



Clerk of the Circuit Court

FY2021 Mid-Year Budget Review

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Objective: Update on FY2021 Goals and Objectives, review FY2021 YTD budget, FY2020 year-end projections and operational lessons learned in the midst of the COVID-19 public health crisis.

I. Update on FY2021 Initiatives and Goals

▪ FY2021 Initiative/Goal #1

Court Operations, e-Filing Program (Output Metric)	2019 Year End Actual	2020 Year End Actual	2021 Year to Date 2nd Quarter Actual	2021 Year End (Revised) Target
Number of e-Filings	3,017,961	2,087,971	1,070,000	2,200,000

- On July 1, 2018, e-Filing became mandatory for all civil areas of law. From 2019 to 2020 the number of e-filings that the Office of the Cook County Clerk of the Circuit Court (our Office) received decreased due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the second quarter of FY2020 there were 378,000 e-filings and in the second quarter of FY2021, there were 502,000 e-filings, showing an increase due to higher use of the Courts by the public and operations returning to normal. We anticipate that the FY2021 target of 2,200,000 will be reached.

▪ FY2021 Initiative/Goal #2

Court Operations Courtroom Clerks (Output Metric)	2019 Year End Actual	2020 Year End Actual	2021 Year to Date 2nd Quarter Actual	2021 Year End (Revised) Target
Number of cases filed (output)	729,980	463,021	199,481	495,000

- The number of case filings is separate from the number of e-filings. A single case may contain multiple e-filings. From 2019 to 2020, the number of case filings decreased considerably from 729,980 to 463,021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the second quarter year-to-date of FY2021, there were 199,481 case filings. As stakeholders begin to conduct more business in the Courts and operations return to normal, our Office anticipates a slightly higher FY2021 target of 495,000 case filings compared to the 463,021 filings from last fiscal year.

FY2021 Mid-Year Budget Review

II. FY2021 Revenue (for revenue generating offices)

Comparison of YTD budget (as of 5/31/2021) vs YTD actual revenue with explanations for major variances and corrective action steps. Final unaudited actuals for May 31, 2021 will be reported in the upcoming monthly Revenue and Expense report.

	FY2021 YTD Budget	FY2021 YTD Actuals	\$ Variance	% Variance
402000-Fees and Lic	28,487,500	27,749,605	(\$737,895)	(2.7%)

- The COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted revenue streams, becoming the primary cause of the negative variance. As the Courts are used more by stakeholders and the general public, our Office's revenue will increase. We anticipate that the revenue variance at the end of FY2021 will be less than 1%.

III. FY2021 Expenditure Projections

Comparison of YTD budget (as of 5/31/2021) vs YTD actual expenses with explanations for major variances and corrective action steps. Final unaudited actuals for May 31, 2021 will be reported in the upcoming monthly Revenue and Expense report.

Operating Expenses	FY2021 YTD Budget	FY2021 YTD Actuals	\$ Variance	% Variance
Personnel	\$43,844,907	\$39,898,306	\$3,946,601	9.0%
Contractual Services	\$384,863	\$289,741	\$95,122	24.7%
Supplies and Materials	\$338,764	\$60,079	\$278,684	82.3%
Operations and Maintenance	\$3,787,623	\$3,849,442	(\$61,819)	(1.6%)
Capital Expenditures				
Rental and Leasing	\$252,790	\$211,548	\$41,242	16.3%
Contingencies and Special Purposes				
Total	\$48,608,947	\$44,309,116	\$4,299,831	8.8%

FY2021 Mid-Year Budget Review

Personnel	Positive variance during the first half of the year is due to vacant union and non-union positions. During the second half of FY2021 the variance will decrease but remain positive due to the Department of Budget and Management Services (DBMS) approval of the Request to Hire (RTH). In addition, we will fill 100 vacant positions before the end of FY2021's third quarter.
Contractual Services	Positive variance is mainly due to the unspent funds of the amount budgeted for the purchase or printing of City of Chicago and Suburban Tickets. Our Office currently has enough unused tickets in stock. The variance will be spent throughout the second half of the year. The anticipated variance at fiscal year-end is expected to be less than 1%.
Supplies and Materials	Positive variance is mainly due to unspent funds of the amount budgeted due to our Office using money from a different funding source to purchase PPE. Our Office anticipates this expenditure will be used more the second half of this fiscal year to purchase supplies to keep staff and the public safe.
Operations and Maintenance	Negative variance is due to the greater use of commercial licenses than was originally budgeted for under Maintenance & Repair Contracts in the first half of FY2021. The annual chargeback amount has been greater than the actual preloaded budgeted amount or the amount anticipated in the past.
Capital Expenditures	
Rental and Leasing	Positive variance exists because the full payment of the Panic Alarm Security System Software contract is not due yet. The positive variance should be gone by the end of the year upon full payment of the expenditure described.
Contingencies and Special Purposes	

IV. Status of FY2021 Hiring

FY2021 Mid-Year Budget Review

Please provide a status (as of 5/31/21) on the office's hiring efforts to date and planned through the end of the year. This section applies to only operating fund positions. For OUP, please provide responses at the Bureau-level. For all other elected/appointed offices, please provide responses at the office/department-level.

Bureau/Department*	# of FY2021 Appropriated FTE	# of Filled Positions	# of Vacant Positions
Clerk of the Circuit Court	1,256	1,038	218

- Our Office anticipates filling 100 of the 218 vacant positions by the end of the current fiscal year's third quarter. We expect to fill a considerable number of the remaining vacant positions during the fourth quarter.

V. FY2021 Contracts

Please provide a list of your office's existing and anticipated contracts for FY2021 in the format provided below. (Feel free to attach this list separately if more room is needed)

Vendor Name	Department	Contract Purpose	Contract Amount	Contract Start Date	Contract End Date	Contract Status
Chicago Tribune	Court Operations	Publication of Legal Notices - Court Ordered	\$102,000.00	8/1/2021	7/31/2022	Ongoing
CDW-G/SHI International	MIS	VMWare Support Subscription Production Technical Support-Licenses for server environment	\$29,434.77	8/5/2021	8/5/2022	Ongoing
CDW-G/SHI International	MIS	Maintenance for Idera SQL Diagnostic Manager Software-Licenses for troubleshooting server environment	\$13,297.30	8/17/2021	8/17/2022	Ongoing
CDW-G/SHI International	MIS	Maintenance and Technical Support for HP Hardware	\$204,528.86	10/1/2021	9/30/2022	Ongoing

FY2021 Mid-Year Budget Review

Cummins - Allison Corp.	Court Operations	Maintenance of currency counters	\$59,964.00	10/15/2019	10/14/2021	Ongoing
Cummins - Allison Corp	Court Operations	Maintenance of currency counters	\$30,130.00	12/1/2021	11/30/2022	Tentative Date
Engineered Security Systems (ESS)	MIS	Maintenance for Preventative Hardware and Software for Camera Security Cashiering System	\$225,000.00	10/18/2021	10/17/2022	Ongoing
Powell Photography	Public Information	Photography/ Videography Services	\$12,500.00	10/25/2020	10/25/2022	Ongoing
Zuno Photography	Public Information	Photography/ Videography Services	\$12,500.00	10/25/2020	10/25/2022	Ongoing
Video Parachute	Public Information	Photography/ Videography Services	\$12,500.00	10/25/2020	10/25/2022	Ongoing
SHI International	MIS	Maintenance enhanced support Idera Precise SQL Licenses	\$10,000.00	10/30/2021	10/30/2022	Ongoing
SHI International	MIS	Maintenance and Technical Support Licenses for Images/troubleshooting in server environment	\$163,709.23	1/1/2022	12/31/2022	Re-instate
Microsoft	MIS	Maintenance for Microsoft Premier	\$92,421.00	1/6/2021	1/6/2022	Ongoing
Davis Bancorp	Court Operations	Armored Car Service	\$232,560.00	4/1/2018	5/31/2022	Ongoing
Tyler Technologies	MIS	Electronic Case Management	\$36,449,035.00	4/8/2021	4/8/2022	Ongoing
SHI International	MIS	Maintenance and Technical Support for Insight Software	\$17,265.31	5/1/2021	4/30/2022	Ongoing
Ensono	MIS	Mainframe Outsourcing Disaster Recovery Implementation	\$2,000,000.00	10/1/2021	9/30/2022	Ongoing

FY2021 Mid-Year Budget Review

Paper Solutions	Court Operations	Supply and Delivery of City and Suburban Tickets	\$264,280.00	11/30/2021	11/30/2021	Ongoing
SHI International	MIS	VM Ware Enterprise Licenses - for server environment	\$47,868.95	8/14/2021	8/14/2022	Ongoing
CDW-G/SHI International	MIS	Maintenance for Idera Precise SQL Licenses - for server environment	\$40,518.80	10/31/2018	10/30/2023	Ongoing
CDW-G/SHI International	MIS	Maintenance for Idera ER/Studio Data ARCH Platform-Licenses for migration to CMS	\$21,810.31	11/9/2018	11/9/2023	Ongoing
Johnson Controls	Court Operations	Maintenance and Monitoring of Burglar/Fire Alarm Systems	\$79,236.30	5/15/2021	5/14/2026	Ongoing
Envelope Connection Inc.	Court Operations	Printing of Court Diversion Envelopes	\$151,200.00	9/1/2017	8/31/2021	Ongoing
NCR	Court Operations	Printing Court Diversion Envelopes	\$45,000.00	9/1/2021	8/31/2023	Tentative Date
TradeMark Products	Court Operations	Repair of Time Stamps, Court Sealers and Hand Stamps	\$86,840.00	8/28/2020	9/27/2023	Ongoing
TradeMark Products	Court Operations	Purchase of Hand Stamps	\$25,000.00	7/26/2021	7/25/2023	Tentative
Ove Water Services, Inc.	Court Operations	Countywide Water Delivery	\$40,000.00	5/1/2021	5/17/2024	Ongoing
Quadient/Neopost	Mailroom	Maintenance & Rental of Mail Meter Machine	\$622.00	12/1/2020	11/30/2221	Ongoing
Pitney Bowes	Mailroom	Rental for Connect Meter Postage Machines	\$1,071.00	4/1/2021	3/31/2022	Ongoing
Pitney Bowes	Mailroom	Maintenance: Postal Equipment and Mono Printer Module with Connect 2000 Feeder	\$1,337.16	4/1/2020	3/31/2021	Ongoing
Ove Water Services, Inc	Court Operations	Countywide Water Coolers	\$1,946.10	6/1/2021	11/30/2021	Ongoing
Paper Solutions	Court Operations	File Jackets	\$145,671.90	12/1/2020	11/30/2021	Ongoing
Countywide Contract	Court Operations	Legal Services	\$125,000.00	12/1/2019	11/30/2021	Ongoing

FY2021 Mid-Year Budget Review

VI. Capital Equipment Updates

Please provide a list of your office's FY2021 capital equipment projects and the status of projects in the format provided below. (Feel free to attach this list separately if more room is needed)

Capital Equipment Project	Project Status (Not Started/Started/ Delayed/Completed)	Please provide an update on the project, reasons for any delays and the expected completion date of the project
Microfilm Readers	Started	We are working on amending an existing contract to purchase the microfilm readers, and anticipate completion by end of year.
Van for Records Management (2)	Delayed	We need a budgetary transfer and anticipate completion by end of year.
HPE Primera Enterprise Storage Solutions	Completed	Project was completed in FY2021.
Chairs	Started	We submitted SAC form to Assent Management, and anticipate completion by end of year.

VII. Grant Funding

Grant Name	Department	Award Amount	Award State Date	Award End Date	Grant Set Up Status
G53795-Grant 2020 CCC Child Support FED	1335.Clerk Of Cret Crt Off.Of Clerk	\$394,206.00	7/1/2020	6/30/2021	Set-Up
G53795-Grant 2020 CCC Child Support FED	1335.Clerk Of Cret Crt Off.Of Clerk	\$203,076.00	7/1/2020	6/30/2021	Set-Up
G53972-Grant 2021 CCC Child Support Grant FED	1335.Clerk Of Cret Crt Off.Of Clerk	\$1,493,574.00	#N/A	#N/A	Not Set-Up
G53973-Grant 2021 CCC Child Support Grant STE	1335.Clerk Of Cret Crt Off.Of Clerk	\$151,169.00	#N/A	#N/A	Not Set-Up
G53998-Grant 2020 CCC Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator Grant	1335.Clerk Of Cret Crt Off.Of Clerk	\$10,000.00	8/1/2020	7/31/2021	Set-Up

FY2021 Mid-Year Budget Review

- Please detail your office's efforts this year to seek out new sources of grant funding.
 - The following summarizes our Office's potential grants for FY2021.

Access to Justice - Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator Grant (seeking \$20K)

- Our Office is requesting to be considered for the Court Navigator Network Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator 2021-2022 Grant Award. Funds awarded will be utilized for a Clerk Coordinator to spearhead our Office's newly created Family Law Self-Represented Litigant Customer Service Center (Center).
- Led by the Coordinator, the Family Law Self-Represented Litigant Customer Service Center will play a critical role in adequately supporting (Self-Represented Litigants) SRLs. Specifically, grant funds will be used to move frequently engaged SRL services from the inadequate and constricted existing space to a more functional, welcoming and customer friendly area.

Access to Justice - Online Dispute Resolution Grant (seeking \$19K)

- Our Office would like to explore the possibility of implementing an automated dispute resolution system or Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) software.
- We currently use Odyssey software, a Tyler Courts & Justice Solution, as the Court's official record management system. One of the functions available through Odyssey is an already existing ODR modular platform called Modria. Our Office has not activated Modria, but we have a high interest in exploring its adoption.

- How many full-time or part-time staff members in your office are responsible for the administration of grants? (*Indicate how many are full-time and how many are part-time*)
 - Our Office currently has one full-time employee who administers the grant funds summarized above.

VIII. COVID-19 Operational Impacts

Please respond to each question below and provide details and take-away about your operations as it relates to the COVID-19 public health crisis.

- Describe any initiatives you have implemented that have resulted in greater efficiencies within your operations and how such initiatives can or will be carried forward into your operations as we transition back to full operation.
 - During the first half of FY2021, our Office implemented numerous reforms and initiatives focused on its workforce in tandem with the federal court's Shakman Compliance Administrator (CCCA). These changes have enabled our office to hire, transfer, train and retrain staff in a more transparent and efficient manner. As the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic continue to recede, our Office realizes that the public will require greater access and more flexible accommodations that will allow them to file cases, pay fees and court costs, and conduct other business with the court system. However, we remain aware of its lingering

FY2021 Mid-Year Budget Review

impacts and the strong possibility that it can reemerge in the fall and winter. On June 28, the governor noted that the more dangerous and contagious COVID-19 Delta variant was increasing in prevalence and the State's public health officials "expect it to dominate our cases statewide by the fall."

Shakman Compliance

- Over the past six months our Office has worked diligently with its CCCA to comply with the court's decrees and thereby increase the efficiency of our Office's operations. Working with the Plaintiff's attorney and the CCCA, our Office has amended the Shakman Employment Plan, amended the exempt list and the exempt positions descriptions, updated telework, transfer and temporary assignment policies and forms, revised and improved time and attendance enforcement, improved employment actions notices, updated and implemented the lateral transfer process, and revised and finalized position descriptions for the entry-level bargaining unit hiring process. Our Human Resources Department has had regular and consistent contact and meetings with the CCCA and her staff to continuously move toward substantial compliance in a collaborative manner.

Staff Hiring

- During the first half of the current fiscal year, our Office has hired 87 Shakman-Exempt staffers in conjunction with the CCCA and with the approval of the Federal Judge.
- Additionally, our Office completed the Entry-Level Bargaining Unit Position Hiring process to bring greater transparency to the hiring of entry-level bargaining positions. On June 11, 2021, our Office commenced the Entry-Level Bargaining Unit Position Hiring process by posting six positions on Taleo: (1) Clerk IV, Senior; (2) Cashier II; (3) Appeals Clerk I; (4) Financial Room Clerk II; (5) Expungement Clerk I; and (6) Warehouse Records Clerk I, Sr.

Staff Transfers

- In March 2021, our Office initiated the first Lateral Transfer process under the Employment Plan for Clerk IV, Sr., Cashier II, and Financial Room Clerk II. Our Office is currently working on lateral transfer offers to 30 Clerk Court I employees.

Staff Training

- Shakman Training: Our Office and the CCCA agreed that training the Exempt and Non-Exempt employees on requirements under Shakman monitoring was imperative. By the end of March 2021, our Office completed Shakman training to both Shakman-exempt and Non-exempt staff.
- Employment Plan Training: The current Shakman Employment Plan requires comprehensive annual Employment Plan training for HR employees and Supervisors. On June 16, 2021, the CCCA and our Office presented HR Employment Plan training to the HR staff. Later this summer, the training for Supervisors will be completed.
- Interviewer Training: The Employment Plan requires that all employees who are eligible to interview Candidates for any Non-Exempt position receive comprehensive training on proper interviewing conduct, techniques, requirements and the prohibition of Unlawful

FY2021 Mid-Year Budget Review

Political Contacts and Unlawful Political Discrimination before the employee may participate on an Interview Panel. This training is scheduled to be completed by the end of summer 2021.

- **Self-Represented Litigant Assistance:** Our office continues to work with outside partners to improve our operations. We are working with many stakeholders including but not limited to the Chicago Bar Association, Chicago Bar Foundation and various groups that assist self-represented litigants in the court system. In addition, we have been working with other city, county, and state offices to improve the quality of services provided by the entire court system. Our Office plans to strengthen its network of outside partnerships to increase awareness of our Office and the services we provide.
- **CBA:** Our Office began negotiations for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement and is committed to negotiating a contract that is fair to the employees and supportive of operations.
- **Notices:** Our Office continues to send Zoom Hearing Notices to the prosecutors and attorneys of record on a case (when required by statute).
- Are there additional cost-saving or efficiency-saving measures you envision incorporating into your operations as a result of lessons learned during the pandemic?
 - To promote access to information, we need to increase access to the courts, the court clerks and the services they provide, starting with greater access to case records online. Making court records accessible online is a multistep process that is described in greater detail below and will hopefully be completed by January 1, 2022. Once the process is complete, our Office will be fully integrated into the Odyssey Case Management System, the electronic docket will then be considered the official court record and our case files will be searchable online.
- How did you incorporate technology and digital access into your processes in the midst of COVID-19?
 - COVID-19 pandemic uniquely impacted the Cook County court system. Adapting to the current pandemic required our Office to integrate technology into our processes to keep the public and our employees safe. Our Office utilized this time to explore how to more efficiently and conveniently deliver its services to the public, Self-Represented Litigants (SRLs) and attorneys.
 - The eCourtesy copy project allows signed orders from court to be sent by our clerks to the individual emails on file for the case. Our Office began sending a courtesy digital copy of signed court orders at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. We plan to continue this practice going forward.

FY2021 Mid-Year Budget Review

- Instead of requiring stakeholders to submit subsequent filings on certain cases in person, our Office has created a system that allows them to file electronically, saving time and cutting costs.
 - We have updated our website to provide the most accurate and timely information and services as possible. By visiting the website, customers can:
 - view court case information through the Electronic Docket,
 - get Zoom hearing information and links,
 - access fillable court forms that our Office is continuously reviewing and updating to increase ease of use and to ensure they meet AOIC standards,
 - retrieve expungement and sealing information and electronic appeals filings,
 - review Electronic Service Providers via the eFiling Information Portal,
 - subscribe to our mailing list, and
 - sign up for case management E-Notices.
 - Our Office continues to use Zoom and Microsoft Teams to disseminate information to staff regarding court operations, Office operations and the impact COVID-19 has on those operations. This communication technology will be essential for the foreseeable future as our Office continues to review policies and procedures to decide on changes necessary to improve operations.
- Are you contemplating implementing more innovative/transformational technological initiatives to systematically transform operations within your office and improve public accessibility?
- We inherited the Odyssey Case Management System for Civil and Traffic divisions that cannot be implemented without court approval. Due to contracts with technology vendors that predate the current administration, our Office is obligated to work within the parameters of those contracts while working to find better solutions. Our Office has been working with the Office of the Chief Judge and various Presiding Judges to implement Odyssey in those divisions and eventually all divisions of the Circuit Court. The new system will allow for the viewing of docket images through a portal. The Probate and Domestic Relations divisions are on track to transition to Odyssey by the end of July 2021. It is our intention to gain court approval for all divisions by January 1, 2022. Furthermore, we are working with the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts and Office of the Chief Judge on eFileIL (the statewide centralized electronic filing manager for civil cases), electronic order entry and other matters. As each division is integrated with Odyssey, SRLs, attorneys of record and all agencies will be able to see their case files and images through the Odyssey Portal.
 - Once we have fully integrated all divisions with Odyssey, we can complete the Disaster Recovery project and implement eRecord, meaning the electronic docket becomes the official court record. Then, we can get certified for re:SearchIL, allowing users to have access to the State's cross-jurisdictional portal to view case files throughout all 102 counties. Our target to complete this process by January 1, 2022.
 - Our Office currently uses informational kiosks and digital signage in the court houses to provide information to the public such as court calls in multiple language. We have had preliminary conversations on how to expand the use of these kiosks and the deployment of more digital signage.

FY2021 Mid-Year Budget Review

- Our Office has also had early conversations on how to use a queuing system similar to the one used at secretary of state facilities in our offices throughout the County. This will allow the customer to get a number, to know where they are in the queue and to be serviced in a timely manner.
- Our Office is taking several steps over the coming months that will allow it to communicate information on policies and processes more clearly to the general public.
 - In addition to the initiatives that we have started and are outlined above, we are developing a proposal for a call center that will more effectively field inquiries from the public.
 - The pre-pandemic manner in which the public and stakeholders interacted with the circuit court and our Office is unlikely to return. The continued use of Zoom for hearings and trials is a distinct possibility as well, given the fact that users of the court system have become accustomed to remote interactions. To meet the needs of the court system experience moving forward, we propose the creation of a Call Center to serve as a safe support resource that will make it easier for County residents and other users to get answers to court questions without having to physically go to a County facility. The Center will not only benefit the elderly, the differently abled, and those facing language or other barriers, it will be a more efficient and transparent resource that leverages existing assets. The proposed Center will consist of 30 trained, Cisco licensed agents and will partner with an additional service to provide access to over 200 languages for non-English speakers. These resources will greatly enhance our Office's obligation to provide greater access to justice as prescribed by the Illinois State Supreme Court.
 - Our Office will develop and launch a new website, but not in the near future. In the meantime, we will continue to review and update the current website in order to improve transparency and accessibility with a focus on user experience by restructuring the navigation bar and by prioritizing information. We are also in the process of adding American Disabilities Act (ADA) and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) tools to the home page for individuals who require additional aid in navigating the site.
- How can your office accelerate these improvements?
 - By better utilizing our Office's budgeted headcount and filling vacant positions, we intend to accelerate these improvements and begin contemplating additional changes to increase efficiency and adapt more effective technology.
- What impact would that have on your budgets?
 - Vacant positions have resulted in a \$3.9 million (9%) positive variance during first half of FY2021. This positive variance will decrease but remain positive as we fill those positions. In addition, our Office's current staffing level is inadequate to address the anticipated increase in demand for Court services. In order to meet the projected increase and help accelerate improvements, additional staff must be hired and trained.

FY2021 Mid-Year Budget Review

IX. FY2022 Preliminary Forecast

Below is the target for the entire elected or appointed official's budget. Department level targets are available in the Hyperion budgeting system.

FY2022 Budget Target	\$103,377,846
-----------------------------	----------------------

- Please provide preliminary ideas of how your office is planning to meet your budget target for FY2022.
- Currently, our Office will need to, and has begun to, hire additional Court Operations staff to provide the necessary services as the Courts return to normal operations. This will require additional approved FTEs and funding. In addition, we will continue to implement new technological systems that will lead to greater ease of service and record keeping.