

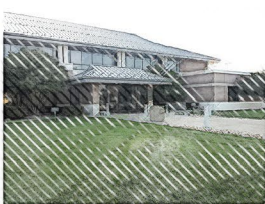


Kane County Justice System

2022–2025

STRATEGIC PLAN

Improving the Kane County Justice System



July 8, 2022

Table of Contents

Letter from Chief Judge, Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Court

Kane County Justice System Strategic Planning Team

Section 1: Introduction 1

Section 2: Mission, Vision, and Core Values 2

Section 3: Justice System Assessment 3

Section 4: Strategic Focus Areas, Goals, and Strategies 5

 Strategic Focus Area 1: Justice System Infrastructure 6

 Strategic Focus Area 2: Justice System Reform and Continuum of Services and Programs 9

 Strategic Focus Area 3: Workforce Excellence 11

 Strategic Focus Area 4: Public Trust and Understanding 14

APPENDIX:

 Long-term Implications and Trends Analysis 16

ADDITIONAL AVAILABLE RESOURCES:

 PowerPoint presentations of the external and internal trends, including data and source citations

Kane County Justice System 2022–2023 Operational Plan

Available upon request from the Kane County Law Library & Self Help Legal Center, 630.406.7126



This document was developed under grant number SJI-21-T-052. The points of view expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the State Justice Institute.

Letter from the Chief Judge

The Kane County Justice System Strategic Planning Team (Team) is excited to present the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Justice System 2022–2025 Strategic Plan (Plan). The Plan delineates the mission of the Kane County Justice System to uphold the law, administer justice, and serve and protect our community. This strategic planning process was made possible through financial support from the State Justice Institute, the Kane County Board, and services through PRAXIS Consulting, Inc.

The Team is comprised of twenty-eight members, including elected officials and employees from the offices and departments who comprise the Kane County Justice System. Included in the Team are members representing the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Court, State’s Attorney’s Office, Public Defender’s Office, Circuit Clerk’s Office, Sheriff’s Office, Court Services, County Board, Information Technologies Department, and Health Department. The Team worked together over nearly a year to create the Plan, utilizing information from employee surveys as well as national, state, and local trends.

Last drafted in 2008, the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit was overdue for a new strategic plan. Chief Judge Hull notes, “The Kane County Board asked the Justice System Partners to work together to provide the County Board with a better understanding of our top priorities. With the support and help of our elected leaders and all our justice partners, we were able to meet, discuss issues, and reach a consensus to forward four strategic focus areas: Justice System Infrastructure, Justice System Reform and Continuum of Services and Programs, Workforce Excellence, and Public Trust and Understanding.

The following document outlines long-term priorities and serves as a roadmap for improving the Kane County Justice System. On behalf of the Justice System Partners, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the members of the Team, staff, and the many other individuals who have worked so tirelessly over the past year to bring this project to fruition. Through your efforts, you have helped ensure that the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Justice System remains at the forefront as we move into the future.

Sincerely,

Honorable Clint Hull
Chief Judge
Sixteenth Judicial Circuit

Kane County Justice System Strategic Planning Team

Hon. Clint Hull Chief Judge	Corrine Pierog Chair, Kane County Board
Theresa E. Barreiro Circuit Clerk	Ron Hain Kane County Sheriff
Rachele Conant Public Defender	Myrna Molina Kane County Board
Roger Fahnestock Executive Director/Chief Information Officer, Kane County IT	Jamie Mosser State's Attorney
Hon. Susan Boles Circuit Judge	Lisa Aust Executive Director, Court Services
Hon. Rene Cruz Circuit Judge	Dr. Alexandra Tsang Director of Diagnostic Center, Court Services
Hon. Julio Valdez Associate Judge	Jason Mathis Supervisor of Pre-Trial Services, Court Services
Doug Naughton Court Administrator	Halle Cox Director, Law Library & Self Help Legal Center
Andrea O'Brien Deputy Court Administrator	Monica Lawrence Chief Information Officer, Circuit Clerk's Office
Karin Herwick Chief Deputy Clerk/Chief Operations Officer, Circuit Clerk's Office	Kristy Sharpness Operations Liaison/Payroll, Circuit Clerk's Office
Michael Isaacson Asst. Director, Community Health, Health Dept.	Charles Lasky Dep. CIO/Chief of Staff, Kane County IT
Kim Bilbrey Attorney, Public Defender's Office	Vincent Coyle Attorney, State's Attorney's Office
Pam Bradley Administrative Support, State's Attorney's Office	Jessica Orsini Deputy Director of Deferred Prosecution Program, State's Attorney's Office
Perparim Osmani Commander of Jail, Kane County Sheriff's Office	Dr. Brenda Wagenknecht-Ivey Strategic Planning Consultant, PRAXIS Consulting

2022–2025 Strategic Plan

July 8, 2022



Section 1: Introduction

In the fall of 2021, with funding assistance from the State Justice Institute (SJI), elected leaders, stakeholders, and staff of the Kane County Justice System embarked on a long-range strategic planning process. Partners and stakeholders participating in the process included the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Court, State’s Attorney’s Office, Public Defender’s Office, Sheriff’s Office, Circuit Clerk’s Office, Information Technologies Department, and representatives from the County Board and the Health Department. This 2022–2025 Strategic Plan (Plan) lays out long-term priorities and will serve as a roadmap for improving the Kane County Justice System.

The twenty-eight-member Kane County Justice System Strategic Planning Team (Team) convened monthly between September 2021 and March 2022 to develop this Plan. The planning sessions were facilitated by Dr. Brenda Wagenknecht-Ivey, CEO of PRAXIS Consulting, Inc. (Denver, CO), and included:

- Developing a mission, vision, and core values for the justice system
- Analyzing internal and external trends affecting the justice system and considering future implications and scenarios
- Summarizing strengths, areas for improvement, and potential concerns facing the Kane County Justice System
- Identifying areas of mutual interest and opportunities for system-wide collaboration
- Describing key strategic focus areas and developing long-range goals and strategies for making justice system improvements

Kane County Justice System Partners are committed to working together to achieve the goals set forth. Doing so is necessary to ensure the highest quality of justice system services to the people of Kane County.



Section 2: Mission, Vision, and Core Values

A mission statement conveys the purpose of an organization or system: why it exists. A vision statement communicates an ideal future: what the organization or system will look like when performing at its best. Core values are foundational principles: principles that provide an unwavering compass for beliefs, ethics, and behaviors.

Below are the mission, vision, and core values of the Kane County Justice System, which includes the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Court, State's Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, Sheriff's Office, Circuit Clerk's Office, and Information Technologies Department. Together these organizations are working to fulfill and achieve the following:

KANE COUNTY JUSTICE SYSTEM

Mission:

The Kane County Justice System upholds the law, administers justice, and serves and protects our community.

Vision:

We strive to be accessible to all, trusted by all, and responsive to the evolving needs of our communities.

Core Values:

- **Fair** – We are impartial, act without bias, and treat all people equally.
- **Professional** – We treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- **Timely** – We provide services and resolve legal matters in a timely and efficient manner.
- **Effective** – We use practices and programs that achieve effective outcomes for court participants and the community.
- **Collaborative** – We are inclusive and work together to achieve mutual goals.
- **Innovative** – We are proactive, creative, and explore ways to enhance performance and outcomes.
- **Accountable** – We are responsible for our conduct and performance and use public resources prudently and responsibly.



Section 3: Justice System Assessment

The Kane County Justice System Strategic Planning Team (Team) analyzed a myriad of external and internal trends and considered their long-term implications on the Kane County Justice System. External trends data included pandemic, social, demographic, economic, technological, policy, political, and national justice system trends. Internal trends data included crime statistics, arrests, filings, sentencing, recidivism, and probation statistics. The Appendix provides a list of plausible long-term implications and a summary of trends that may affect the Kane County Justice System.

Below is a summary of the strengths, areas for improvement, and concerns of the Kane County Justice System, according to the Team.

Strengths	Areas for Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees: Primarily dedicated and hardworking; strive to provide excellent services to the people of Kane County. • Strong leadership: Justice System Partners, many of whom are elected officials; strive to identify and work toward common goals. • System collaboration: Justice System Partners work well together. There is a willingness to collaborate, listen, and problem solve to enhance the effectiveness of the justice system. • Continuous improvement: There is a strong commitment and desire to continually improve. • Role model: Kane County Justice System is viewed as a leader. It is a role model for other jurisdictions (e.g., uses evidence-based practices). • Technology: The technological infrastructure is effective (e.g., platform, server, storage, phone network). County IT is responsive, innovative, and helpful. • Electronic access: More court records and documents are electronically accessible. • Performance metrics and data: The Justice System is doing a better job of collecting, analyzing, and using data (e.g., recidivism, mental health, referral system, etc.) to show results, progress, impacts, and outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee compensation: Kane County needs to be more competitive. • Turnover: The Justice System continues to experience high turnover. Staff goes to other organizations and counties for higher pay, better benefits, and perks. • Facilities and Physical Space: There are six court locations across the county, many of which are out of space. Facility and space improvements are needed. • Budgetary constraints: The Justice System is under-resourced and under-funded; needs to be creative in finding ways to re-purpose existing fiscal resources. • Political ideology: Find ways to improve the Justice System; avoid polarization and gridlock due to differing political ideologies. • Technology: Software used by the Justice System and outside organizations is not integrated. Current technology and systems have limited functionality. Workarounds are labor-intensive and costly. More IT support is needed. Data is not easily accessible and is difficult to share. • Silos: Justice System Partners have individual missions, functions, and budgets, making it difficult to be an integrated system, resulting in inefficiencies and duplication of efforts (e.g. Human Resources, fleet management).

CONCERNS

- **Employee turnover:** Increasingly difficult to hire and retain qualified employees
- **Lack or uncertainty of funding:** Insufficient and uncertain budgets to meet evolving needs of the community and to provide evidence-based and innovative programs and services
- **New statutory requirements:** Inability to implement and comply; uncertainty of impact; unfunded mandates
- **Lack of preparation:** It is essential for the Kane County Justice System and the County Board to collaborate and jointly prepare for the future. All parties must think long-term and strategically and develop innovative ways to make system improvements. Failure to plan and prepare adversely affects Kane County residents and communities.
- **Lack of public trust:** Trust and confidence in the justice system and government as a whole have declined. This is especially true with people of color and other marginalized and disenfranchised groups.
- **Lack of agility:** Sweeping reforms are underway in the justice system. To remain a leader and continuously improve services to the people of Kane County, all organizations including the County Board, must be responsive, flexible, open-minded, and agile.
- **Status quo:** Unwillingness to advocate for or make needed changes
- **Politics:** Elected officials may have differing political ideologies (e.g., on government funding, taxes, how to combat crime, etc.) and be unable or unwilling to compromise to improve the justice system.
- **Security breach:** Personal and building security threats and breaches. Facilities must be a safe place for all in which to work and do business.
- **Computer system failure:** Such as cyber threats, cyber-attacks, and data breaches



Section 4: Strategic Focus Areas and Long-Range Goals and Strategies

Strategic focus areas, and long-range goals and strategies for making improvements, are presented in this section. Strategic focus areas are internal or external issues that are fundamentally important to the Kane County Justice System. They are significant issues that must be addressed in the coming years for the Kane County Justice System to fulfill its mission, work toward the vision, and live its core values.



Refer to the Kane County Justice System 2022–2023 Operational Plan for specific initiatives on which the Kane County Justice System is working. Available upon request from the Kane County Law Library & Self Help Legal Center 630.406.7126

1

Strategic Focus Area 1: Justice System Infrastructure (Court Locations, Facilities and Physical Space, Access to Services, Technology, and Safety and Security)

Description: This strategic focus area includes the entire justice system infrastructure – court locations, facilities and physical space, access to services, technology, and safety and security. Improvements are needed in these areas to ensure the Kane County Justice System is able to provide the highest quality of services to the people of Kane County and operate efficiently and effectively.

This area is important for the following reasons:

- **Court Locations:** The Kane County Justice System is currently located in six locations across Kane County. Before litigants can conduct judicial system business, they must first identify the correct courthouse or facility where their issue can be addressed. It is confusing to the public as well as costly and inefficient to operate out of six locations (e.g., security in all six locations, travel time and expense between locations, etc.).
- **Facilities and Physical Space:** Some spaces, such as courtrooms, office space, and public areas, are sub-par; they do not meet existing public and judicial system needs and fall far short of meeting anticipated future needs. The spaces do not promote trust and confidence in the justice system as a whole.

In light of the resulting changes brought on by the pandemic, now is an opportune time to re-examine space needs. In some instances, more space may be needed, and in other instances, the Kane County Justice System may be able to reduce its footprint. Now is the time to modernize where and how services are provided, and the work arrangements of employees, both of which may result in more effective and efficient facility and physical space usage.

- **Access to Services:** Services can be improved by consolidating into fewer locations and making them more accessible remotely so court users may travel less, or not at all, to conduct business.
- **Technology:** The Kane County Justice System is in need of systems integration and upgrades. Technologies (e.g., hardware, software, applications, data) need to be upgraded, more data storage is needed, and security needs to be continually improved, as data collection and reporting are essential to effective decision-making, capturing funding, and grant reporting.

It is vitally important to continue investing in and expanding the uses of technology to enhance access to court and case information, increase the ability to do business remotely and improve operational efficiency.

- **Safety and Security:** The needs are high. Security is duplicative across all locations (e.g., equipment, scanners, and personnel). It is costly and inefficient to provide perimeter, entry, courtroom, and personal safety in six locations.

LONG-RANGE GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 1: The Kane County Justice System and select service providers will be located at consolidated, easily accessible campus(es).

Strategies:

- a. Document and advocate for the long-term facility and space needs of the Kane County Justice System
- b. Develop and promote plausible options and scenarios for a consolidated Kane County Justice System campus (e.g., locations, number and size of facilities, etc.)
- c. Explore and advocate for innovative funding opportunities and strategies
- d. Demonstrate the long-term benefits of a consolidated campus (e.g., improved services, cost savings, operational efficiencies, etc.)
- e. Build support for a long-term facilities plan among stakeholders, partners, service providers, and the public
- f. Develop and implement innovative service delivery models to reach all areas of the county and include in long-term facilities plan
- g. Collaborate with county leaders to develop and invest in a long-term facilities and service delivery plan that will meet the needs of the community

Goal 2: Courtrooms, office space, and public areas will meet the needs of the public and Kane County Justice System, and foster a respectful and professional environment.

Strategies:

- a. Evaluate space needs and present a long-term plan to meet the needs of the Kane County Justice System and the public
- b. Reduce and expand the facilities and space footprints where possible and as needed
- c. Modernize, upgrade, and remodel existing space
- d. Improve maintenance and cleanliness of space

Goal 3: The public and all occupants will be safe and secure conducting business at Kane County Justice System facilities.

Strategies:

- a. Evaluate security needs and enhance security at all Kane County Justice System locations (e.g., upgrade cameras, equipment, parking lot lighting, etc.)
- b. Evaluate and enhance safety protocols and procedures
- c. Enhance emergency preparedness and training

Goal 4: The technology infrastructure (systems and support) will meet the current and future needs of the Justice System.

Strategies:

- a. Evaluate and prioritize technological needs and develop a plan for making Kane County Justice System enhancements and investments (e.g., case management systems, hardware, software, applications, equipment, and upgrade technology in courtrooms and in all organizations)
- b. Streamline data, reduce data storage, and reduce duplication of data
- c. Integrate the information technology systems of the Kane County Justice System to facilitate data sharing and reporting
- d. Strengthen security across all information technology systems
- e. Collaborate with external agencies including, but not limited to, law enforcement to enhance data sharing, reporting, and operational efficiencies
- f. Enhance information technology support to the Kane County Justice System
- g. Continue to use technology to increase remote access to information and the ability to conduct business remotely within the Kane County Justice System (e.g., e-filing, video-conferencing for court proceedings and court services, text reminders, online dispute resolution, virtual interpreting, etc.)

2

Strategic Focus Area 2: Kane County Justice System Reform and Continuum of Services and Programs

Description: The Kane County Justice System is committed to implementing justice system reform recently enacted by the Illinois Legislature and advocating for a continuum of needed services and programs. Kane County Justice System leaders will work together to effectively implement the new laws and expand programs and services in the community.

This area is important for the following reasons:

- **Justice System Reform:** The Illinois legislature recently passed the new Safe-T Act (Public Act 101-0652). It includes the abolition of monetary bail, release on own recognizance, pre-trial detention hearings, and officer-worn body cameras. The Kane County Justice System is working together to implement the provisions of this new legislation. Implementation is challenging. The fiscal and operational impacts are still being determined. Justice leaders are seeking efficiencies and cost savings and will identify and suggest ideas for revenue replacement.
- **Comprehensive Continuum of Services:** Kane County lacks an integrated and comprehensive continuum of justice system and community services for people who come into contact with the justice system. Important services have been eliminated and under-funded and new services are needed to meet existing and evolving needs (e.g., deflection and diversion, substance abuse, behavioral health, etc.).

Additionally, there is a need to expand the use of evidence-based practices including risk and needs assessment, triage, and supervision by risk and need.

Kane County also needs wrap-around services to support people in need. These include but are not limited to housing, employment, education, and physical, mental, and behavioral health. Justice System Partners will collaborate with community partners to expand these services and work with the Health Department to increase linkages to needed services.

- **Increase Operational Efficiencies:** The Kane County Justice System understands the need to look for cost savings and increase operational efficiencies. This includes streamlining operations, searching for economies of scale, and eliminating duplication of services across agencies. It also includes focusing on and expanding services that achieve effective outcomes and discontinuing services that are less effective.
- **Justice System Data and Performance Measures:** Establishing performance measures for the Kane County Justice System is important to demonstrating results and building trust and confidence in the system. To do so, there needs to be better data collection, analysis, and reporting. Examples of performance measures include: recidivism rates, diversion and deflection, successful completions, and time to disposition.

LONG-RANGE GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 1: The Kane County Justice System will implement and adapt practices to comply with new laws and advance the justice system.

Strategies:

- a. Communicate the impact of new laws and justice system reform on the county (communicate the fiscal impact, impact of body cameras, etc.)
- b. Develop a system-wide approach to implementing provisions of new laws (e.g., develop consistent and complementary policies, procedures, practices, etc.)
- c. Coordinate implementation efforts across the justice system
- d. Educate and inform partners, stakeholders, and the public about the new laws and impact on the county. Develop consistent messaging
- e. Explore and recommend ways to absorb the fiscal impact and recommend new revenue streams in order to recoup lost revenue due to statutory changes
- f. Use best practices throughout the Kane County Justice System

Goal 2: The Kane County Justice System and its partners will provide a comprehensive continuum of services that meet the existing and evolving needs of those involved in the justice system.

Strategies:

- a. Define existing and likely future service needs in Kane County (e.g., document existing justice, court, and community services; identify service gaps; forecast future needs in Kane County)
- b. Continue to learn about and use evolving and evidence-based practices throughout the Kane County Justice System
- c. Evaluate existing services and eliminate, improve, and expand as needed; eliminate duplication of services across the Kane County Justice System
- d. Expand the use of existing community resources
- e. Collaborate with justice system, legal, and community and social service partners to fill service gaps
- f. Develop and formalize new partnerships to expand and enhance needed resources, programs, and services
- g. Communicate and educate about needs, service gaps, and services that are available to individuals, youth, and families involved in the justice system

3

Strategic Focus Area 3: Workforce Excellence (Recruitment, Retention, Well-Being)

Description: Providing the highest quality of services to the public is a high priority for the Kane County Justice System. Maintaining an excellent workforce is foundational for this to happen. This strategic focus area, Workforce Excellence, includes being able to recruit and retain top talent and ensure employees' well-being.

This area is important for the following reasons:

- **Competent and Dedicated Staff:** The Kane County Justice System wants to be able to attract, hire, and retain competent, talented, dedicated staff.
- **High Turnover Rates:** The turnover rate in all organizations is high. The Kane County Justice System is having difficulty recruiting and retaining employees.
- **Pay and Benefits:** Kane County employees frequently leave to take positions in neighboring counties. The pay and benefits in Kane County are not competitive, nor at market rate, compared to neighboring counties.
- **High Workloads:** Workloads of employees are high, especially with the high turnover rate and the effects of the pandemic. Vacancies are exacerbating the workload demands and burnout employees are experiencing. Employees are having to cover jobs that are unfilled and for people who are out sick.
- **Workforce Diversity:** The Kane County Justice System is committed to increasing the diversity of the workforce and ensuring the workforce mirrors our diverse community.
- **Non-Financial Incentives:** Innovative, non-financial practices are needed to improve recruitment, retention, engagement, and well-being throughout the Kane County Justice System. It is important to modernize human resource practices so that Kane County is viewed and promoted as an advantageous place to work and establish a career. Examples include: ensuring people feel welcomed, included, valued, and appreciated; provide employees with meaningful work; provide flexible hours and hybrid work arrangements; and ensure reasonable workloads that allow for work-life integration.

LONG-RANGE GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 1: The Kane County Justice System will employ a diverse workforce.

Strategies:

- a. Collectively develop, coordinate, and present common goals to the County Board regarding human resource needs, priorities, and modernized practices
- b. Expand and enhance recruiting practices to attract diverse applicants (e.g., universities, job fairs, targeted recruitment with diverse populations, internship and mentorship opportunities, etc.)
- c. Establish human resource goals (e.g., retention, diversity, etc.) for the Kane County Justice System and measure and report on progress
- d. Promote the benefits of working in Kane County government (e.g., careers, benefits, pension, desirable place to work with flexible hours, meaningful work, etc.)

Goal 2: The workforce – judicial officers, elected officials, leaders and managers, and employees – will have the requisite skills to perform at the highest levels.

Strategies:

- a. Invest in and provide training and development opportunities for judicial officers, organizational leaders, and employees
- b. Encourage participation in state and national education programs (e.g., Illinois Judicial College, state and national associations, etc.)
- c. Cross-train staff within and across departments
- d. Set goals for positions (e.g., develop proficiency standards; develop clear performance expectations within departments, etc.)

Goal 3: Employees of the Kane County Justice System will be engaged and satisfied.

Strategies:

- a. Build and maintain a culture that values and appreciates the contributions of all employees (e.g., recognition program)
- b. Promote the importance of the work of all employees (e.g., doing meaningful work – making a difference)
- c. Collectively advocate for competitive pay and benefits including improved health insurance
- d. Continue to provide professional development and training opportunities for all employees

-
- e. Promote advancement opportunities within and across the Kane County Justice System (e.g., mentorship program, leadership development, etc.)
 - f. Offer flexible hours and hybrid work arrangements
 - g. Modernize, update, and standardize human resource processes and practices across the Kane County Justice System (e.g., improve application process, performance management, 360 evaluations, update policies for receiving health insurance, etc.)
 - h. Collaborate between the Kane County Justice System, County Board, bargaining units, and unions, to improve pay, benefits, and working conditions for employees

4

Strategic Focus Area 4: Public Trust and Understanding

Description: Trust and confidence in the judicial branch of government has been on the decline for decades, according to research studies by the Gallup organization and National Center for State Courts. The declines are consistent with eroding trust and confidence with government generally (e.g., executive and legislative branches, law enforcement, the legal profession, etc.).

The Kane County Justice System is committed to rebuilding and maintaining the public's trust and confidence and increasing the public's understanding of the judicial branch and the responsibilities of the court and each respective justice system department.

This area is important for the following reasons:

- **Public Understanding:** The general public lacks an understanding of the judicial branch and the interrelationships with the other branches of government. The Kane County Justice System will work to increase the public's knowledge of the justice system as a whole.
- **Community Relations and Partnerships:** The Kane County Justice System will build new partnerships and connect with and build stronger relationships within the community.
- **Performance, Accountability, Transparency:** The Kane County Justice System is committed to enhancing performance, increasing accountability, and being more transparent. This includes demonstrating fiscal responsibility and reporting on performance.
- **Communicate Needs and Priorities:** More work is needed to communicate and build support for the needs and priorities of the justice system. Organizational leaders are working to present a united front on system needs and future priorities.

LONG-RANGE GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 1: The Kane County Justice System will educate stakeholders, community partners, and the public about the justice system.

Strategies:

- a. Improve and expand informational and educational resources (e.g., written, electronic, videos, etc.) to assist litigants, youth, and families involved in the Kane County Justice System
- b. Communicate and build support for the needs and priorities of the Kane County Justice System
- c. Communicate and share information about the justice system using all forms of media (e.g., joint press releases, social media, podcasts, etc.)
- d. Enhance interdepartmental communication and education among Kane County Justice System departments

Goal 2: The Kane County Justice System will build and maintain the public's trust and confidence.

Strategies:

- a. Engage in outreach efforts that will build strong community relations (e.g., speaking engagements, attend community meetings and key events, present at schools, and conduct mock trials, etc.)
- b. Be inclusive and connect with Kane County's diverse communities
- c. Build, strengthen, and expand relationships with community leaders and partners, thereby building a coalition of community ambassadors and partnerships
- d. Be visible and active in the community (physically and virtually)
- e. Increase transparency and demonstrate fiscal responsibility

APPENDIX

LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS AND TRENDS ANALYSIS

In formulating the Kane County Justice System Strategic Plan, the Team reviewed and analyzed a variety of internal and external trends affecting the Kane County Justice System. A list of plausible long-term implications and a summary of the trends follow.

PowerPoint presentations of the external and internal trends, including data and source citations are available upon request from the Kane County Law Library & Self Help Legal Center 630.406.7126

LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS

Below is a listing of likely future, long-term implications on the Kane County Justice System. Using in large part these implications, formulated through Team review of external and internal trends, the Team developed and populated the previously outlined four strategic focus areas of the Kane County Justice System Strategic Plan.

- The public expects 24/7 services. This includes access to information and the ability to conduct court business electronically anytime and from anywhere.

There will be increasing pressure to accommodate and serve more people with the same or fewer resources. Service demands will continue to increase. Leaders will be challenged to develop ways to realign and use limited resources most effectively.

- Language barriers will persist and increase unless the justice system becomes more multi-lingual or increases capacity to provide language assistance.
- The digital divide will worsen especially as justice system organizations increase the use of technology, remotely accessed court, videoconferencing, etc. if steps are not taken to bridge the gap. Some people will not have the resources to buy computers or mobile devices, will not have the technical literacy to use the devices effectively, or will not have access to secure or stable Wi-Fi.
- In the future, litigants and defendants may not be able to hire an attorney or pay court costs (e.g., fines, fees, restitution, etc.).
- The number of self-represented litigants will likely continue to increase. They will have difficulty navigating the system (e.g., requirements, procedures, forms, etc.) without additional procedural or legal assistance.
- More litigants, defendants, and court users will likely experience and be suffering from mental health and substance use disorders. The need for more assessment, diagnostic, and treatment options and programs will continue to increase. Funding, community resources, and treatment programs are currently inadequate to meet the growing demand.

-
- Solving the root causes of issues that bring people into the justice system also will be important in the future to achieve positive outcomes such as rehabilitation, reduce recidivism, and keep the community safe. Innovative, evidence-based programming will be needed to meet evolving needs and achieve positive outcomes.
 - Many people continue to distrust the government generally and law enforcement and courts specifically. Proactive steps are needed to strengthen and re-build trust and confidence in the justice system.
 - The Kane County Justice System will need to continue to use and expand the use of technology to provide services and conduct business. We will focus on the importance of human interaction and building relationships. Privacy issues and increased anxiety regarding technology use will need to be addressed.
 - Remote hearings increase the participation of some court participants, and are currently effective for some, but not all, types of hearings. Efforts must be made to ensure the technology is not burdensome and does not create inefficiencies. It is essential to make provisions for people who do not use technology. It will be essential to find an optimal balance of in-person and virtual court proceedings going forward. Professionalism, courtroom decorum, and the ability to make a court record also must be preserved going forward. Doing so will help build confidence in the judicial system.
 - The new future of work is “hybrid work arrangements,” where organizations will need to find the optimal mix of in-person and remote work. Experts suggest, “remote work is here to stay.” Justice system agencies/organizations will need to adapt to the new future of work in order to serve court users outside of normal business hours, recruit and retain a talented workforce, to name a few. Additional training will be needed to learn the remote technologies, lead and manage a hybrid team, and the like.
 - Justice system personnel, like employees everywhere, may be suffering from burnout, isolation, mental health challenges, etc. Demands on employees are increasing and work conditions are challenging (e.g., high workloads, backlogs, short-staffed, new technology, etc.). Employee well-being must be a high priority in the future.
 - Safety and security must remain a high priority for all involved in the justice system. Court security (perimeter and courtroom), cyber security, and public health safety precautions are vitally important so court users, justice system participants, and personnel, feel safe while conducting justice system business.
 - Justice system reform is occurring both nationally and within Illinois. Implementing and funding reform initiatives will be challenging. The requirements may come down in the form of unfunded mandates. The Kane County Justice System departments will benefit from collaborating, realigning and sharing resources, and eliminating antiquated programs and practices to respond to and implement the new requirements.
 - Pre-trial reform (eliminating cash bond or bail) will adversely impact local revenues. Kane County will need to find appropriate ways to generate revenue to fund the justice system.

-
- Kane County Justice system facilities will continue to be a challenge. There are six different locations through which judicial officers and staff are spread. Some of the facilities are antiquated and in need of repair. Space for staff is also limited; there is no space to grow or expand. Long-term facilities planning is needed to ensure the justice system is able to meet the existing and evolving needs of Kane County residents.
 - The performance of the justice system will continue to be scrutinized. The Kane County Justice System and outside agencies (e.g., police) use different computer systems, programs, and software, which are not integrated. Obtaining useful data from the multiple systems is difficult and time consuming. Sharing and transferring data also is difficult, which causes delays and adversely impacts the timely resolution of cases. Integrating the systems and ensuring reliable data will be essential to making good, data-driven decisions that enhance justice system performance.
 - The Kane County Justice System must become more nimble and agile. It must be able to adapt to changing and evolving needs of court users and the community. Old practices must be critically examined, and new, more effective practices must be explored and implemented. Additionally, more within and cross-agency collaboration will be essential in the future.
 - The Kane County Justice System needs consistent and stable funding and resources to be able to make and sustain systemic changes and improvements. To ensure quality services to the people of Kane County, it will be increasingly important to invest in the county and justice system infrastructure (e.g., facilities, space, technology, security, etc.) and initiate programmatic best practices and innovations.

TRENDS ANALYSIS

SOCIAL TRENDS

Population: Between 2010 and 2019, the US population increased by 6.3%. The population of Kane County and Elgin grew by 3.3% and 2.5% respectively during the same time period. Aurora’s population stayed the same. Illinois’ population declined by 1.2% during the same time period.

Age of Population: Kane County’s population is younger than the population of the United States and Illinois. The median age of the population in the United States and Illinois in 2019 was 39 years of age. The median age in Kane County, Aurora, and Elgin in 2019 was 38, 35, and 35 respectively.

Largest Birth Cohort in the Population and Workplace: As of 2019, Millennials (born between 1981 and 1996) make up the largest birth cohort in the general population and the workplace. Millennials surpassed the baby boomers, which was previously the largest birth cohort.

Race and Ethnicity: Illinois’ population mirrors the racial and ethnic make-up of the population of the US with approximately 70% of the population being white, 14% African American, 6% Asian, and 3% two or more races, and 18% of the population identifying as Hispanic/Latino. The population of Kane County, Aurora, and Elgin is more racially and ethnically diverse than that of Illinois and the US. Nearly a third (1 in 3) of residents are Hispanic/Latino.

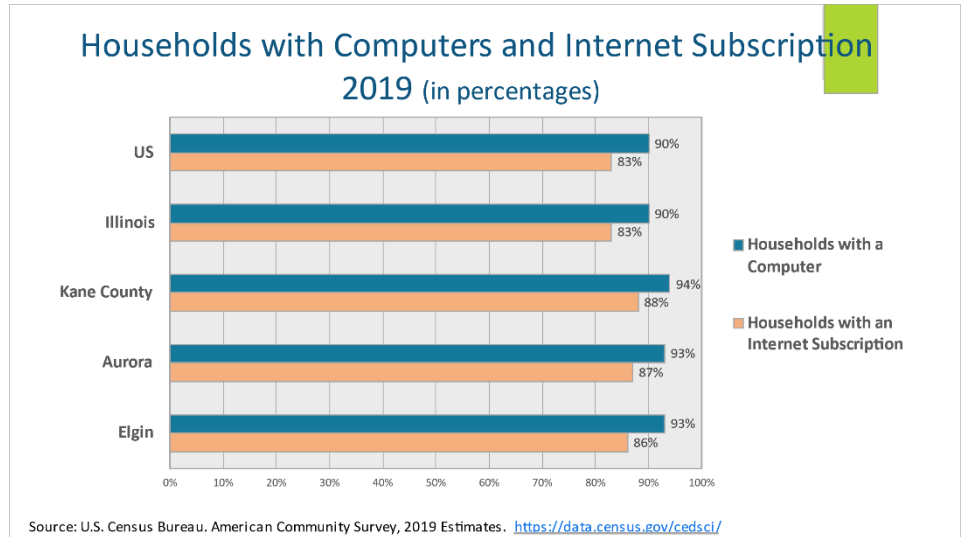
Racial Inequality and Racial and Civil Injustices: There is increasing awareness and discussion about racial inequality and racial and social injustices in society. More conversations and actions are taking place around equality, equity, and justice – fairness and equitable opportunities for all.

Languages Spoken in the Home: Forty-six percent of the population in Aurora and Elgin, and 31% of the population in Kane County, speak languages other than English in the home, according to the US Census Bureau. Twenty-two percent of the population in the US and 23% of the population in Illinois speak languages other than English in the home.

Social Media: Social media is increasingly used to connect, communicate, and conduct business.

Households with Computers and Internet Subscriptions:

Slightly more households have a computer and an internet subscription in Kane County, Aurora, and Elgin than in the United States and Illinois.

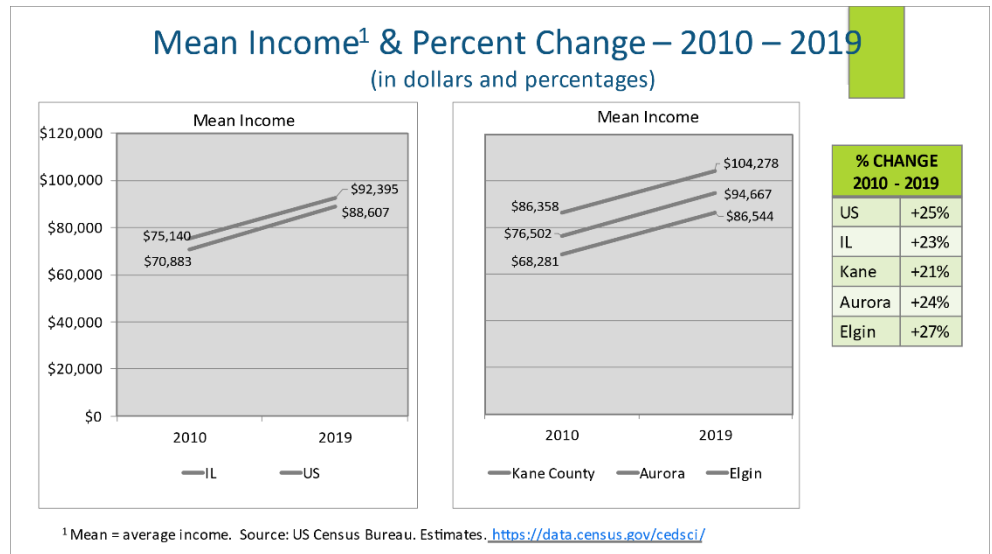


ECONOMIC TRENDS

Unemployment: In June 2021, the unemployment rate in the United States was 5.9% and in Illinois, it was 7.2%. It was 6.2% in Kane County.

Mean Household Income:

The mean household income in Kane County is higher than both the United States and Illinois.



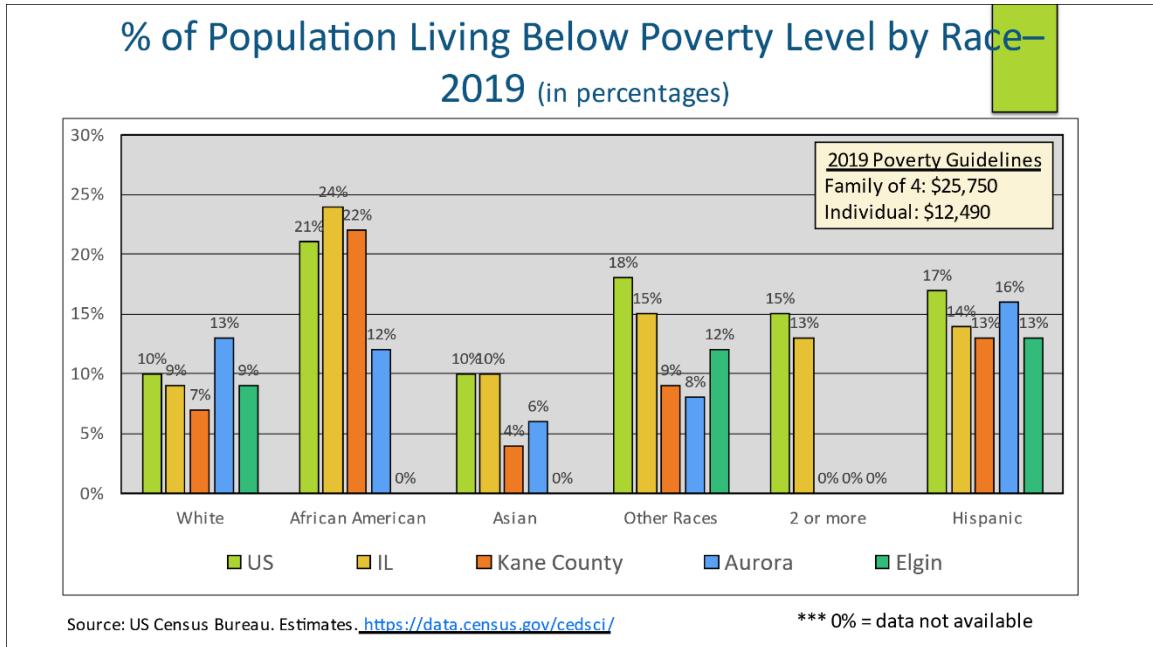
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Home:

The median value of housing has increased by 34% across the United States from 2010 to 2019. While the median value of housing has increased in Illinois (by 9%) as well as in Kane County,

Aurora, and Elgin, the increases have been much less: between 1–7% during the same time period.

Median Gross Rent (rent plus utilities): Median gross rent in Kane County, Aurora, and Elgin is higher than that for the United States and Illinois (about \$1200 per month vs. \$1050 per month respectively). Between 2010–2019, rental costs have increased between 21–25% in Kane County, Aurora, and Elgin. The United States and Illinois experienced similar increases in rental costs during the same time period.

Poverty Rates: The percentage of the population living below poverty is highest for those with less than a high school diploma, and those who are African American and Hispanic/Latino. The poverty rates are lowest for people who have a bachelor’s degree or higher, and those who are White, and Asian. The percent of population living below poverty is higher in the United States and Illinois than in the Kane County area.



Opportunity Gap: There is a widening opportunity gap due largely to differences in socio-economic status, access to quality education, adequate health care and housing.

Increasing Homelessness: As evictions increase, homelessness of individuals and families may increase as well.

TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

Gadgets Galore: The wireless revolution continues. Telecommunications and information technology are rapidly being developed.

Growing Digital Divide: Although high proportions of people have computers in their household and an internet subscription, the digital divide continues to widen. The digital divide is widening between people who have: (a) the means to buy computers and/or mobile devices, (b) access to secure and stable Internet; and (c) the knowledge and technical skills to use them, and those that don't.

E-Everything from Anywhere and Anytime: People expect 24/7 service and the ability to do business electronically and on-demand.

Artificial Intelligence/Big Data: Artificial intelligence, big data, and data analytics are the future and must be used carefully. Predictive analytics are a tool for better decision-making. Reliable data are needed to measure and improve performance.

Data Sharing: There is continued need for networking and integrating information systems and sharing appropriate data (e.g., information exchange).

Cyber Attacks: Digital infrastructures are increasingly at risk.

POLICY AND POLITICAL TRENDS

Polarization and Gridlock: There is ongoing debate and polarization over important issues. The major political parties are gridlocked on most issues including issues that traditionally were non-partisan.

Declining Trust in Institutions: There is declining trust in institutions such as government (including courts), media, and medicine as tracked and reported by the Gallup Organization.

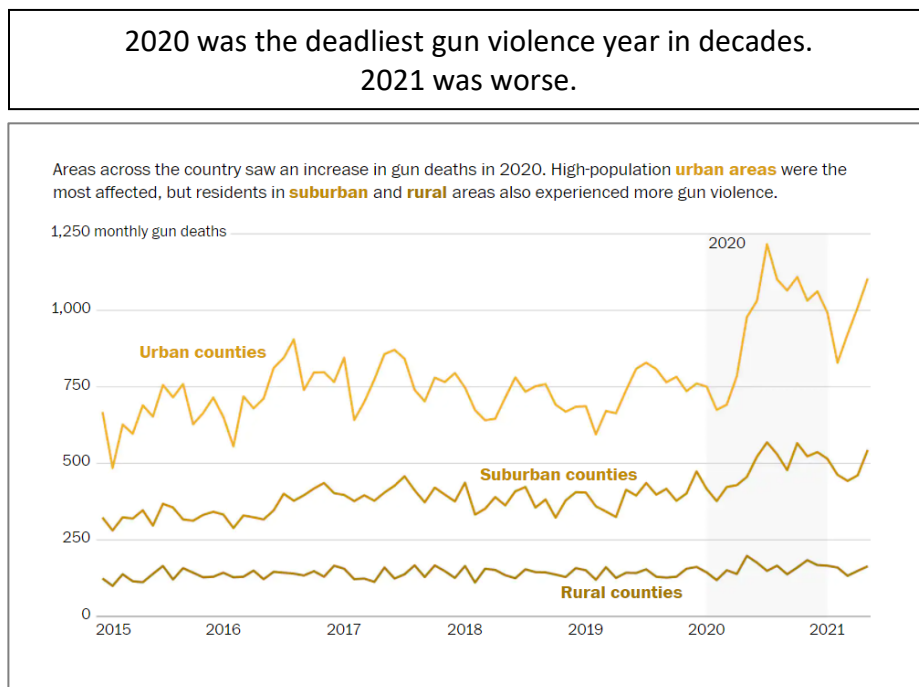
JUSTICE SYSTEM TRENDS

Justice System Reform: Justice system reform is underway across the United States including access to justice initiatives, pre-trial (Bail or Bond) reform, modifying methods for providing legal representation and assistance, improving the legal education system, etc.

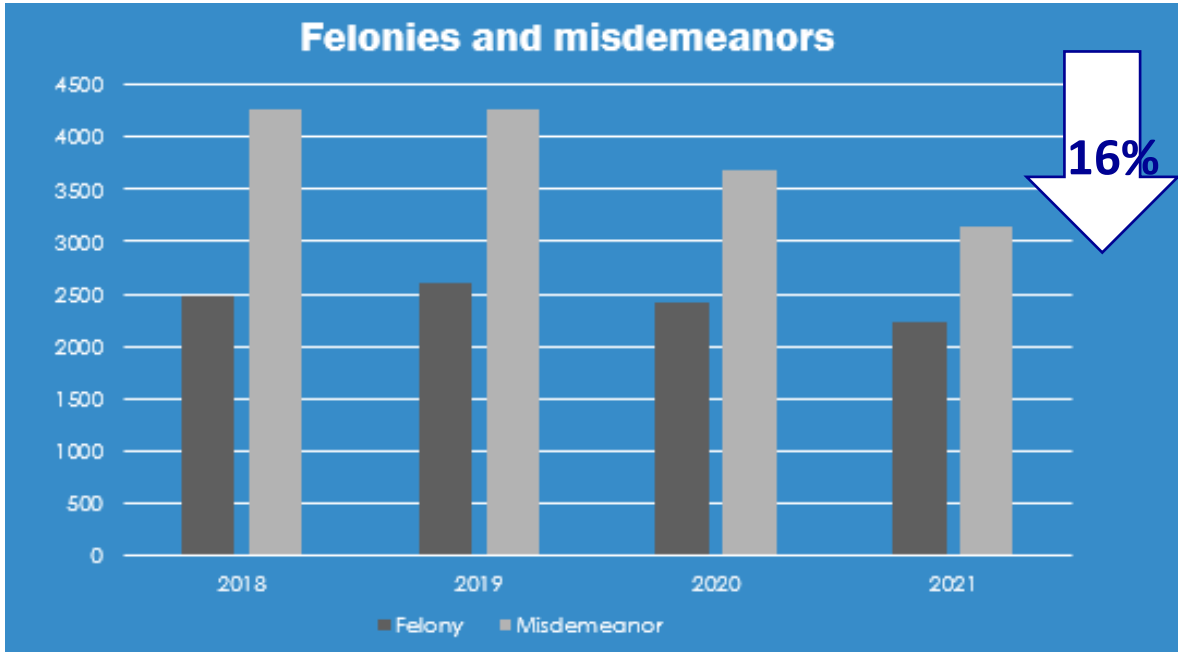
Court Infrastructure: Facilities, courthouse and courtroom security, and IT equipment and cyber security are often antiquated and in need of improvement.

Retirements: Many baby boomers are retiring. There is a high need to develop the next generation of judicial and administrative leaders. Some experts predict a “resignation boom” is looming.

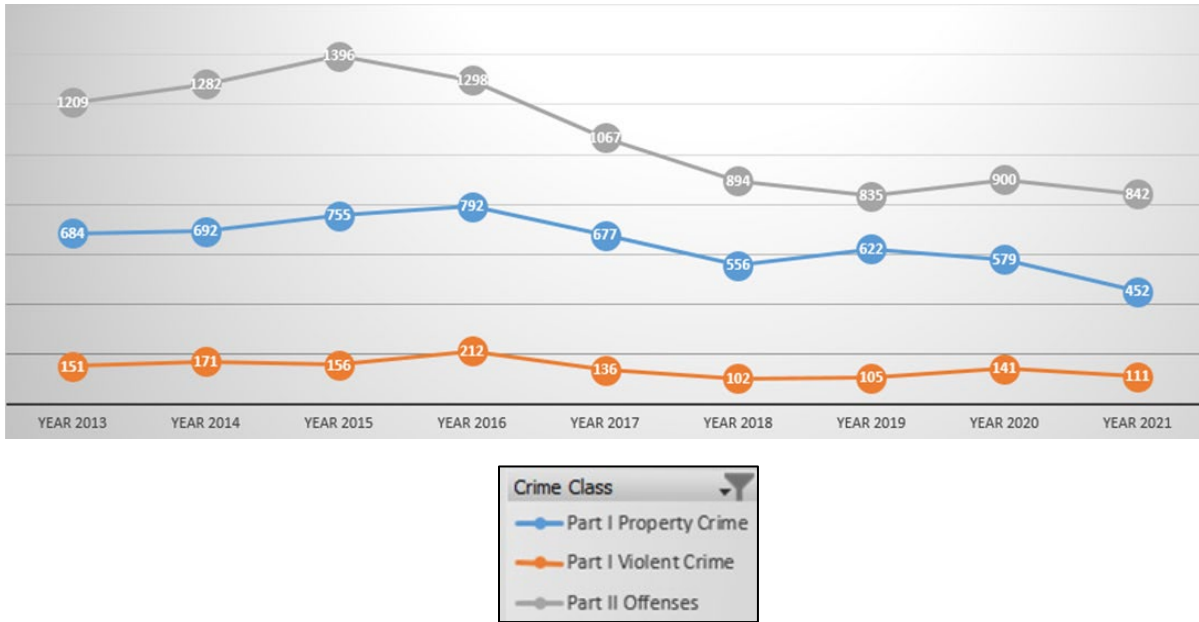
Crime: Gun violence is on the rise, according to national statistics.



Crime across Kane County is down 16% over the past 3 years.



Violent crime in Kane County is down in 2021 (from 2020), according to the State’s Attorney and Sheriff’s Offices.



Technological Innovations: Courts are embracing technological innovations advanced largely by the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, the service delivery model is being critically examined and transformed in courts across the United States. Both electronic access and the ability to conduct court business remotely are being enhanced. Virtual hearings, trials, services, and meetings are being evaluated and refined to discern practices that ensure access and fairness for all, operational efficiency, effectiveness, and respect for the process.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: Racial justice and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) discussions are occurring. Many courts are taking actions to address racial and social injustices and promote a more diverse, equitable, and welcoming inclusive environment.

Mental Health: The number of litigants with mental health and substance abuse issues is increasing. There is a need to improve and expand evidence-based treatment options, community programs, and other supportive services.

Dispute Resolution: There is an increase in the use of private dispute resolution options to resolve matters because the public system is too slow, too complicated, and costs too much. Additionally, alternative and innovative methods for resolving disputes are being tested and implemented (e.g., online dispute resolution – ODR).

Skills: The skills needed to succeed in today's and tomorrow's courts are different from the past. There is an increasing need to re-tool the skill sets ensuring judicial officers and the workforce have the requisite skills to succeed. Re-skilling and up-skilling are needed and on the rise.