

MARIYANA T. SPYROPOULOS

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT


COMPLIANCE DEPARTMENT



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OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY

TO: Mariyana T. Spyropoulos, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County
Michael Ciaccio, Chief of Staff
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James Chandler, General Counsel
Katarina Durcova, Inspector General

FROM: Dana R. Andrews, Director of Compliance, (DOC) 

RE: January 2026 Semi-Annual Report

DATE: January 15, 2026

In accordance with Article V, Section B of the Employment Plan (the Plan) of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County (Clerk's Office), the following is the January 2026 Semi-Annual Report (Report).

This report details compliance – related activities between July 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025 and will be posted on the Clerk of the Circuit Court's website. The Clerk's Office continues to maintain substantial compliance, so long as the Clerk's Office acts in good faith to remedy instances of non-compliance that have been identified and prevent recurrences, does not make employment decisions based on political reasons or factors (except for Shakman Exempt positions), does not have a record of material noncompliance which frustrates the Consent Decrees and the Supplemental Relief Order's essential purpose, and has implemented procedures intended to effect long-term prevention of the use of impermissible political considerations in connection with employment.

The information contained herein provides insight into the processes that have been implemented and proposed recommendations to sustain continued compliance.

Mission Statement

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.

Violations of the Plan

Violations of the Plan and/or Supplemental Policies Manual (SPM) were reported or discovered during this time period. They will be addressed specifically below.

Unlawful Political Discrimination (UPD)

No complaints of UPD were filed or reported.

Political Contacts

No political contacts were reported.

Employment Plan Amendment

Actively Recruited Positions List

Inspector General Investigator, MIS Business Analyst, Senior Server Administrator, and Senior Systems Developer were added to the list.

Employment Plan Training and Supplemental Policies Training

The Clerk's Office must provide comprehensive mandatory Employment Plan training to all employees, supervisors/interviews, and Executive Staff, to ensure they are aware of and knowledgeable of the Plan as well as their role in the hiring process. Employees receive such training within 60 days of employment or promotion, and on an annual basis thereafter. From July 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025, trainings were conducted both in person and electronically, through the Learning Management System (LMS).

Two hundred four (204) new employees attended in person Employment Plan and Supplemental Policies Manual Training during New Employee Orientation and 4 new supervisors and/or interviewers completed Supervisor/Interviewer Training.

Annual all-employee Employment Plan, Supplemental Policies Manual, and Supervisor/Interviewer Trainings are delivered through LMS on an on-going basis.

Policies

No additional EP or Handbook policies were finalized during this reporting period.

Audit Activities

Posting File

During this reporting period, I reviewed each posting file after completion of the hiring cycle. Thirty (30) areas on the Posting File/Interview File Checklist, tied to the hiring steps, were examined along with the required documentation that must be housed in each file.

On December 31, 2025, my Office issued an Audit Report that included my findings and recommendations to the CHRO and Director of Hiring and Change Management. I recommended that HR ensure all required signatures and approvals are obtained prior to finalizing hiring actions; reinforce panelist requirements to initial any alterations made to Interview Evaluation forms; implement a final quality-control review of posting files before completion; and provide refresher guidance to hiring managers and interview panelists regarding documentation standards.

All issues identified have been resolved accordingly.

Hiring & Employment Actions

Offering guidance on correct implementation of the Plan (and on how to address and/or resolve errors or other unexpected circumstances in a manner consistent with Plan principles) is a big part of what I do. I also monitor employment actions in progress to assess for compliance and assist by providing direction and guidance as processes unfold. This prevents non-compliance in real time and serves as a form of training to prevent future non-compliance. Additionally, I monitor compliance with Plan requirements via review of documents.

My practice is to recommend corrective measures and advise HR staff as appropriate to assist with corrections.

Hiring

Hiring actions will be addressed individually below.

Actively Recruited Positions:

Inspector General Investigator

The position was properly posted with 1 vacancy under the Actively Recruited Hiring Process. The DOC validated 50 applications and came to an agreement with HR on its validation resulting in 31 eligible candidates. The Application Review Panel reviewed candidate profiles and supporting documents and identified 9 candidates for interview. The interview process occurred without issue with the DOC monitoring 3 out of 6 interviews. During the Ranking Meeting, the Interview Panel ranked 2 candidates. Subsequent to the initial posting, a second vacancy was approved. The remainder of this sequence should be addressed further in the next DOC's Report.

MIS Business Analyst

The position was properly posted with 1 vacancy under the Actively Recruited Hiring Process. The DOC validated 53 applications and came to an agreement with HR on its validation resulting in 15 eligible candidates. The Application Review Panel reviewed candidate profiles and supporting documents; no candidates were identified for interview. Subsequently, the position requisition was cancelled and the position description was reviewed and revised by the hiring department. No issues were identified with this sequence.

Senior Accountant

The position was properly posted with 1 vacancy under the Actively Recruited Hiring Process. The DOC validated 16 applications and came to an agreement with HR on its validation resulting in 3 eligible candidates. The Application Review Panel reviewed candidate profiles and supporting documents; no candidates were identified for interview. Subsequently, the position requisition was cancelled and the position description was reviewed and revised by the hiring department. No issues were identified with this sequence.

Senior Server Administrator

The position was properly posted with 1 vacancy under the Actively Recruited Hiring Process. The DOC validated 41 applications and came to agreement with HR on its validating resulting in 12 eligible candidates. The Application Review Panel reviewed candidate profiles and supporting documents and identified 3 candidates for interview. The interview process occurred without issue with the DOC monitoring 3 interviews. During the Ranking Meeting, the Interview Panel ranked 1 candidate. The ranked candidate accepted the position. No issues were identified with this sequence.

Senior Systems Developer

The position was properly posted with 2 vacancies under the Actively Recruited Hiring Process. The DOC validated 15 applications and came to agreement with HR on its validating resulting in no eligible candidates. Subsequently, the position requisition was cancelled. No issues were identified with this sequence.

Executive Assistant Hiring:

Two (2) Executive Assistants were appointed during this time period. HR submitted notifications for all Executive Assistants pursuant to Section XIII of the Plan. I did not identify any concerns with any of the selections.

Exempt Hiring:

Five (5) Shakman exempt employees were appointed during this time period, including: (Acting) Executive Clerk, Court Operations and Administration; Associate Clerk, Court Operations, Civil/Probate/County/Law; Deputy General Counsel; Director of Procurement; ACDC, Traffic.

HR submitted notifications for all Exempt hires pursuant to Section XII of the Plan. I did not identify any concerns with any of the selections.

General Hiring:

Accountant

This position was posted during the previous reporting period. The position was properly posted with 1 vacancy under the General Hiring Process. The DOC reviewed and verified randomization and sorting and validated 70 applications and came to agreement with HR on its validation, resulting in 42 eligible candidates. The interview process occurred without issue with the DOC monitoring 7 interviews. During the Ranking Meeting, the Interview Panel ranked 3 candidates. The top ranked candidate accepted the position. No issues were identified with this sequence.

Accounts Payable Specialist

This position was posted in the previous reporting period. The position was properly posted with 1 vacancy under the General Hiring Process. The DOC reviewed and verified randomization and sorting and validated 211 applications and came to agreement with HR on its validation, resulting in 116 eligible candidates. The interview process occurred without issue with the DOC monitoring 9 interviews. The interview process occurred without issue with the DOC monitoring 8 interviews. During the Ranking Meeting, the Interview Panel ranked 4 candidates. The top ranked candidate accepted the position. No issues were identified with this sequence.

Auditor

This position was posted during the previous reporting period. The position was properly posted with 1 vacancy under the General Hiring Process. The DOC reviewed and verified randomization and sorting and validated 170 applications and came to agreement with HR on its validation, resulting in 90 eligible candidates. The DOC monitored 7 interviews, **during one of the interviews, the Interview panelist began to a clarify question for a candidate and was reminded by the DOC to only repeat the question.** No further issues occurred for the remainder of the interview process. During the Ranking Meeting, the Interview Panel ranked 5 candidates. The top ranked candidate accepted the position.

Financial Clerk

This position was posted during the previous reporting period. The position was properly posted with multiple vacancies under the Entry Level Bargaining Unit Process. The DOC reviewed and verified randomization and sorting and randomly validated applicants out of 354 applications and came to agreement with HR on its validation resulting in 131 eligible candidates. Conditional offers of employment were made directly from the Validated Eligibility List. Seventeen (17) candidates accepted the position. No issues were identified with the sequence.

IT Security Analyst

The position was properly posted with 1 vacancy under the General Hiring Process. The DOC reviewed and verified randomization and sorting and validated 53 applications and came to agreement with HR on its validation, resulting in 12 eligible candidates. The interview process occurred without issue with the DOC monitoring 7 interviews. During the Ranking Meeting, the Interview Panel ranked 3 candidates. The top ranked candidate accepted the position. No issues were identified with this sequence.

IT Data Analyst

The position was properly posted with 1 vacancy under the General Hiring Process. The DOC reviewed and verified randomization and sorting and validated 101 applications and came to agreement with HR on its validation, resulting in 21 eligible candidates. The interview process occurred without issue with the DOC monitoring 8 interviews. During the Ranking Meeting, the Interview Panel ranked 3 candidates. The top ranked candidate accepted the position. No issues were identified with this sequence.

Motor Vehicle Operator (Internal)

The position was properly posted with 2 vacancies under the Entry Level Bargaining Unit Position Hiring Process. The DOC reviewed and verified randomization and sorting and validated 26 applications and came to agreement with HR on its validation resulting in 5 eligible candidates. Offers of employment were made directly from the Validated Eligibility List and 2 candidates accepted the position. Subsequently, 1 candidate resigned her position and the next candidate from the Validated Eligibility List received an offer of employment and accepted the offer. No issues were identified with this sequence.

MIS Project Manager

The position was properly posted with 1 vacancy under the General Hiring Process. The DOC reviewed and verified randomization and sorting and validated 52 applications and came to agreement with HR on its validating resulting in 21 eligible candidates. The interview process occurred without issue with the DOC monitoring 9 interviews. During the Ranking Meeting, the Interview Panel ranked 4 candidates. This sequence should be addressed further in the next DOC's Report.

Office Clerk

This position was posted during the previous reporting period. The position was properly posted with multiple vacancies under the Entry Level Bargaining Unit Position Hiring Process. The DOC reviewed and verified randomization and sorting and randomly validated applicants out of 783 applications and came to agreement with HR on its validation resulting in 346 eligible candidates. Conditional offers of employment were made directly from the Validated Eligibility List. Eighty-nine (89) candidates accepted the position. No issues were identified with the sequence.

Operations Manager (Repost)

This position was posted during the previous reporting period. The position was properly posted with 5 vacancies under the General Hiring Process. The DOC reviewed and verified randomization, sorting and validated 251 applications and came to agreement with HR on its validation resulting in 68 eligible candidates. The DOC monitored 48 interviews. During the Ranking Meeting, 19 candidates were ranked. Subsequently, 3 additional vacancies were approved, for a total of 8 vacancies. Conditional offers were made based on ranked order, until all vacancies were filled.

Interns:

No interns were placed during this reporting period.

Lateral Transfers:

Two lateral transfer opportunities were posted for Circuit Court Clerk (2025-L2) and Office and Financial Clerk (2025-L3).

2025-L2 Court Clerk (July 23 – August 1, 2025). A lateral bid opportunity was initially posted for 33 vacancies on July 23, 2025. The Union filed a grievance regarding the two vacancies at First Appearance Court (FAC) (2650 S. California). As part of the proposed remedy, those specific vacancies were removed from the lateral posting and the posting was extended by 3 days, to August 1, 2025. Seventy-six (76) applications were submitted, 7 of which were duplicates, and 17 of which were submitted by employees who did not hold the correct title, resulting in 52 eligible candidates. Fifty-two (52) eligible candidates were offered the lateral transfer, solely based on seniority, with 25 employees accepting offers. No other issues were identified with this sequence.

2025-L3 Office and Financial Clerk (August 29 – September 4, 2025). A lateral bid opportunity was posted for 42 vacancies on August 29, 2025. Fifty-three (53) applications were submitted, 7 of which were duplicates resulting in 46 eligible candidates. Forty-six (46) eligible candidates were offered the lateral transfer, solely based on seniority, with 23 employees accepting offers. No issues were identified with this sequence.

Promotions:

One promotional opportunity was posted for Circuit Court Clerk (2025-P2).

2025-P2 Circuit Court Clerk (August 13 – 19, 2025). A promotional bid opportunity was posted for 40 vacancies on August 13, 2025. Two hundred fifteen (215) applications were submitted, 21 of which were duplicates, 5 of which were submitted employees who did not meet the minimum qualifications, 1 of which submitted by an employee who did not hold the correct title, and 1 of which deemed ineligible based on disciplinary record, resulting in 187 eligible candidates. Eligible candidates were offered the promotion, solely based on seniority, with 39 employees accepting offers. No issues were identified with this sequence.

Other Employment Actions

I reviewed over 1,000 original and revised Notice of Employee Actions (NEA's) for several employment actions including but not limited to:

Discipline: During this reporting period, 210 instances of discipline were processed, of those 5 disciplinary actions were withdrawn.

Hire: During this reporting period, 154 hires were processed.

Separation: During this reporting period, 77 separations were processed.

Reclassification: The Clerk's Office processed 1 reclassification, to include the following change in position job code/title and/or pay grade:

Previous Job Code/Title	Pay Grade	New Job Code/Title	Pay Grade
0019.Archivist	17	3180.Grant Writer	18

All reclassification requests were submitted with rationales and explanations, including revised position descriptions and organizational charts. All memoranda were reviewed and approved by the DOC.

Notification of Employment Action/Notice of Employee Action (NEA)

The majority of NEA's are being sent to the DOC in a timely manner, however there are instances in which the notice is sent weeks after the actions have occurred. Consistent with the previous DOC's reports, ***I recommend that HR continue to remind supervisors that NEA's must be submitted on a timely basis in accordance with the Plan and that discipline be imposed on supervisors who continue to miss deadlines.***

Ineligible for Hire/Rehire List

Former employees and candidates deemed disqualified or ineligible for employment due to reasons listed in *Section IV. R.1 Ineligible for Hire/Rehire List* of the Plan are placed on an Ineligible for Hire/Rehire List (List). Individuals on the List are not allowed to move forward in the hiring process, whether the position is Non-Exempt or Exempt.

The List is currently under review.

Complaints/Investigations

Complaints under my authority to investigate include alleged violations of the Employment Plan, Supplemental Policies, Unlawful Political Discrimination and Unlawful Political Contacts. The DOC may coordinate with the CHRO or Designee and/or the Clerk's Office OIG or Designee on further

investigation of the alleged violation. At the conclusion of the investigation, the DOC shall prepare a DOC Investigation Report and provide copies to the Clerk, COS, CHRO or Designee and OIG.

I received a complaint of discrimination resulting in wrongful termination. The alleged discrimination involved a former employee who was terminated. There was no evidence that any violations of the Plan and/or Supplemental Policies had occurred as the requisite disciplinary procedures were followed. The complaint, along with evidence gathered by the DOC, was forwarded to the OIG for resolution.

The DOC Investigation Report is pending.

Second Step Grievance Hearings

I monitored 53 Second-Step Grievance Hearings and did not observe any discrepancies during the monitored hearings with respect to the Plan or Supplemental Policies Manual.

Position Descriptions

Exempt:

I reviewed and provided feedback on the following position descriptions: Grant Writer and Scheduler to the Clerk.

Consistent with the Plan, the Clerk's Office welcomed feedback and proposed revisions from the DOC.

Non-Exempt:

I reviewed and provided feedback on the following position descriptions: Finance Manager, Inspector General Investigator, MIS Business Analyst, MIS Project Manager, Senior Accountant, Senior Systems Developer, and Senior Server Administrator.

Consistent with the Plan, the Clerk's Office welcomed feedback and proposed revisions from the DOC.

Union:

I reviewed and provided feedback on the following newly created union position descriptions during this time: Desktop Support Analyst I and Desktop Support Technician I.

Consistent with the Plan, the Clerk's Office welcomed feedback and proposed revisions from the DOC.

Exempt List

The Clerk's Office proposed the following changes to be made to the Exempt List:

Add: Grant Writer

Retitle: Director of Scheduling and Advance to Scheduler to the Clerk

Consistent with the Plan, the Clerk's Office provided notice to the DOC with the required rationale and position descriptions. After review and comment, the DOC raised no objection to the changes.

Clerk's Website

The Plan specifies certain content and information that our website must contain, making it one of the main mechanisms to providing transparency into our implementation of and compliance with the Plan.

Quarterly Employment Action Reports

The HR website is current through the 4th quarter of 2025 with reports that reflect the total number of hires, promotions, transfers, and terminations by department, including designations of Exempt positions.

Meetings

I have an established standing meeting with the Chief of Staff, to discuss the Compliance Program and any issues that may need attention to ensure the Program is effective. Additionally, I meet with the CHRO on all facets of the Program. As needed, I meet with the Inspector General and Ethics Officer regarding all aspects of the Employment Plan, including complaints and investigations.

Conclusion

Consistency with requisite steps is vital in maintaining substantial compliance of the Employment Plan and this Report shows that the Clerk's Office continues to implement the plan in a reasonable manner. As always, I am appreciative of the assistance and collaboration received as I carry out my compliance related activities.