



**Mariyana T. Spyropoulos**

Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County

# PROGRESS REPORT **2025**



# LETTER FROM CLERK MARIYANA T. SPYROPOULOS

Dear Cook County residents,

It is an honor to present this progress report on the early initiatives undertaken by the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County since being sworn in on December 1, 2024.

This document reflects the foundational work that has taken place to bring meaningful, measurable change to an office that is central to the administration of justice in Cook County. Guided by the values of transparency, accountability, and accessibility, the early months of this administration have been defined by action – modernizing systems, strengthening internal operations, and delivering new tools and services to the public.

From launching the Clerk’s office’s first-ever public-facing data dashboard, to initiating an internal control audit that prioritizes financial oversight, every reform has been approached with the belief that government must be both effective and people-centered. Programs like Amnesty Week and the expansion of language access services are early examples of how this office is working to ease the burden on working families and remove longstanding barriers to the court system.

Much of this work would not be possible without the dedication of our employees, who have responded with professionalism and urgency to this administration’s call for reform. Their commitment to customer service, continuous improvement, and public trust is deeply appreciated, and I am grateful to them.

This progress report is not a conclusion, it is a starting point. There is more work to be done, and I look forward to continuing to forge ahead. Thank you for the opportunity to serve. It is a privilege to lead this office and to work every day on behalf of the residents of Cook County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Spyropoulos', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mariyana T. Spyropoulos

Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County

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# MISSION STATEMENT

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The Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County strives to serve the public with excellence.

Our goal is to provide efficient, transparent, and technologically advanced court services to all participants in the judicial system, ensuring an accurate and complete court record, strong financial stewardship, and equal access to justice for all.

Our dedicated workforce reflects the diversity of our communities and is committed to delivering exceptional service and upholding the integrity of the judicial process.



## TRANSPARENCY

Transparency is reflected in the deliberate effort to provide the public with clear, consistent, and timely access to court data, services, and operational updates. A transparent court system strengthens public confidence and reinforces the integrity of government institutions.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability remains central to the stewardship of public resources and the performance of official duties. This includes the implementation of internal controls, employee training, and ongoing evaluation of office practices to ensure alignment with legal, ethical, and operational standards.

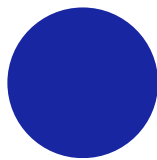
## ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility underscores the responsibility to ensure all individuals – regardless of language, income, ability, or background – are able to navigate and engage with the court system. Expanding language services, enhancing digital access, and simplifying court interactions are key priorities in reducing barriers to justice.

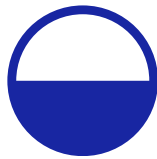


# PROGRESS LEGEND

The progress legend is designed to provide a clear snapshot of where each initiative stands in terms of implementation. Each project in this report is labeled according to its current status. This visual guide helps readers quickly identify completed actions, ongoing efforts, and future initiatives.



**COMPLETE**



**IN PROGRESS**



# TRANSPARENCY

Transparency is a foundational value of the Clerk's Office and a central tenet of Clerk Mariyana Spyropoulos' administration. As promised during her campaign, the Clerk has taken significant steps to improve the public's ability to access, understand, and engage with court-related data and services. These efforts mark a departure from legacy practices and demonstrate a new commitment to open government and public accountability.

## DATA DASHBOARD

In March 2025, the Clerk's Office launched its first public-facing Data Dashboard, providing access to five years of case initiation data beginning in 2020. Hosted on the Clerk's website, the tool allows users to filter by area of law, court location, and circuit division or branch. It offers insight into court operations and will continue to expand with new data and features. The dashboard reflects the office's commitment to transparency without waiting for legislative reform and offers the public timely, accessible information in a centralized format.



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# TRANSPARENCY

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## EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK OVERHAUL

The Human Resources team completed a comprehensive revision of the Clerk’s Employee Handbook. The previous version of the handbook lacked the structure, clarity, and consistency needed to support a modern workplace.

The new handbook introduces transparent policies and procedures designed to improve employee understanding of expectations, promote equitable workplace practices, and support strong managerial oversight. Developed entirely in-house, the updated document is both a practical tool and a symbol of the administration’s commitment to institutional integrity.

Clear policies lead to consistent service delivery, which in turn builds accountability across every level of the organization – from frontline staff to executive leadership.



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## DID YOU KNOW?

THE CLERK’S OFFICE  
IS COMPRISED OF  
**1,400 EMPLOYEES**





# TRANSPARENCY

## APPOINTED A PUBLIC ACCESS DIRECTOR

In an effort to institutionalize transparency and promote greater accountability, the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County created the position of Public Access Director – a dedicated role tasked with overseeing public information practices, managing records access requests, and strengthening interagency compliance protocols.

The establishment of this position marks a significant step forward in formalizing the Clerk’s commitment to openness and responsiveness. The Public Access Director serves as a key liaison between the Clerk’s Office and oversight bodies, including the Cook County Office of the Independent Inspector General. This structure enhances both the authority and independence of transparency efforts within the office and ensures ongoing cooperation with countywide integrity measures.

Beyond supporting public records access, the Public Access Director is also charged with reviewing internal information-sharing policies, identifying opportunities to proactively release data, and promoting best practices that align with state public access laws and County transparency goals.

This role reflects Clerk Spyropoulos’ belief that transparency must be structurally embedded, not simply aspirational, and that residents deserve a court system that communicates clearly, operates openly, and earns public trust through action.



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# ACCOUNTABILITY

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Accountability is essential to a transparent and effective government. Since taking office, Clerk Mariyana Spyropoulos has focused on strengthening internal controls, raising professional standards, and instilling a culture of responsibility across the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County.

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## CUSTOMER SERVICE TRAINING

The Clerk’s Office developed a custom, in-house Customer Service Training course for all employees. The training emphasizes respect, communication, and accountability in every internal and external interaction, with a focus on improving the overall customer experience. As of April 8, 2025, a total of 1,188 employees, approximately 94% of the office, have completed the course, including all members of the executive leadership team and Clerk Spyropoulos. Full participation is on track for completion by the end of April 2025.

This initiative is part of a broader investment in staff development and service delivery. A comprehensive Court Clerk Training program, including a curriculum and practical toolkit, is being developed for rollout in Q2 2025. Additionally, a Management Training Guide is underway for Chief Deputy Clerks and Assistant Chief Deputy Clerks, with soft skills training to support leadership development and strengthen the customer experience across court operations.



# ACCOUNTABILITY



## FULFILLING BACKLOGGED STATUTORY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

Upon assuming office, Clerk Spyropoulos directed audits across all divisions to identify past-due reports and required processes left incomplete by previous administrations. The Clerk's Office has since corrected and submitted all 2023 and 2024 quarterly reports to the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts.

Significant volumes of delayed financial transactions between defendants and plaintiffs were processed, and over 200 boxes of unfiled civil court documents were organized. Data reporting to the Department of Child and Family Services was reinitiated, and corrective plans were developed to address outstanding expungement transmittals to state and local law enforcement agencies. File accessions were also resumed in several divisions. Remaining prior-year reports to the Secretary of State are scheduled for completion in Q2 of 2025.



## APPOINTED AN INSPECTOR GENERAL

Clerk Spyropoulos appointed the office's Inspector General to enhance internal oversight and strengthen ethical standards. This role is focused on advancing accountability and organizational integrity through independent review and the implementation of ethics policies and staff training.

To support this work, anonymous reporting tools have been made available to both employees and the public, including a confidential Employee Anonymous Portal that allows staff to submit issues, feedback or suggestions directly to leadership.

## DID YOU KNOW?

COOK COUNTY IS  
ONE OF THE LARGEST  
**UNIFIED COURT SYSTEMS**  
IN THE WORLD



# ACCOUNTABILITY



## CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY

In February 2025, Clerk Spyropoulos launched an extensive customer service survey, which seeks to gather valuable insights from residents to guide improvements throughout the office, whether they utilized the call center, an office computer program, or visited in person. The survey allows users to rate their experience and provide details about interactions with the Clerk's Office.

This initiative is a part of Clerk Spyropoulos' commitment to providing the highest level of customer service to the people of Cook County. By hearing from the public directly through the survey, the Clerk's Office is able to make effective changes throughout the office to positively impact the quality of service and make changes quickly when problems arise.



## ETHICS CODE

In order to create excellence in the workplace and an environment where employees and officers demonstrate integrity, respect, responsibility, and accountability, the Clerk's Office adopted an Ethics Executive Order.

This order underscores Clerk Spyropoulos' commitment to ensuring that the office adheres to the Cook County Ethics Ordinance. Additionally, this order represents the Clerk's strong commitment to the Clerk's Office being a model in ethics in government by adding increased specificity to the ethics guidelines for employees.



## ETHICS OFFICER

Clerk Spyropoulos has designated an ethics officer who is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the newly adopted code of ethics. The ethics officer will ensure employees are made aware of the code and help ensure compliance across all departments.



# ACCOUNTABILITY



## INTERNAL AUDIT

To strengthen financial oversight and ensure proper stewardship of public resources, the Clerk's Office initiated a comprehensive Internal Control Audit. While the Clerk's Office continues to undergo regular external audits, this internal audit focuses specifically on evaluating internal financial controls, identifying inefficiencies, and addressing process gaps. This effort reflects the Clerk's pledge to modernize operations and promote responsible financial management.



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# ACCESSIBILITY

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Accessibility is fundamental to justice. Clerk Mariyana Spyropoulos is committed to making the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County more navigable, inclusive, and responsive for all residents regardless of language, income, ability, or digital access.

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## AMNESTY WEEK

Amnesty Week provided the opportunity to pay outstanding fines and fees with the 30% collection fee waived to make it easier for the public to pay what they owe.

The Clerk of the Circuit Court has a statutory responsibility to collect all court-related fines and fees. The Clerk's goal with Amnesty Week was to find a means of easing the burden of additional fees on individuals by waiving the burden of 30% past-due collection fees. The Clerk is committed to both meeting the obligations of the Clerk's Office and helping the public.

## LANGUAGE ACCESS EXPANSION

Language should never be a barrier to justice. In early 2025, the Clerk's Office began implementing Language Line interpretation services across its divisions, providing real-time support to non-English-speaking constituents.

Additionally, the Clerk's website was updated to allow translation into more than 50 languages, and office signage was updated to include translation services. These tools ensure that all Cook County residents, including those with limited English proficiency, can confidently navigate court services and understand their rights and responsibilities.

## DID YOU KNOW?

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OVER **100 LANGUAGES** ARE  
SPOKEN IN COOK COUNTY



# ACCESSIBILITY



## ADVISORY GROUPS

Clerk Spyropoulos is establishing Advisory Groups to bring the office to the next level. The goals of achieving operational excellence, improving customer service, and increasing access to justice require expertise and diverse perspectives.

Advisory groups, such as the Attorney Advisory Group, will help identify issues and opportunities to build a tactical and strategic plan to improve the Clerk's Office.



## ONLINE RECORDS CENTER

In early 2025, the Clerk's Office launched a new Online Records Center to modernize and streamline the process for the public to request court records. This initiative is part of a broader commitment to improving access to information, enhancing operational transparency, and ensuring that court records are readily available to those who need them.

Through the Online Records Center, requests can be submitted for court data, court files, archived files, and media requests.



## DEFENDANT ACCESS (E-PAY/E-PLEA)

E-plea provides customers the option to electronically plea for traffic cases. E-pay allows customers to make electronic payments, when pleading guilty or prior to the scheduled court hearing on eligible Traffic and Administrative cases.

The implementation of the e-pay/e-plea functionality is targeted for the second quarter of 2025, and future plans include expanding convenient e-pay functionality to other areas of law.



# ACCESSIBILITY

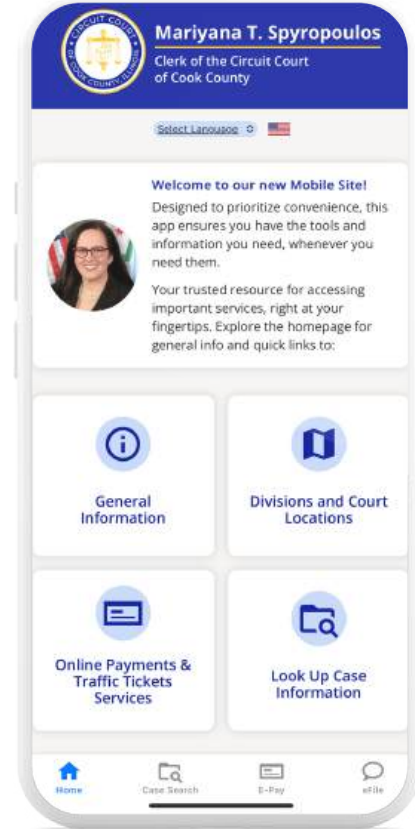


## MOBILE APP

The Clerk’s mobile app, launched in 2025, is a progressive web application (PWA) that provides mobile-friendly access to key court services without requiring a download from an app store. Users will be able to:

- Search for court cases
- Pay traffic tickets
- Access directions to court locations
- Find eFile information and support

This app supports the Clerk’s goal of meeting residents where they are and modernizing how services are delivered across Cook County.



## eCITATION

The eCitation project will electronically import traffic tickets from law enforcement agencies directly into the Clerk’s case management system. This system will reduce paperwork, minimize manual data entry, and improve accuracy.

The initial phase includes 23 municipalities and 20 agencies, with implementation targeted for the end of Q2 2025.

By reducing inefficiencies and simplifying case initiation, eCitation will improve access to timely resolution and enhance the public’s experience with traffic-related matters.







# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report represents the result of a collaborative effort across internal teams and external partners. The contributions of all involved have helped advance the mission of delivering more effective, accountable, and transparent services to the public.

Sincere appreciation is extended to all employees of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County for their contributions to the development and success of this Progress Report. The dedication, professionalism, and ongoing service of staff across all divisions have served as the foundation for meaningful progress and operational improvement on behalf of the residents of Cook County.

Special acknowledgment is given to Civic Consulting Alliance (CCA) for providing strategic guidance and insight throughout the planning and implementation process. Their collaboration was instrumental in advancing key initiatives.

Gratitude is also extended to Protiviti for its technical expertise and its support in evaluating internal systems and contributing to the Office's modernization efforts.

## THANK YOU





# Mariyana T. Spyropoulos

Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County

## MARIYANA T. SPYROPOULOS

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**Top Row:** Craig Wimberly, James Chandler, Rowida Zatar, Sloan Smith, Vivek Ananda, Daniel Rude, Chad Gearig  
**Bottom Row:** Tyhani Hill, Clerk Mariyana Spyropoulos, Renee Banks, Michael Ciaccio

**Not Pictured:** Katarina Durcova, Delio Calzolari