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**Kane County 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court and Justice System Partners**  
**Responsive Integrated Justice**  
**Justice System Process Program Presentation to County Board Members**  
**National Center for State Courts Summary Report**

On February 2, 2017, in collaboration with the National Center for State Courts, the justice process partners for the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit in Kane County, Illinois presented an integrated justice process program to County Board members. The primary goal of the program presentation was to share and discuss information with Board members regarding the criminal justice process and the interactions of justice partners. The presentation was designed to accomplish the following objectives:

- A review of court purposes and why courts exist;
- Increase understanding of innerworkings and responsibilities of justice partner agencies and offices;
- Raise awareness of communication and cooperation necessary among justice partners to help insure an effective and efficient criminal justice process; and
- An enhancement of Board member understanding of the overall work performed by justice partners.

Justice partner presentation participants included Chief Circuit Court Judge Susan C. Boles, States Attorney Joseph McMahon, Sheriff Donald Kramer, Clerk of Court Thomas Hartwell, Public Defender Kelli Childress, and Executive Director for Court Services Lisa Aust. Participating with justice system partners were National Center for State Courts Vice President Dan Hall and National Center for State Courts Management Consultant Greg Langham.

The presentation was conducted at the Dunham Woods Riding Club, 33W333 Army Trail, Wayne, Illinois. Presentation attendees included sixteen County Board members along with nine various Kane County officials and staff and two local media representatives. The program began at 8:00 a.m. and ended at 12:00 noon.

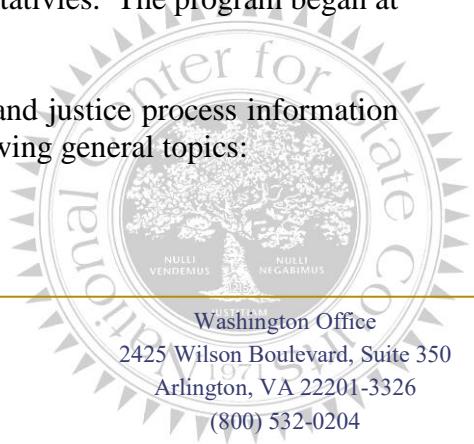
Justice system partners and NCSC participants presented court and justice process information with the support of a PowerPoint presentation that included the following general topics:

- Program Goal and Objectives
- Program Presentation Style

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- Why Courts Exist
- What the Public Expects of Their Courts
- The Importance of Court Independence
- Typical Progression of Criminal Felony Litigation
  - Arrest
  - Bond Hearing Preparation
  - Board Hearing Filing of Motions Related to Charges
  - Party/Role Establishment
  - Grand Jury Indictment
  - Arraignment
  - Discovery
  - Pre-Trial Motions
  - Plea Negotiations
  - Trial
  - Verdict: If Guilty
  - Post Trial Motions/Sentencing Hearing
  - Probation
  - Appeal
  - Ongoing Life of Case
  - Legal Considerations
  - National Perspective of Trending Legal, Social, and Funding Issues
- Open Questions and Discussion

Prior to the start of the presentation and during a scheduled break, justice partners spoke with various Board members. Throughout the presentation, time for questions and discussion was scheduled and interaction between justice partners and Board members was encouraged.

Noted Board member comments indicated presented information was very helpful in generating a further understanding of the justice system process related to felony cases and the level of interaction initiated by justice partners to make the process effective and efficient. Particular interest was expressed as to how justice partners “weaved in and out” of the process in order to advance a fair and unbiased judicial disposition. A point was made several times that the Kane County justice partnership methods should be in use in all judicial circuits.

Topics of particular interest to Board members were concerns about continued incarceration of the mentally ill, various alternatives to incarceration, benefits of probation supervision, use of the plea bargaining process, access to court records, and the grand jury indictment process. Board members supported the need to repeat the program particularly when new Board members are elected. It was suggested that the program be presented at least every other year.

Chief Judge Susan Boles urged Board members to contact justice partners at any time with further questions or concerns. Chief Judge Boles indicated that justice partners were open to any future follow-up meetings or discussions with Board members regarding the justice process for Kane County.

Board members were provided with a program notebook that included copies of PPT presentation slides, justice system office organization charts, justice partner contact information, and brief articles describing the purpose of courts and future trends that may impact the overall justice process.

In a follow-up debriefing discussion regarding the presentation, justice partners and NCSC personnel reviewed the program's curricula, presentation methods, and perceived results. The following topics and remarks summarize the debriefing discussion.

- Presentation program goal and objectives were achieved in that the benefits of justice partners collaborating and cooperating were well demonstrated.
- The presentation will assist with future dialogue between justice partners and Board members.
- Presentation topics related to court purpose, role, and what the public expects from their courts should continue to be part of the program.
- Time permitting, additional emphasis should be given to the independence of courts, the balance of power between the three branches of government, and the legal use of court ordered fees and fines.
- The overall litigation progression chart of a felony case should be reviewed with brief general remarks followed by the more in-depth description of each critical event in the progression chart.
- Efforts should be made in future presentations to generate a higher degree of interaction between justice partners and Board members. Additional interaction could be generated by questions to Board members regarding opinions related to justice system scenarios or a particular process event.
- Everyone agreed that the “soft sell” approach to lobbying for specific funding needs was best presented through references to increased effectiveness and efficiency as future funding is provided.
- There was general agreement that in describing how a felony case is managed via critical case events best displayed the work of individual partner agencies as well as the collective and collaborative work of all partners.
- The use and explanation of possible impact trending issues resulting from national justice and social events was useful in predicting future system challenges, particularly in the areas of incarceration alternatives, the use of court fines, understanding race concerns, need for adequate funding, access to legal representation, the use of specialty courts, court managed treatment options, and advanced uses of technology.
- Though additional presentation time could have been beneficial, it was thought that the half-day program agenda was sufficient.
- It was suggested that the program should be repeated in the future and that the benefits of its presentation to an upcoming meeting of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Appellate Circuit should be considered.