



*For Immediate Release*

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## **New Kane County Juvenile Justice Center Courtroom opening July 11**

“A new Kane County Juvenile Justice Center courtroom will open on July 11, 2022,” said Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Chief Judge Clint Hull, a result of the effort “to offer a more effective and efficient way to hear juvenile abuse/neglect cases.” When juvenile abuse/neglect cases began to spike in Kane County, nearly tripling since 2018, Chief Judge Hull said he, along with the juvenile judges of the Sixteenth Circuit, needed to do something to better serve the needs of the children and families involved in the juvenile justice system. The judges convened a meeting with their justice system partners to discuss what could be done system-wide to address this important issue.

The solution? In 2021, Chief Judge Hull proposed to the Kane County Board that they approve spending unused funds and savings resulting from the coronavirus pandemic to build out a second juvenile courtroom at the Kane County Juvenile Justice Center at no additional cost to the County.

The Board agreed significant benefits would be achieved by locating the Juvenile Delinquency and Abuse/Neglect courtrooms together in the same building, as the original design plans of the Juvenile Justice Center called for the construction of a second courtroom without needing to add space to the original building.

Before the approval of adding a new Juvenile courtroom, abuse/neglect cases were heard by judges in the Kane County Courthouse (Third Street, Geneva), while juvenile delinquency cases are conducted at the Juvenile Justice Center in

St. Charles. Chief Judge Hull said, “It is common for juvenile litigants to have cases in both Abuse/Neglect and Delinquency courtrooms. Having them in different locations caused a hardship for judges, justice partners, staff, and families to be split between the two buildings, therefore, unable to assist one another.”

The Honorable Kathryn Karayannis, Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Division, praised the addition saying, “The new courtroom and updated court facilities are designed to meet the needs of all families involved in juvenile court under one roof. Thank you to Chief Judge Hull and the Kane County Board for identifying the need and persevering to find and provide the support needed to make this project a reality. Juvenile Delinquency Judge, the Honorable Sandra Parga, mirrored Judge Karayannis’ sentiment, “We are very excited to have a building dedicated to the needs and services that focus on the well-being of all of our kids in Kane County.”

Chief Judge Hull also added, “We are very excited to have both juvenile delinquency and abuse/neglect cases in the same building. It will allow us to serve everyone better by having everyone together. I want to thank the Kane County Board, State’s Attorney’s Office, and Public Defender’s Office for supporting this project.”



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