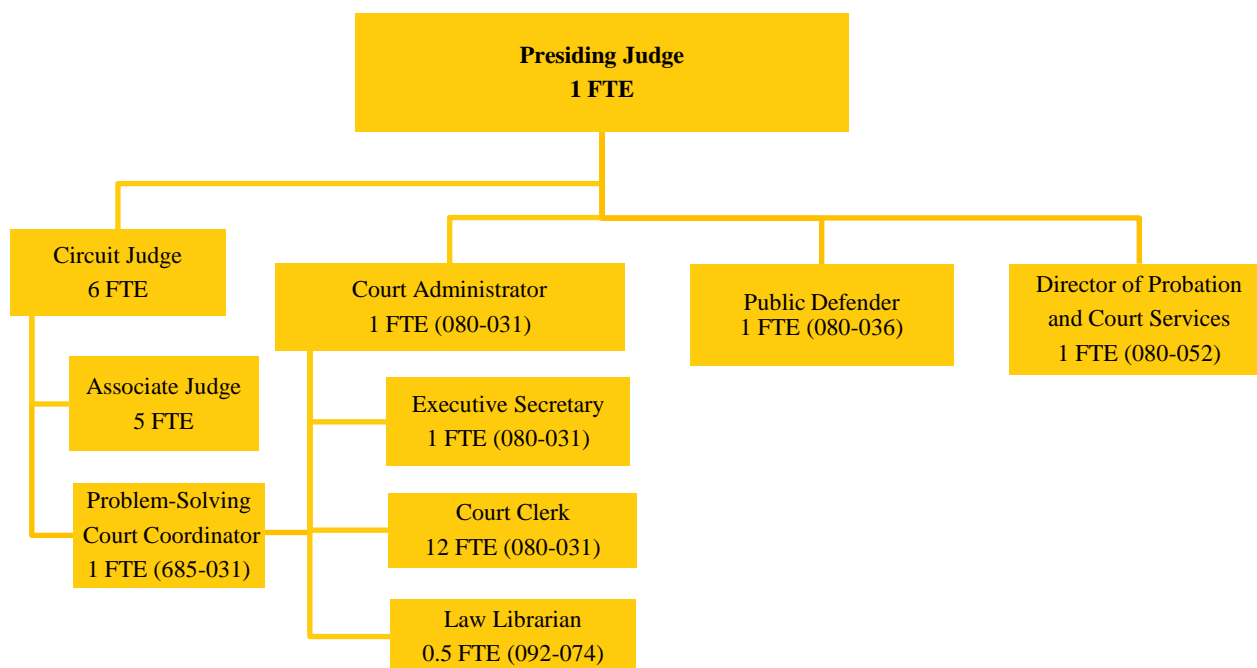


CIRCUIT COURT

Fund 080-031



Circuit Court positions: 11 FTE Judges (paid by the State), 14 FTE Circuit Court (080-031), 0.5 FTE Law Librarian (092-074), and 1 FTE Problem Solving Court Coordinator (685-031).

Article VI – The Judiciary – of the Illinois Constitution vests the judicial powers “in a Supreme Court, an Appellate Court and Circuit Courts.” The Circuit Courts Act (705 ILCS 35/0.01 *et seq.*) created the judicial circuits with Champaign County being part of the Sixth Circuit along with Douglas, Moultrie, Macon, DeWitt, and Piatt counties.

MISSION STATEMENT

To carry out constitutional and statutory responsibilities vested in the Circuit Court, providing trials, hearings, and proceedings in civil and criminal cases.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Most of the court’s non-personnel expenditures are for mandated services. The number of cases filed each year fluctuates, and it is not possible to predict how many of those cases will result in jury trials, or require the court to appoint counsel, order psychiatric evaluations, retain interpreters for limited English proficient case participants, or provide auxiliary aids and services to promote effective communication with persons with disabilities. These services help ensure equal access to the courts. Expenditures for professional

services (physician evaluations, interpretation, etc.) have exceeded requested budgets significantly and increasingly since FY2016, which demonstrates the need to for an increase to the professional services line item. The need for an increase in juror expenses has been documented as well.

The number of self-represented litigants appearing in court continues to increase dramatically. Staff at the courthouse self-help center (formerly the Self-Representation Help Desk), furnish legal information to patrons, but are prohibited by law from providing legal advice. In May 2019, the Public Interest Law Initiative coordinated with the court to open the “Ask-A-Lawyer Desk,” which is staffed by pro bono attorneys who provide brief advice, referrals, and limited scope representation to eligible self-represented litigants for approximately 30 minutes per litigant. This service is offered the first and third Tuesdays of each month for two hours per day. It is expected that the additional assistance will promote the efficient disposition of cases involving self-represented litigants at no cost to the county and improve access to justice.

The public address and assistive listening systems in all eleven courtrooms, along with the video arraignment system in two courtrooms, were installed in 2012 and have been maintained by C.V. Lloyde Audiovisual. Components of the three systems have begun to fail over the last year and service calls have been difficult to schedule. After repeated failures of two courtrooms’ assistive listening systems, one adjustment the court made to avoid the inefficiency of relying on an outside vendor to be readily available for service calls was to purchase individual portable, hand-held assistive listening devices that do not connect to the existing sound system. These devices are inexpensive, work extremely well, and require no outside service calls or maintenance agreements.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

Fund 080 Dept 031			2018 Actual	2019 Original	2019 Projected	2020 Budget
335	60	STATE REIMBURSEMENT	\$300	\$0	\$0	\$0
		FEDERAL, STATE & LOCAL SHARED REVENUE	\$300	\$0	\$0	\$0
369	41	TELEPHONE TOLL REIMB	\$50	\$0	\$0	\$0
369	90	OTHER MISC. REVENUE	\$91	\$0	\$0	\$0
		MISCELLANEOUS	\$141	\$0	\$0	\$0
371	92	FROM LAW LIBRARY FUND 092	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0
		INTERFUND REVENUE	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0
		REVENUE TOTALS	\$15,441	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0
511	3	REG. FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES	\$560,358	\$557,144	\$557,144	\$592,656
511	10	JUDGES' SALARY INCREASE	\$6,473	\$6,622	\$6,622	\$6,622
		PERSONNEL	\$566,831	\$563,766	\$563,766	\$599,278
522	1	STATIONERY & PRINTING	\$1,955	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
522	2	OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$7,281	\$8,000	\$7,600	\$8,000
522	44	EQUIPMENT LESS THAN \$5000	\$0	\$0	\$1,041	\$0
		COMMODITIES	\$9,236	\$11,000	\$11,641	\$11,000

Fund 080 Dept 031			2018	2019	2019	2020
			Actual	Original	Projected	Budget
533	3	ATTORNEY/LEGAL SERVICES	\$49,157	\$80,000	\$68,500	\$70,000
533	5	COURT REPORTING	\$17,489	\$18,000	\$28,500	\$19,000
533	7	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$118,391	\$82,000	\$91,000	\$98,000
533	33	TELEPHONE SERVICE	\$92	\$0	\$0	\$0
533	42	EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE	\$2,131	\$0	\$255	\$0
533	62	JUROR MEALS	\$3,705	\$4,500	\$6,400	\$5,425
533	63	JUROR EXPENSE	\$121,478	\$118,000	\$118,000	\$121,000
533	72	DEPARTMENT OPERAT EXP	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
533	93	DUES AND LICENSES	\$510	\$510	\$585	\$585
534	37	FINANCE CHARGES,BANK FEES	\$7	\$0	\$58	\$0
534	74	CONTRACT ATTORNEYS SERVICES	\$191,400	\$191,400	\$191,400	\$191,400
			\$505,360	\$495,410	\$505,698	\$506,410
EXPENDITURE TOTALS			\$1,081,427	\$1,070,176	\$1,081,105	\$1,116,688

Note: The judges are not county employees and are not included in county personnel appropriation.

ALIGNMENT to STRATEGIC PLAN

County Board Goal 1 – Champaign County is committed to being a high-performing, open and transparent local government organization

- The Circuit Court continues to work with other justice-related departments to develop processes and explore new technologies that will allow the public easier, more efficient access to the court system.

County Board Goal 2 – Champaign County maintains high-quality public facilities and highways and provides a safe rural transportation system and infrastructure

- The Circuit Court will continue to work with the Physical Plant to ensure compliance with state and federal laws governing equal access to courthouse programs and services for persons with disabilities.

County Board Goal 3 –Champaign County promotes a safe, just and healthy community

- The Circuit Court will continue to support programs designed as alternatives to incarceration and will continue its representation on the Champaign County Reentry Council.
- The Circuit Court will continue to provide the citizens of Champaign County a transparent, effective, and efficient venue for the redress of grievances.

County Board Goal 4 – Champaign County is a county that supports balanced, planned growth to balance economic growth with preservation of our natural resources

- The Circuit Court will work with the County Board and the County Executive to maximize efficiencies and operate a fiscally responsible court system.

DESCRIPTION

The Champaign County Circuit Court is a state court of general jurisdiction that adjudicates civil and criminal cases. Presiding Judge Thomas J. Difanis has administrative authority over court operations in Champaign County, including overall supervision of the Court Services and Public Defender departments. The eleven judges (six elected circuit judges and five appointed associate circuit judges) handle approximately 30,000 cases annually. The court is in session from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday (excluding holidays).

The circuit court currently employs fourteen full-time employees (twelve court clerks, one court administrator, and one executive secretary). Additional positions that fall under the court's authority include a full-time Problem-Solving Court (aka Drug Court) Coordinator, a part-time Law Librarian, and a temporary part-time Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation Program Coordinator. These positions are funded from special revenue funds. The court administrator is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the court, including personnel, budgeting, ADA compliance and other administrative responsibilities, and provides legal research assistance to the judiciary.

OBJECTIVES

1. To provide the judiciary with the personnel, facilities, technology, materials, and other support necessary for the administration of justice in Champaign County
2. To equip court personnel with training and materials necessary to support judicial functions, provide quality service to the public, and cooperate with other justice-related departments
3. To increase public confidence in the Champaign County justice system by providing timely access to court-related information and services

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Indicator	FY2018 Actual	FY2019 Projected	FY2020 Budgeted
Cases	30,937	29,728	30,333
Jury Trials	58	68	63