



*For Immediate Release*

Date: January 15, 2021

## **Remote Court Access in Kane County 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit is extended through February 28, 2021**

After consulting with the Kane County Health Department, a decision was made for the health and safety of our community to extend the current remote access to court hearings through February 28, 2021 (General Order 21-01). What this means for the average court-goer is that they will still need to attend court, but they do not need to go to any of the Kane County court buildings to do so. Instead, they will attend court from home from an internet connected device, through the online Zoom platform.

Only court staff, those seeking an emergency order of protection, or those who have been authorized by a Judge to appear, will be allowed in to the court buildings.

Criminal jury trials will resume beginning Thursday, January 28, 2021. All potential jurors, attorneys, witnesses, and litigants that are participating in the jury trial will be allowed in the Judicial Center after going through screening at the front door. The decision to resume criminal jury trials was made after speaking with the Kane County Health Department, Kane County State's Attorney, Kane County Public Defender, the private defense bar, Kane County Sheriff, and the Kane County Circuit Clerk's Office.

All safeguards recommended by the Kane County Health Department will be implemented to keep everyone involved in the criminal jury trials safe and healthy. These measures include, but are not limited to, making sure everyone that enters the Judicial Center for the trial does not have a temperature or other COVID-19 symptoms, has access to hand sanitizing stations, and consistently and correctly uses their facemasks. Proper social distancing and constant cleaning of high touch surfaces will also be maintained.

Chief Judge Hull commented, "Criminal jury trials are an essential to the criminal justice system. It is critical that we do everything in our power to make sure that we give those charged, as well as the victims, their day in court."

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