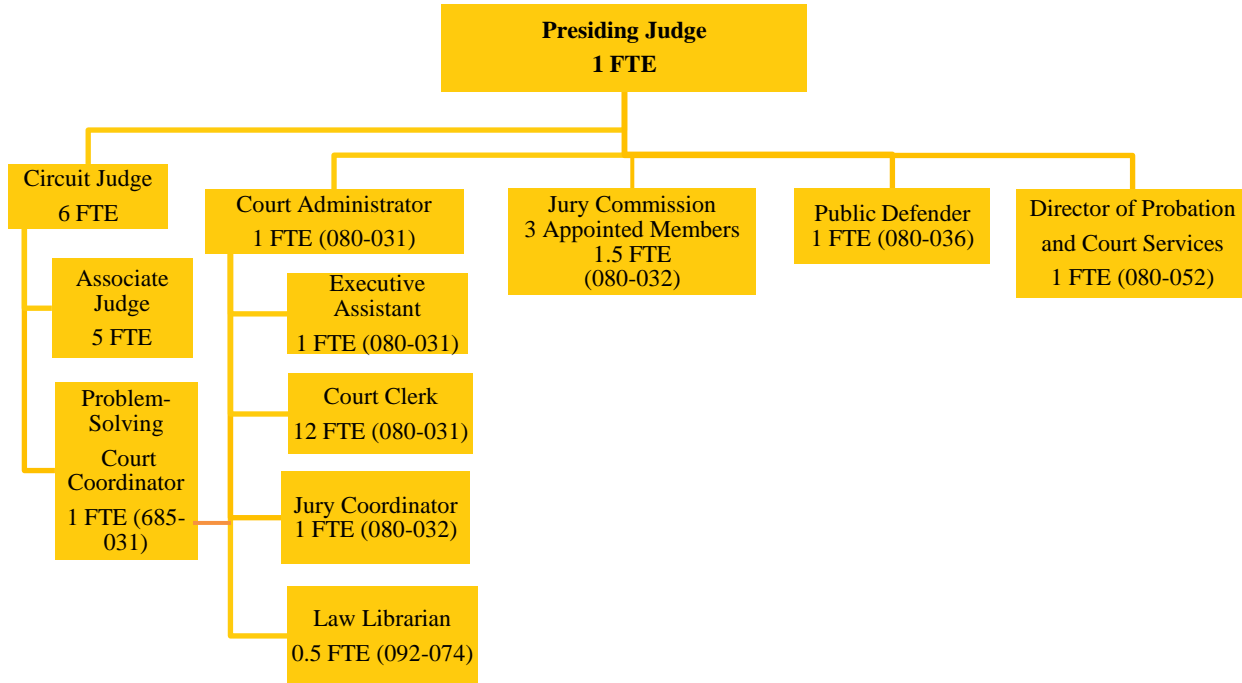


# CIRCUIT COURT

## Fund 080-031



Circuit Court positions: 11 FTE Judges (paid by the State), 14 FTE Circuit Court (080-031), 0.5 FTE Law Library Clerk (092-074), 1 FTE Problem Solving Court Coordinator (685-031) and 2.5 FTE Jury Coordinator/Commission (080-032)

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**

The Circuit Court’s projected expenditures are expected to fall below budget in FY 2021. 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, or provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. The remainder of the Circuit Court’s budget is used to compensate and support the staff who carry out these mandated services, ensuring equal access to justice through the courts.

The coronavirus pandemic continues to affect all aspects of court operations. Jury trials were suspended in January and February 2021. The Court now schedules jury terms for two weeks rather than one. This change will save the county approximately \$15,000 in FY 2022.

Although the courthouse is fully open, many procedural modifications made to facilitate public health guidelines for social distancing at the beginning of the pandemic will remain in place. Most notably, many court proceedings do not require the physical appearance of all participants in the courtroom. The Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC) has provided funding for courts to maintain Zoom accounts. Additional financial support was secured from AOIC's Rapid Relief Funding for Remote Capabilities, which will streamline the process of conducting remote hearings.

The Court received approval from the AOIC for funding to upgrade the public address system in the courtrooms. The existing system was installed in 2012. The components comprising the existing system began failing as early as 2016. Obtaining equipment for repairs is becoming more difficult as the original equipment has become obsolete. Delays due to supply chain shortages and service call scheduling difficulties result in interruptions to court proceedings, burdens on staff time, and added expense for short-term repairs. Additionally, the courtroom amplification or PA system is separate from the audio recording system owned and maintained by the State of Illinois. With AOIC funding, the Court has contracted for an audio system upgrade with the vendor that maintains the State's audio equipment. This arrangement is expected to assist in more expedient problem identification and service. The contract was made possible with the cooperation of the Circuit Clerk's Office through the Court Automation Fund. AOIC will reimburse the county for the cost of the project after it is completed in mid-August 2021.

AOIC funding was also secured to obtain video/remote hearing presentation systems. Although other courthouses in the state have used this funding to install integrated audio-visual systems in some or all courtrooms, the Champaign County Circuit Court determined that portable systems would fit local needs more efficiently. Remote hearings do not occur in all courtrooms. Judges may change courtrooms. Portability will facilitate flexibility. Additionally, it will not be necessary to close every courtroom for installation of complicated systems that must be connected to courtroom audio and recording equipment, ongoing maintenance will be easier and less expensive with fewer specialized components, and the units will be interchangeable. These systems may be used for presentation of evidence during trials and other hearings. Technology will allow counsel to project digital evidence from their devices onto a large screen viewable by all participants.

FY 2020 was the first year since 2015 that expenditures for professional services (psychiatric evaluations, interpreters, etc.), did not increase over the expenditures from the previous year, presumably due to the pandemic-related reduction in operations. In FY 2021, however, expenditures from this line item are again expected to exceed the original budget. The request for FY 2022 has been increased in keeping with the trend.

The Circuit Court resumed management of the Jury Commission Fund in FY 2021. That fund had been maintained by the Circuit Clerk's Office since 2014. Because the Court is responsible for most aspects jury management, this transfer of responsibility is expected to facilitate more efficient and cost-effective coordination of jury services. As such, line items for juror meals and juror payment, which have been maintained in the Circuit Court's general fund, will be transferred to the Jury Commission Fund budget beginning in FY 2022. All expenses specific to the jury commission and jury coordination (except for the cost of summoning jurors, which is borne by the Circuit Clerk's Office), will be included in the Jury Commission budget.

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

**FINANCIAL**

Fund 080 Dept 031			2020	2021	2021	2022
			Actual	Original	Projected	Budget
332	38	CURE PROGRAM	\$73,453	\$0	\$0	\$0
335	60	STATE REIMBURSEMENT	\$0	\$0	\$26,480	\$0
		FEDERAL, STATE & LOCAL SHARED REVENUE	\$73,453	\$0	\$26,480	\$0
369	90	OTHER MISC. REVENUE	\$318	\$0	\$0	\$0
		MISCELLANEOUS	\$318	\$0	\$0	\$0
371	92	FROM LAW LIBRARY FUND 092	\$0	\$15,000	\$0	\$0
		INTERFUND REVENUE	\$0	\$15,000	\$0	\$0
<b>REVENUE TOTALS</b>			<b>\$73,771</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$26,480</b>	<b>\$0</b>
511	3	REG. FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES	\$584,491	\$620,893	\$620,893	\$628,073
511	5	TEMP. SALARIES & WAGES	\$260	\$0	\$0	\$0
511	10	JUDGES' SALARY INCREASE	\$6,615	\$6,622	\$6,501	\$0
		PERSONNEL	\$591,366	\$627,515	\$627,394	\$628,073
522	1	STATIONERY & PRINTING	\$1,489	\$3,000	\$2,311	\$2,657
522	2	OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$5,733	\$8,000	\$6,590	\$8,000
		COMMODITIES	\$7,222	\$11,000	\$8,901	\$10,657
533	3	ATTORNEY/LEGAL SERVICES	\$56,466	\$70,000	\$46,874	\$70,000
533	5	COURT REPORTING	\$8,110	\$19,000	\$18,270	\$19,000
533	7	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$105,996	\$120,000	\$130,318	\$140,000
533	29	COMPUTER/INF TCH SERVICES	\$854	\$500	\$500	\$500
533	33	TELEPHONE SERVICE	\$534	\$0	\$300	\$500
533	42	EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE	\$7,144	\$0	\$2,000	\$1,000
533	62	JUROR MEALS	\$1,598	\$5,000	\$2,000	\$0
533	63	JUROR EXPENSE	\$40,454	\$121,000	\$60,000	\$0
533	72	DEPARTMENT OPERAT EXP	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
533	75	COURT-ORDERED COSTS	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,622
533	85	PHOTOCOPY SERVICES	\$267	\$0	\$0	\$0
533	93	DUES AND LICENSES	\$585	\$0	\$585	\$0
534	74	CONTRACT ATTORNEYS	\$191,400	\$191,400	\$191,400	\$191,400
		SERVICES	\$414,408	\$527,900	\$453,247	\$430,022
544	33	OFFICE EQUIPMENT & FURNIS	\$0	\$0	\$26,480	\$0
		CAPITAL	\$0	\$0	\$26,480	\$0
<b>EXPENDITURE TOTALS</b>			<b>\$1,012,996</b>	<b>\$1,166,415</b>	<b>\$1,116,022</b>	<b>\$1,068,752</b>

## ***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.
- The Circuit Court will work with the Sheriff, Physical Plant, and other courthouse officials to ensure the health and safety of all who must come to the court facility.

*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 promote access to justice through staffing and programming initiatives, including the pursuit of grant funding where feasible.
- 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 Randall B Rosenbaum 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 fifteen full-time employees (twelve court clerks, one court administrator, one executive assistant, and one jury coordinator), in addition to the three appointed members of the jury commission. 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**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>FY2020 Actual</b>	<b>FY2021 Projected</b>	<b>FY2022 Budgeted</b>
Cases Filed	22,283	21,335	25,000
Jury Trials	19	30	45
Non-English Language Interpreters (incl. sign language)	2,739	3,064	3,100
Mental Health Evaluations	72	80	90