

Who's Who in the Division?

A lot of people work in the Domestic Relations Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County. Some people who work here can help you file your court documents, some can help you figure out where you need to go, and some can provide information about your case. Everyone who works here is here to help – but not every person can answer every question. Those that work here also cannot provide legal advice. This is a list of the people you are most likely going to interact with when you come to court and a bit of information about how they may be able to help you.

- **Assistant State's Attorneys** - The assistant state's attorneys represent the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) with relation to parentage and child support issues. HFS is a party, just like you are. Please note that the assistant state's attorney does not represent you even though HFS may have goals similar to yours. For more information on the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, click [here](#).
- **Circuit Court Clerks**- The clerks are an integral part of the court system. They deal with filing and scheduling and can also answer questions about the locations of various court related services. However, they are not attorneys and cannot provide legal information or legal advice. For more information on the Clerk of the Circuit Court's Office, Cook County State's Attorney's Office, click [here](#).
- **Concourse Level (CL 24)** - The staff at the front desk located in CL 24 are there to help litigants with cases assigned to the concourse level courtrooms, hearing rooms, and Early Resolution Program. Also located on the concourse level is the DNA Diagnostics Testing Center.
- **Coordinators**- Coordinators are available in some courtrooms to manage the judge's schedule and daily court call. When a coordinator is not available, the judge manages his or her own schedule and daily court call. When available, the coordinators can also answer questions about the locations of various court related services. However, they are not attorneys and cannot provide legal advice.
- **Foreign Language Interpreters** - The Circuit Court of Cook County's Office of Interpreter Services provides sign language interpreters and foreign language interpreters to litigants. For more information on their policies and procedures, click [here](#).
- **Hearing Officers** - Hearing officers help parties reach agreements and ensure the parties are ready for a prove up. Hearing officers also help self-represented litigants in the Early Resolution Program. They must be fair and impartial and cannot give legal advice. A hearing officer may not mediate disputes relative to parenting time or responsibilities. If parties cannot reach an agreement with a hearing officer, they are entitled to appear in court before a judge.
- **Judges** - The judges are here to decide matters in your case. Each judge must be fair and impartial and cannot give legal advice. Consequently, judges cannot speak to or correspond with litigants regarding their case outside of court. Any communication to the Judge must include all parties properly before the court.
- **Mediators** - Mediators assist in identifying the issues, reducing misunderstandings, exploring and clarifying the parties' respective interests and priorities, and identifying and exploring possible solutions that will satisfy the interests of all parties and thereby facilitate resolution of some or all of the issues in dispute. Mediation sessions are confidential and their contents cannot be reported to the court.
- **Presiding Judge**- The Presiding Judge has centralized and administrative authority to coordinate and supervise the functions of the court pursuant to [Circuit Court of Cook County Rule 13.2\(a\)](#) and [General Order 15.1](#). As such, the Presiding Judge does not discipline the other judges in the division and does not review or otherwise weigh in on their rulings.
- **Presiding Judge's Staff** - The Presiding Judge's staff, located in room 1901A at the Daley Center, is available to direct you to appropriate resources and to provide administrative guidance and basic procedural information.
- **Sheriff's Deputies** - The sheriff's deputies are in court to provide security for all who attend court and to preserve order. For more information on the Cook County Sheriff's Office, please click [here](#).

DISCLAIMER: This guide serves as a court-process navigation tool. It does not contain legal advice. Litigants are encouraged to consult an attorney if possible and the Illinois Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act (IMDMA) at 750 ILCS 5/ *et seq.* for more information. Note that the IMDMA and all accompanying statutes have been interpreted and explained by the Illinois Appellate Court and the Supreme Court of Illinois; and their decisions are equally as binding on the trial court as the statute itself. To research and review those cases via a legal research database commonly used by judges and attorneys, please visit any of the Circuit Court of Cook County's Law Libraries (e.g. 29th floor of the Daley Center).