the Second Judicial District of the Appellate Court. Currently, one circuit judge from Winnebago County, the Honorable Kathryn E. Zenoff, serves on the Illinois Appellate Court, Second District 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-three Judicial Circuits, including our Seventeenth Judicial Circuit which is comprised of both Winnebago County and Boone County.

In the Circuit Court there are two types of Judges: Circuit Judges and Associate Judges. The Seventeenth Judicial Circuit has eleven Circuit Judges and fifteen 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, except felony matters which require prior authorization from the Illinois Supreme Court.

### Organizational Chart



## Court Locations



Winnebago County Courthouse  
400 West State Street  
Rockford, Illinois 61101



Winnebago County Criminal Justice Center  
650 West State Street  
Rockford, Illinois 61102



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

### Administration

Hon. Eugene G. Doherty  
Hon. Donald P. Shriver

Winnebago Co. – 209  
Winnebago Co. – 314

### Appellate Court – Second District

Hon. Kathryn E. Zenoff

c/o Second District Appellate Court  
55 Symphony Way  
Elgin, Illinois 60120

### Civil Division

Hon. Lisa Fabiano  
Hon. Stephen E. Balogh  
Hon. Ronald A. Barch  
Hon. Eugene G. Doherty  
Hon. Donna R. Honzel  
Hon. Donald P. Shriver

Winnebago Co. – 412  
Winnebago Co. – 311  
Boone Co. – 3  
Winnebago Co. – 209  
Winnebago Co. – 426  
Winnebago Co. – 314

### Criminal Division

Hon. Joseph G. McGraw  
Hon. Jennifer Clifford  
Hon. John T. Gibbons  
Hon. Brendan A. Maher  
Hon. Phillip J. Nicolosi  
Hon. Debra D. Schafer  
Hon. Ryan A. Swift  
Hon. C. Robert Tobin  
Hon. Ronald J. White  
Hon. Randy Wilt  
Hon. John H. Young

Winnebago Co. – A  
Winnebago Co. – 467  
Winnebago Co. -- 315  
Winnebago Co. – D  
Winnebago Co. -- C  
Winnebago Co. – 317  
Winnebago Co. - 125  
Boone Co. – 1  
Winnebago Co. – 316  
Winnebago Co. – 478  
Boone Co. – 2

### Family Division

Hon. Gwyn Gulley  
Hon. Joseph P. Bruscato  
Hon. Joseph J. Bruce  
Hon. Steven L. Nordquist

Winnebago Co. – 451  
Winnebago Co. – 455  
Winnebago Co. – 216  
Winnebago Co. – 459

### Juvenile & Problem-Solving Courts Division

Hon. Janet R. Holmgren  
Hon. John S. Lowry  
Hon. Mary Linn Green  
Hon. Francis M. Martinez

Winnebago Co. – 217  
Winnebago Co. – JJC 1  
Winnebago Co. – JJC 2  
Winnebago Co. – JJC 3

## **Trial Court Administration**

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

The Trial Court Administration Office supports the judges of the Seventeenth Circuit Court. The office is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the courtrooms, technology management, information management, budgeting/fiscal matters and project leadership. The Court Administration staff works under the supervision and direction of the Chief Judge.

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, media and public relations, judicial internship programs, and web-site management.

## **Court Reporting Services**

***Kelly Johnson, Court Reporter 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 the stenographic court reporter to record verbatim all that is said during every court proceeding to which he or she is assigned.



Presently there are a total of nineteen court reporters assigned to the 17th Judicial Circuit Court. Winnebago County maintains a staff of fourteen Official Court Reporters and three Court Specialists. Boone County maintains a staff of two Official Court Reporters. Our court reporters 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 electronic recording equipment in all of the courtrooms in both Winnebago and Boone Counties. All civil courtrooms and select felony courtrooms are currently using the digital electronic 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.

## **Court Bailiffs**

***Kelly Jurmu, Deputy Chief Bailiff***

The Bailiffs of the 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit serve a vital function for our courts. Currently, there are twenty-two full time Bailiffs, and one Deputy Chief Bailiff in Winnebago County. The Deputy Chief Bailiff is responsible for work assignments, scheduling, and training. In addition, the Deputy 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.

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.



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

## **Jury Commission**

***Colleen L. Kruse, Clerk of the Jury Commission***

Trial by jury is a fundamental part of the American system of justice, and is a right guaranteed under the constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Illinois. To preserve this right it is essential that the court establish and maintain a well-functioning system for the selection and utilization of jurors. Under Illinois law, every county with a population in excess of 40,000 must establish a Jury Commission consisting of three Jury Commissioners appointed by the circuit judges of the court. Each Jury Commissioner serves for a three year term. The day-to-day operation of the jury system in the Winnebago County Courthouse is administered through the Office of the Jury Commission under the direction of the Clerk of the Jury Commission, Colleen L. Kruse.

This office is responsible for the selection and summoning of prospective jurors and the management of jurors during their term of service. Illinois law requires that the names of prospective jurors be randomly drawn from a combined list of registered voters; Illinois driver's license holders 18 years of age and older; Illinois Disabled Person Identification Card holders; Illinois Identification Card holders and claimants for unemployment insurance. During 2020, 15,105 citizens were summoned for jury service in Winnebago County. Of this number, 2,063 appeared as instructed and 1,218 were directed to courtrooms for jury selection. There were a total of 29 jury trials.

## **Public Defender's Office**

***David Doll, Winnebago County Public Defender***

***Carie Poirier, 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-four staff attorney positions and eleven 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 four 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; juvenile delinquency cases, and represent parents in abuse and neglect cases. The Public Defender also represents all unrepresented persons who appear in custody for bond court, and extradition matters. The office staffs two problem-solving courts: the Youth Recovery Court and the Adult Drug Court.

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.

## **Law Library & Self-Help Centers**

***Brian L. Buzard, Law Library Director / Research Attorney***

The Winnebago County Law Library is located on the third floor of the Winnebago County Courthouse. The Boone County Law Library is located on the second floor of the Boone County Courthouse. Both law libraries are available to serve the public during regular courthouse hours. Winnebago County has a full time Law Library Director who maintains the library collection, answers questions and assists the Judges in legal research projects. Free public access Westlaw® terminals are available in both facilities for computer assisted legal research.



Legal Self-Help Centers are located within each of the law libraries. These facilities make information available on Illinois law and court procedures for individuals who are unable to retain the services of an attorney for representation in court. Internet based resource materials are available through a partnership with Illinois Legal Aid Online. Self-Help Center Navigators are present during normal working hours to assist individuals with computer and print resources. The Winnebago County Legal Self-Help Center was opened in May 2007. In calendar year 2020, the Winnebago County Legal Self-Help Center provided assistance to over 5,053 individuals. The Boone County Self-Help Center was opened in May 2008. In 2020, the Boone County Self-Help Center provided legal information and forms to over 228 individuals.

Both Legal Self-Help Centers are computer based allowing some materials to be accessed via the Seventeenth Circuit Court Webpage at [www.17thcircuit.illinoiscourts.gov](http://www.17thcircuit.illinoiscourts.gov).

## **Alternative Dispute Resolution Center**

***Christine Hawley, 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. Our Alternative Dispute Resolution Center operates this program to help relieve crowded court dockets and to reduce the length and cost of litigation of modest-sized claims through the arbitration process. 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.

## Problem-Solving Courts

### **Therapeutic Intervention Program (TIP) Court**



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.

### **Drug Court**

The Winnebago County Drug Court was established in 1996. The Boone County Drug Court was established in 2013. Our Drug Courts were established 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. Drug Court participants undergo an intensive regimen of substance abuse treatment, case management, drug testing, supervision and monitoring, and immediate sanctions and incentives while regularly reporting to scheduled court hearings before a judge presiding in the Drug Court program. The overall benefit to individuals recovering from substance abuse problems 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.



### **Veterans Court**

The Veteran's 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 Veteran's Justice Outreach Specialist who works through the Department of Veterans Affairs in Madison, WI. Veterans are linked with a variety of services available through Veteran's Affairs in Rockford and in Madison, WI.

## **Family Recovery Court**

The 17<sup>th</sup> 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**

The Youth Recovery Court (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.

## **Domestic Violence Coordinated Courts**

Established in 2012 with a grant award from the Department of Justice/Office on Violence Against Women, the 17<sup>th</sup> 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 11,000 intimate partner domestic violence cases.

### ***Justice for Families (JFF) Grant Program***

The Winnebago County 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court has received multiple grants since 2011 to establish, enhance and expand the work of the DVCC. The Department of Justice/Office on Violence Against Women's Justice for Families grant program supports the work of the Domestic Violence Coordinated Courts 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 limited-English proficient litigants; enhancing legal services for pro-se litigants, and increasing focus on the intersection of domestic violence within stalking, human trafficking, and juvenile court populations.

### ***Domestic Violence Mentor Court Initiative***

The 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court Domestic Violence Coordinated Courts have served as a nationally recognized Domestic Violence Mentor Court since 2014. This recognition has allowed the 17<sup>th</sup> 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.

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

The 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court is a recipient of the Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking (ICJR) grant program from the Department of Justice/Office on Violence Against Women. 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 prosecution and other members of our community's coordinated community response to domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

### ***Enhancing Training and Services to End Abuse in Later Life (ALL) Grant Program***

Winnebago County is a recipient of the Enhancing Training and Services to End Abuse in Later Life (ALL) grant program from the Department of Justice/Office on Violence Against Women. This grant program addressed elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, including domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking, against victims who are 50 years of age or older. Goals of this grant program include establishing a coordinated community response to address victimization in later life, training for law enforcement, prosecutors, victim service providers, and courts, and victim advocacy for victims of abuse in later life.

### ***Multi-Disciplinary Teams and a Coordinated Community Response***

The Domestic Violence Coordinated Courts 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 Strangulation Task Force, Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team, Abuse in Later Life Coordinated Community Response Team, Protection Order Violation and Enforcement Team, Victim Safety and Security Committee, and the City of Rockford Mayor's Task Force on Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking.

## **Department of Court Services**

### ***Deb Jarvis, Director of Court Services***

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 Pre-Trial Division. Additionally, the department operates the Resource Intervention Center which enables community service agencies to provide much needed services to the adult offender under one roof.



## **Winnebago County Adult Probation Division**

### ***Lorraine Dixon, Deputy Director***

The mission of the Adult Probation Division 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 2,725 offenders in 2020. Adult Probation employs a Deputy Director, three Supervisors, thirty-three Probation Officers, and five support staff. This division of Court Services consists of the following units:

- Assessment Unit
- General Unit
- Domestic Violence Unit
- Drug Court Unit
- DUI Unit (Court Supervision/Conditional Discharge)
- Therapeutic Intervention Program ("TIP Unit"- mental health cases)
- Inter/Intra-State Transfer Unit
- Presentence Investigation Unit
- Public Service Work Unit
- Sex-Offender Unit
- Specialized Supervision 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 Evidenced Based Practices when working with clients.

## **Winnebago County Juvenile Probation Division**

***Taryn Marko, Deputy Director***

The Winnebago County Juvenile Probation Department 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.

The Winnebago County Juvenile Probation Department employs a Deputy Director, four Supervisors, eighteen 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 2020, there were approximately 115 probation adjustments as well as 23 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 community-based programming, public service work, restitution, detention time, foster care, or residential placement with the goal of rehabilitating juvenile offenders.

The Department has several specialized Probation Officers, including five School-Based Officers. The School-Based Officers are assigned to each of the Rockford Public High Schools and Harlem High School. They provide on-site prevention and intervention services, which allows the juvenile to focus on their educational needs. Using the Effective Casework Model (ECW) for assessment and case management, the Probation Officer works with the youth and his/her family to address identified issues and encourage positive change. At the end of 2020, there were 401 active juvenile probation cases with an average caseload of 31 minors per Probation Officer.

Juvenile Probation also oversees operation of the Juvenile Assessment Center. This 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. The Probation Officers at this location also conduct assessments of the arrested minors to refer to services and 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.

## **Boone County Probation Department**

***Amy Gallano, Deputy Director***

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

The Department consists of a Deputy Director, Senior Probation Officer, two Adult Probation Officers, one Pretrial Officer, one Drug Court Coordinator/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 offenders whose criminal behavior is directly linked to a substance abuse diagnosis. The juvenile probation officers supervise a diversion program designed to keep less serious offenders 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 2019 the Department formalized a Pretrial Services Division.

## **Winnebago County Pretrial Services Division**

***Jodi Gerue, Deputy Director***

***Jodi Campbell, Supervisor***

The Pretrial Services Division was established in July of 1990 to help alleviate jail overcrowding. Our mission is to promote pretrial justice while enhancing community safety. In 2020, we continued to assist the Court in making decisions regarding release and supervision by providing the court with bond reports and risk assessment information on defendants who were arrested and remained in custody prior to arraignment.

The bond report prepared by Pretrial Services provided the court with information about a defendant's background, criminal history, marital and family information allowing the Court to make timely and informed bond decisions. Pretrial Services prepared a total of 3,256 reports in 2020.

Pretrial Services also conducted the revised Virginia Pretrial Risk Assessment Instrument. This risk assessment predicts the likelihood of pretrial failure (failure to appear in court or to be charged with a new arrest during the pretrial stage). In addition, Pretrial Services completed the Domestic Violence Screening Instrument (DVSI) in domestic violence cases alleging intimate partner violence. Pretrial Services conducted 2,899 pretrial risk assessments and 1,039 of those reports included domestic violence screenings in 2020.

Pretrial Services supervised defendants released on bond and monitored conditions of release including reporting to Pretrial Services, curfew check, urinalysis, breathalyzer, assessment, treatment, counseling, education and employment. In 2020, Pretrial Services supervised 1,431 defendants released on conditions of bond.

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

## **Winnebago County Juvenile Detention Center**

***William A. Vedra, Superintendent***

The Winnebago County Juvenile Detention Center is a secure, 48 bed facility 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 expanded to its current capacity in 1995.

In calendar year 2020, the average daily population was 23.6. This was a decrease from 2019 when the facility had an average of 40.1. The continued improvement in the average daily population is attributed to the efforts of the Court, State's Attorney, and Public Defender working to handle cases more efficiently. In addition, this year, some of the decrease in population is also correlated to the drop in the number of admissions due to the special circumstances created by the pandemic.

The Detention Center provides a variety of programming for the minors lodged there. Three District 205, special education certified, teachers work with the youth on either their home school work or on a core curriculum of Math, English, and Geography. The District also installed WiFi in the building, which enables the minors to use tablets for their work for the first time. Outside volunteers and detention center staff supplement their formal education with career exploration, art, and teaching a variety of life skills.

## **Resource Intervention Center (RIC)**

***Jodi GeRue, Deputy Director***  
***Perry Weatherford, Supervisor***

The Resource Intervention Center (RIC) opened for service February 11, 2008. In 2020, the RIC continued to house comprehensive services for individuals being supervised by the Winnebago County Adult Probation Division and the Winnebago County Pretrial Services Division.



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

Pretrial Officers completed risk assessments that identify areas of risk related to the likelihood of failure to appear and arrest for a new offense if the defendant is released pending trial. Interventions at the RIC targeted the identified areas of risk.

Probationers and pretrial defendants referred to the RIC were assessed for readiness to change using the URICA (University of Rhode Island Change Assessment) or SOCRATES (Stages of Change Readiness and Treatment Eagerness Scale) tool. Based on this score, individuals who were identified as not being ready to change were recommended to a cognitive behavioral change program to address treatment readiness.

The RIC's collaborative service providers included Rock Valley College Foundation-HEARR (Higher Education Alliance for the Rock River Valley) who provide educational and job readiness services. Rosecrance and Remedies provided substance abuse assessment and intensive outpatient treatment. Youth Services Bureau provided parenting classes. Remedies and Children's Home and Aid provided partner abuse intervention programs. RIC staff provided cognitive behavioral change groups, such as anger management, T4C, Pathways to Change (The Change Companies Basic Cognitive Skills), Beyond Violence and Beyond Trauma. RIC Therapists provided mental health assessments, individual therapy, and group therapy. Additionally, RIC personnel provided orientation groups, a relapse prevention program, and substance abuse aftercare.

In 2020, the most utilized programs at the RIC were substance abuse treatment and cognitive behavioral programs.

The Resource Intervention Center employs a deputy director (who also oversees the Pretrial Division), one supervisor, two probation officers, two therapists (Licensed Clinical Social Workers), and one support staff.

## **Court Programs and Activities**

### **Judicial Speakers Bureau**

The 17<sup>th</sup> 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 Seventeenth Circuit that would like to further their understanding of our court systems and the administration of justice.

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.

### **Small Claims Mediation Program**

Since 2006, pro se litigants in small claims 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.

### **Family Mediation Program**

The 17<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court Family Law Mediation Program provides a way for parents to work out child custody and visitation 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.

### **Court-Annexed Major Civil Mediation**

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 case may be referred to mediation by a judge or by stipulation of the parties involved.

### **Residential Foreclosure Mediation Program**

The Residential Foreclosure Mediation Program, serving Winnebago and Boone Counties, is located in the lower level of the Winnebago County Courthouse. The operation of the program is provided by a full-time program coordinator and one part-time program assistant. The Program supports homeowners as they organize their financial paperwork to present to their lender. After the lender reviews the paperwork, a trained mediator helps borrowers and lenders communicate to explore available options that may resolve the foreclosure process. Housing counseling services are provided by HomeStart, a nonprofit, HUD-certified housing counseling agency. In 2020, 75% of homeowners who made it through the pre-mediation phase retained their home.

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 the housing counseling and mediation services.

## **National Adoption Day**

National Adoption Day, occurring each November, is celebrated in the 17<sup>th</sup> Circuit with a gathering and celebration finalizing adoptions of children previously residing in foster care. However, an in-person celebration was not available in 2020 due to the pandemic.

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 seventeen years on National Adoption Day, a total of 392 children have been adopted into permanent loving families in Winnebago County.

## **Justice Partner Collaborations**



### **Family Violence Coordinating Council**

The 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Family Violence Coordinating Council (FVCC) 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, and stalking. The FVCC's five committees focus their efforts in three primary areas: training, prevention, and awareness.

In August 2020, the FVCC collaborated with the Mayor's Office on Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking, Rockford Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation, and Catholic Charities to co-host the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Educator's Summit. The Educator's Summit consisted of a series of trainings for local teachers on domestic violence, sexual violence, human trafficking, and how these issues impact students in the classroom. Over 150 teachers and educators from Winnebago County attended.

In October 2020, the FVCC sponsored Domestic Violence Awareness Month events for Winnebago and Boone counties. These events included the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Awareness Art Contest, where local high school students created and donated art to be displayed at the Family Peace Center. The FVCC hosted Rockford City Market, where purple ribbons of awareness were given out to all patrons, along with information and resources for survivors located at the main booth. Additionally, the annual "Shining the Light on Domestic Violence" awareness event went virtual with videos released on Facebook each week highlighting domestic violence survivors, music from local musician Clark Kelly, and an award dedicated to the VOICES Survivor Advocacy Committee, Rockford Chapter.

Early in 2020, the Honorable Jennifer Clifford was appointed to continue the FVCC's work to improve approaches, programs, procedures, protocols, and policies in an effort to create appropriate family violence intervention, education, and prevention through cooperation and collaboration. Previously, the Honorable Rosemary Collins (ret.) retired as Chairperson of the Council after 25 years of service.

### **Criminal Justice Coordinating Council**

The Winnebago County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council 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.

## The Kids' Place



The Kids' Place facilities are secure waiting areas for children ages two through twelve. These facilities 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 facilities are located in the lower level of the Winnebago County Courthouse and off the first floor lobby in the Criminal Justice Center. Both facilities 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 51,554 children have used the services of The Kids' Place. In 2020, a total of 268 children were entrusted in the care of the Kids' Place.



## 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. Our program currently has 12 therapy dog teams. Sadly, we had to say goodbye to both Bella and Rhea this year as they crossed over the Rainbow Bridge.

The program launched late 2017, and since inception the Winnebago County Courthouse has had over 375 visits from the therapy dog teams. The program was suspended for most of 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but prior to March we had 32 visits. We have missed our therapy dog teams and look forward to their return!

## Domestic Violence Assistance Center

The Domestic Violence Assistance Center (DVAC) is located in the Winnebago County Courthouse, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

## Children's Safe Harbor



Children's Safe Harbor

Children's Safe Harbor is located at 1416 20<sup>th</sup> Street 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 and/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. Priority is given to residents of Winnebago County. Families may utilize Children's Safe Harbor as long as necessary at no cost.

### **Supervised Visitation**

Children's Safe Harbor provides supervised visitation services for adult and child victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking and child abuse. Children's Safe Harbor's programming is grounded in the belief that domestic violence is a crime of power and control that impacts the whole family; therefore services are rooted in safety of both adult victims and children.

Supervised visitation is limited to providing services between custodial and non-custodial parents. 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. Parents enter and exit the center through separate entrances, park in separate parking lots and arrive/depart at pre-scheduled staggered times.

Since implementing supervised visitation services in 2014, Children's Safe Harbor has served 277 families, 554 parents and 427 children.

### **Visitation Exchange**

Children's Safe Harbor allows residential and non-residential parents to conduct visitation exchanges without coming in contact with each other. Parents enter and exit the visitation center through separate entrances, park in separate parking lots and arrive/depart at pre-scheduled staggered times.

Parents need not be identified as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking or child abuse for visitation exchange services (due to the funding stream) however program services are still operated as such. As a result, safety for both the adult and child victim will still be the highest priority of the agency regardless of the service provided.

Since 2009, Children's Safe Harbor has served 516 families, 1032 parents and 820 children.

For more information about Children's Safe Harbor contact 815-316-7772 or access [www.childrendefeharbor.net](http://www.childrendefeharbor.net)

## 2020 Court Statistics

### Winnebago County Year End 2020

<b>CASE TYPE</b>		<b>FILINGS 1-1-2020 to 12-31-20</b>	<b>CLOSED 1-1-2020 to 12-31-20</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>Percent of Cases Closed</b>	<b>PENDING CASELOAD as of 12-31-20</b>
LAW (OVER)	<b>L</b>	423	354	69	83.69%	803
LAW (UNDER)	<b>LM</b>	775	793	-18	102.32%	619
ARBITRATION	<b>AR</b>	508	485	23	95.47%	373
CHANCERY	<b>CH</b>	324	492	-168	151.85%	849
MISC REMEDY	<b>MR</b>	977	928	49	94.98%	505
EMIN. DOMAIN	<b>ED</b>	4	9	-5	225%	3
TAX	<b>TX</b>	219	231	-12	105.48%	222
MUN. CORP	<b>MC</b>	1	2	-1	200%	0
DISSOLUTION	<b>D</b>	910	827	83	90.88%	1077
SM. CLAIMS	<b>SC</b>	2834	2358	476	83.2%	3472
PROBATE	<b>P</b>	535	736	-201	137.57%	6930
ADOPTION	<b>AD</b>	156	132	24	84.62%	197
FAMILY	<b>F</b>	678	409	269	60.32%	1416
ORDER PROT	<b>OP</b>	2736	2736	0	100%	0
MENT. HEALTH	<b>MH</b>	297	278	19	93.6%	33
JUVENILE ABUSE	<b>JA</b>	568	398	170	70.7%	1527
JUVENILE DEL.	<b>JD</b>	248	306	-58	123.39%	1345
JUVENILE	<b>J</b>	5	23	-18	460%	147
CRIMINAL FEL.	<b>CF</b>	2706	2820	-114	104.21%	3861
CRIMINAL MISD.	<b>CM</b>	3114	2883	231	92.58%	7538
DUI	<b>DT</b>	779	874	-95	112.2%	1860
TRAFFIC	<b>TR</b>	22372	24508	-2136	109.55%	37199
ORDIN VIOL.	<b>OV</b>	363	395	-32	108.82%	463
CIV. LAW VIOL.	<b>CL</b>	114	161	-47	141.23%	112
CONSERVATION	<b>CV</b>	98	93	5	94.9%	205
<b>TOTAL CASES</b>		<b>41,744</b>	<b>43,231</b>	<b>-1487</b>	<b>103.56%</b>	<b>70,756</b>

## Boone County Year End 2020

<b>CASE TYPE</b>		<b>FILINGS 1-1-2020 to 12-31-20</b>	<b>CLOSED 1-1-2020 to 12-31-20</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>Percent of Cases Closed</b>	<b>PENDING CASELOAD as of 12-31-20</b>
LAW (OVER)	<b>L</b>	39	25	14	64.10%	87
LAW (UNDER)	<b>LM</b>	48	54	-6	112.50%	9
ARBITRATION	<b>AR</b>	59	39	20	66.10%	42
CHANCERY	<b>CH</b>	63	76	-13	120.63%	91
MISC REMEDY	<b>MR</b>	150	143	7	95.33%	10
EMIN. DOMAIN	<b>ED</b>	0	0	0	100%	0
TAX	<b>TX</b>	2	5	-3	250%	3
MUN. CORP	<b>MC</b>	0	0	0	100%	0
DISSOLUTION	<b>D</b>	155	166	-11	107.10%	131
SM. CLAIMS	<b>SC</b>	531	426	105	80.23%	266
PROBATE	<b>P</b>	75	53	22	70.67%	229
ADOPTION	<b>AD</b>	8	2	6	25.00%	9
FAMILY	<b>F</b>	48	49	-1	102.08%	58
ORDER PROT	<b>OP</b>	270	269	1	99.63%	22
MENT. HEALTH	<b>MH</b>	0	0	0	100%	0
JUVENILE ABUSE	<b>JA</b>	30	15	15	50.00%	65
JUVENILE DEL.	<b>JD</b>	106	121	-15	114.15%	185
JUVENILE	<b>J</b>	3	14	-11	466.67%	0
CRIMINAL FEL.	<b>CF</b>	304	243	61	79.93%	511
CRIMINAL MISD.	<b>CM</b>	238	256	-18	107.56%	826
DUI	<b>DT</b>	173	167	6	96.53%	401
TRAFFIC	<b>TR</b>	5496	5039	457	91.68%	10429
ORDIN VIOL.	<b>OV</b>	128	153	-25	119.53%	40
CIV. LAW VIOL.	<b>CL</b>	26	57	-31	219.23%	2
CONSERVATION	<b>CV</b>	8	12	-4	150.00%	1
<b>TOTAL CASES</b>		<b>7,960</b>	<b>7,384</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>92.76%</b>	<b>13,417</b>