

# ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

The Executive Office is comprised of the Administrative Director, the Executive Assistant to the Director, the Senior Attorney, supporting attorney(s), and administrative staff. Through the Administrative Director, the Executive Office is responsible for coordinating and guiding the operations of each of the divisions of the Administrative Office and serves as a central resource for myriad operational issues which impact the administration of the judicial branch.



The **Executive Office**, on behalf of the Supreme Court, manages and coordinates liaison activities with Executive and Legislative Branch officials and agencies. One of the major duties performed for the Supreme Court is the consideration of non-routine administrative matters, which are presented during each of the Court's terms. The Administrative Director, in collaboration with the Chief Justice, prepares and presents agenda issues to the Court for discussion and deliberation to assure that the business of the judicial branch is thoroughly managed. Agenda items approved by the Court for action are then implemented by the Director through the Executive Office.

The Executive Office plans and directs Administrative Office staff support for the Supreme Court Committees and the Committees of the Illinois Judicial Conference. The study and recommendations which flow from each Judicial Conference Committee to the Supreme Court impact matters related to improving the administration of justice in Illinois. Consistent with the Court's reliance on the work of the Judicial Conference committees to examine and make recommendations on matters of judicial branch

policy, the Court again assigned specific tasks and projects to Judicial Conference committees in 2009. The Administrative Director assigns senior level staff, with subject matter expertise, to serve as liaisons to assist each committee in their assignments.

In its administration of Supreme Court Rule 39 (Appointment of Associate Judges), the Executive Office conducted twenty-five associate judge elections in fourteen of Illinois' twenty-three judicial circuits during 2009. The Executive Office also processes applications filed under Supreme Court Rule 295, which authorizes the assignment of associate judges to hear felony matters. Additionally, applications for licenses issued to those law students seeking to provide limited legal representation under Supreme Court Rule 711 are processed through the Executive Office.

The Executive Office's activities and responsibilities also include securing and tracking legal representation through the Office of the Attorney General for members of the judicial branch named in a case or controversy arising out of the performance of their official duties. Executive Office staff negotiates, prepares,

# ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE DIRECTORY

## EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Cynthia Y. Cobbs, Director  
Michael Tardy, Executive Assistant  
Marcia Meis, Senior Attorney

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE DIVISIONS

*Administrative Services Division* - Kathleen L. O'Hara, Assistant Director

*Court Services Division* - Dawn Marie Rubio, Assistant Director

*Judicial Education Division* - Cyrana Mott, Assistant Director

*Judicial Management Information Services (JMIS)* - Skip Robertson, Assistant Director

*Probation Services Division* - Cheryl Barrett, Assistant Director

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and manages office leases and contracts for the Supreme and Appellate Courts, mandatory arbitration programs, and the Administrative Office. All vendor contracts generated by the Administrative Office for use in securing goods and services are reviewed and approved by the Executive Office. Written summaries of recent Supreme Court opinions are prepared by legal staff within the Executive Office for distribution to all Illinois Judges. Additionally, the Executive Office serves as secretary to the Illinois Courts Commission, managing the filing and preservation of Commission records, distributing the Official Illinois Courts Commission Reports, and performing all other duties typically executed by a clerk of a court of record. Executive Office Staff also prepares and executes grants which provide for programming funded through the Lawyer's Assistance Program Act.

The **Administrative Services Division** provides technical and support services to the judicial branch through its five operational units; the Payroll/Benefits Unit, the Accounting Unit,

the Budget Unit, the Human Resources Unit, and Mail/Reprographics Unit.

The Payroll/Benefits Unit maintains all payroll records for current state-paid judicial branch employees, as well as records for all previous employees. Staff of this unit work with the Office of the Comptroller to produce both monthly and semi-monthly payrolls for over 1,500 current judicial branch employees. Staff also coordinate the state's varied employee benefit programs, including health, dental, and life insurance.

The Accounting Unit consistently and accurately processes all payment vouchers for the Supreme Court, the Appellate Court, the state-paid functions of the circuit courts, and the Administrative Office. The Accounting Unit also maintains all financial records for the expenditure of resources appropriated by the General Assembly. Staff of this unit work closely with staff of the Comptroller's Office to reconcile payment information and provide that office any additional information needed to facilitate the payment of judicial branch bills.

In addition to overseeing procurement and



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inventory controls, the Budget Unit produces highly technical and analytical financial reports used by judicial branch managers and the Administrative Director. These reports track daily spending, contractual obligations, and projected needs. This unit also prepares the comprehensive documentation utilized in the development and implementation of the annual judicial branch budget. The Budget Unit monitors the number of authorized judicial and non-judicial positions within the judicial branch and coordinates the flow of information among the Secretary of State's Office and the State Board of Elections regarding judicial election.

The Human Resource Unit provides personnel services to judicial branch employees and managers. Staff within this unit maintain comprehensive attendance records for all judicial branch personnel covered by the Supreme Court's Leave of Absence Policies and assist individuals with questions regarding the associated paid and unpaid leaves of absences. Staff interact with CMS personnel to coordinate the state's workers' compensation program. The Human Resource Unit also works with judicial branch employees and managers in administering the judicial branch's classification and compensation plan. When requested, staff of this unit also assist judicial branch managers in their recruitment and selection process, including the placement of advertisements, the dissemination, collection, and review of applications, administering proficiency testing, and securing reference checks. The Mail/Reprographics Unit oversees the distribution of mail and parcel services for the Administrative Office. Acting as its own print shop, staff of this unit review materials presented for copying and

determine the best method to replicate the originals. In many instances, the Unit produces print quality manuals, brochures, and publications.

The **Court Services Division** is organized into four working groups (the Courts, Children and Families Unit; the Program Unit; the Recordkeeping and Technology Unit; and the Labor Unit) and is involved in a diverse and wide range of activities and projects affecting judges, circuit clerks, and other components of the judicial branch of government. The Division is

responsible for staffing a variety of Supreme Court committees, Judicial Conference committees, and the Conference of Chief Circuit Judges. It produces the Judicial Conference Report, the Court-Annexed Mandatory Arbitration Report and this annual report. The Division also serves as the primary liaison for addressing concerns and initiatives relating to the trial courts and circuit court clerks. It assists with local labor negotiations that impact the judicial branch. In addition, a number of specific-topic programs, such as management of the Capital Litigation Trial Bar (CLTB), maintenance of judicial branch long-range capital development plans, and maintenance of a court interpreter registry, are administered by the Division. Child protection projects, including management of related federal grants, are also one of its responsibilities. Also, Court Services oversees the operations of 16 mandatory arbitration programs. Finally, the Division provides legislative support services to the Supreme Court, and prepares legislative summaries for Chief Circuit Judges and circuit clerks.

In coordination with the Division, and pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 58, voluntary judicial performance evaluations were conducted in 2009 in the Ninth, Thirteenth and Twentieth Judicial Circuits. In 2009, Court Services staff processed 92 applications for membership in the Capital Litigation Trial Bar. Also, staff processed 11 applications for certification as an approved provider of Capital Litigation Trial Bar continuing legal education training courses. As of December 31, 2009 there were 869 members of the Illinois Capital Litigation Trial Bar. The Division

processed the removal of 94 members from the active roster of the Capital Litigation Trial Bar for failure to comply with continuing education requirements as mandated by Supreme Court Rule 714(g). Pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 714(i), the division assisted in the reinstatement of four members to the active roster of the Capital Litigation Trial Bar. In 2009, the staff administered 13 impartial medical examination orders pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 215(d). The Labor Unit represented judicial employers in negotiating approximately 35 collective bargaining agreements, and in advising judges and circuit clerks on matters of contract interpretation and administration.

The Division is responsible for a number of initiatives and projects associated with child protection issues in the Illinois courts, including the management of the federally-funded statewide Court Improvement Program (CIP). There are currently three grant awards (Basic, Data and Training) for which the staff manages all technical, fiscal and program components. The Division identified legal representation as the funding priority through 2011, therefore preference will be given to programming and funding projects that focus on improving outcomes for children and families, by enhancing the effectiveness of legal representation of children, parents, the state, and the child welfare agency in child abuse and neglect, and termination of parental rights proceedings. One example includes the development and regional delivery of the training *Joining Forces: Tackling the Challenges Attorneys Face in Juvenile Abuse and Neglect Cases*. During two CIP funding cycles the Division funded 19 proposals. The second funding cycle included awards specifically related to the legal representation funding priority. As a result of the Data Collection and Analysis Needs Assessment, completed in 2008, the Division established a multi-pronged approach to implement the recommendations contained in the assessment. The initial step in implementation is the Child Protection Data Courts [CPDC] Project. The initial purpose of the CPDC project is to establish a short-term manual court data collection structure to measure the nine key child protection court measures and enable the courts to improve efficiency and effectiveness in ensuring safety,

permanency, due process, and timeliness in child protection cases.

The Division also provides a wide range of guidance and technical support services to circuit clerks and their staff. Division staff continues to work with the Oversight Board for Continuing Education of the Illinois Association of Court Clerks to develop educational programs for circuit clerks and their staff, and coordination of the New Clerk Mentor Program. Division staff also coordinated and conducted a three-day New Clerk Orientation in January of 2009 for 21 newly elected circuit clerks and their mentors. An update of the Manual on Fines and Fees and the Manual on Recordkeeping is in process and will be distributed electronically to Chief Circuit Judges and Circuit Clerks upon completion during 2010. Staff assisted the Office of the Auditor General in review of the Circuit Clerk Audit Guidelines and published and distributed the revisions to county board chairs and circuit clerks. The Division coordinated activities relating to implementation of the Supreme Court approved Electronic Business Initiative, providing a framework for specific statewide e-Business services in the trial courts. In 2009, Logan, Bond and St. Clair Counties were approved to accept electronic pleas of guilty in accordance with the Standards for accepting pleas of guilty in minor traffic and conservation offenses pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 529. Four counties are participating in e-Filing pilots – Cook, DuPage, Will and Madison. These pilots are authorized to accept electronic filings for various authorized case categories as approved by the Supreme Court. The AOIC provided merged jury lists to 99 counties in 2009. Petit juror and grand jury handbooks were supplied to counties as needed. The Division continues to manage the Offense Code Table (OFT) to identify offenses



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reported through the Automated Disposition Reporting (ADR) Program. A complete, updated version of the OFT was issued in April 2009, and is currently used for ADR reporting in 86 Illinois counties.

The **Judicial Education Division** is responsible for the coordination and development of judicial education resources to ensure Illinois judges acquire the knowledge and skills needed to be effective jurists. In that regard, the Division partners with and provides administrative support to the Illinois Judicial Conference Committee on Education, the Special Supreme Court Committee on Capital Cases, the Judicial Mentor Committee, the Appellate Court Administrative Committee and other committees, commissions or groups as determined by the training and educational needs of the judiciary on behalf of the Court.

Since the Supreme Court's adoption of a 30 hour continuing judicial education requirement for all Appellate, Circuit and Associate Judges, the Division has coordinated along with the Illinois Judicial Conference Committee on Education, the presentation of Education Conference 2008 and 2010. Over 950 judges attended the two sessions of Education Conference 2008, with the same attendance expectation for the 2010 Conference. Education Conference 2010 will offer judicial education training in four core tracks: Judicial Conduct, Professionalism and Ethics; Civil Law and Procedure; Criminal Law and Procedure; and Family Law and Procedure. Fifty-one sessions, many to be presented twice over the course of five days, will be taught or facilitated by 133 judicial faculty and guest speakers.

The Division is actively engaged from year-to-year with the Project Benchbook Editorial Board of the Committee on Education in the production of judicial benchbooks. In the fall of 2009, the first edition of the Criminal Law and Procedure benchbook was released along with 2009 Updates to judicial benchbooks on Domestic Violence, Civil Law and Procedure, DUI/Traffic, Evidence and Family Law and Procedure in hardcopy and CD format. In 2010, benchbooks will be available to the Illinois judiciary through the judicial portal. The first edition of the benchbook on Capital Cases, produced in partnership with the Special Supreme Court Committee on Capital Cases, is scheduled to be distributed in the fall of 2010 to members of the judiciary certified to hear capital cases.

The Division oversaw the presentation of two Capital Litigation Seminars in accordance with Supreme Court Rule 43, the New Judge Seminar, the Appellate Court Conference, a Faculty Development Workshop for judges serving as judicial education program faculty, and the 2009-2010 Seminar Series which included two regional (two day) seminars and one mini-seminar (one day). The University of Illinois College of Law was the setting for the 2009 Advanced Judicial Academy, a biennial event, which the College of Law will host again in June, 2011. In addition, the Division, as part of its staff support to the Judicial Mentor Committee, administers the New Judge Mentor program, which provides an experienced judicial mentor for all new Illinois judges. Lastly, the Division collaborated with the Judicial Management Information Services (JMIS) Division of the Administrative Office in the development and launch of an electronic registration system, namely, the Conference Management Application or CMA.

The **Judicial Management Information Services (JMIS) Division** is one of five divisions within the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC). The JMIS division is charged with providing technology to the offices and staff of the Illinois Supreme and Appellate Courts, Supreme Court supporting units and all divisions within the AOIC. The JMIS division is staffed by 23 professionals consisting of four groups organized to respond to the technology initiatives assigned by the Administrative Director.

The Hardware / Software group manages the Courts' local and wide area networks, servers, personal computers, peripherals, and productivity software. The Hardware / Software group is also responsible for the installation and support of the state-provided digital recording systems in the supreme, appellate and trial courts. The Internet Services group is responsible for the design and upkeep of the Court's website ([www.state.il.us/court](http://www.state.il.us/court)) as well as the use of Internet technologies that enhance the exchange of information throughout the judiciary. The User Services group staffs JMIS' Help Desk, is responsible for database administration, provides telecommunication services, and manages the inventory and asset tracking of the Court's technology equipment. The Application Group is responsible for the design and development of more than twenty enterprise database applications written using an Oracle or



Progress database system.

In 2009, through the Administrative Director and Illinois Supreme Court, JMIS has completed the installation of electronic recording systems in each of the five Appellate Districts. Consistent with the audio and video recording of Supreme Court arguments, all Appellate Court and Workers' Compensation hearings are now recorded and posted to the Court's website.

At the direction of the Administrative Director, the AOIC continued its work on planning and implementation of the electronic business initiative to provide statewide electronic filing, electronic pleas of guilty for traffic citations, and a central repository of probation and trial court case information. Using information received from a target assessment study, an infrastructure prototype, and discussions with technology-specific vendors, the e-Business initiative is expected to progress with the implementation of a database platform and infrastructure standards to govern the Court's e-Business model.

The **Probation Services Division** provides services to Chief Judges and their probation staff in all circuits. The Probation and Probation Officer's Act, at 730 ILCS 110/15 (1) states: "The Supreme Court of Illinois may establish a Division of Probation Services whose purpose shall be the development, establishment, promulgation, and enforcement of uniform standards for probation services in the State, and otherwise carry out the intent of this Act." Consistent with its statutory responsibility, the mission of the Probation Division is to improve the quality, effectiveness, and professionalism of probation and detention services in Illinois. In carrying out this mission, the Division's training, monitoring, standards-setting, and technical assistance activities extend to all aspects of the administration and operation of Illinois probation and court services departments. These activities include the administration of state reimbursement to counties for probation and detention services, review and approval of annual probation plans submitted by each department, collection and analysis of statewide probation data, administration of probation employment and compensation standards, implementation of evidence-based practices (EBP) in the supervision of offenders on probation, monitoring and evaluating probation programs and operations, administration of the interstate compact for

probationers transferring into and out of the state, design and delivery of basic and advanced training for probation and detention personnel, and provision of technical assistance and staff support to circuit courts to improve the administration and operation of probation services in Illinois. In 2009, the Division's major focus was the application of the Supreme Court's data-driven model of probation reimbursement consistent with the principles of Evidence-Based Practices (EBP). Concomitant with the 25% reduction in 2009 appropriations to the Supreme Court for probation, is the Division's responsibility to work with chief circuit judges and probation departments to ensure core probation services are sustained. Many probation departments have struggled to preserve core services as a result of budget cuts and staff reductions.

Notwithstanding the critical shortfall in state probation funding in 2009, the furtherance of EBP principles and programming continued. Division staff provided a wide array of technical assistance and training to probation officers in such areas as Motivational Interviewing, Stages of Change, and cognitive-behavioral curriculums, including "Thinking For A Change." Applied to target the higher risk offenders, the ultimate goal of EBP probation in Illinois is to achieve a significant reduction in the number of future crimes and victims. Out of the funding crisis in 2009 has emerged an even more urgent commitment to fully implementing and measuring EBP throughout Illinois.

The Division sponsored fifty-one (51) training events in 2009 that served over 1,500 participants. In addition to Basic Training for probation and detention staff, training topics in 2009 included cognitive-behavioral interventions and curriculums; Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R), Youth Assessment Screening Instrument (YASI), Officer Safety, Legal Issues, and the Probation Directors' Leadership Academy.

Preparations and plans were finalized for upgrading the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI) project for juvenile offenders to a secure, web-based application that will enhance case supervision planning and the application of the effective casework model (ECW). It is anticipated that a three phase transition will be accomplished by mid-year 2010.

