STATE OF ILLINOIS
CIRCUIT COURT
22ND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
McHENRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS

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For Immediate Release

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22nd Judicial Circuit Selected to Present at National Court Management Conference

WOODSTOCK, IL – The 22nd Judicial Circuit of McHenry County has been selected to present at the National Association for Court Management (NACM) Annual Conference. The presentation, titled *"48 Hours: Building a Justice System Together,"* will focus on the collaborative efforts of McHenry County's justice partners to implement the sweeping changes brought about by Illinois' SAFE-T Act. Dan Wallis, Trial Court Administrator and David Kozlowski, Integrated Justice will be presenting on behalf of the 22nd Judicial Circuit of McHenry County. "I am both humbled and excited to have the opportunity to share the accomplishments of the 22nd Judicial Circuit and our justice partners on a national stage. Implementing the SAFE-T Act was not a small undertaking, and what we accomplished would not have been possible without the commitment, cooperation, and hard work of everyone involved. I am extremely proud of what we accomplished together, and I look forward to sharing our experience with other court professionals," stated Dan Wallis.

On September 18, 2023, Illinois implemented the pretrial provisions of the SAFE-T Act, eliminating cash bail and fundamentally changing how criminal cases are processed throughout the State. The legislation presented significant operational challenges for the courts and their justice partners. New requirements included a 48-hour timeline between arrest and first court appearance, changes to arrest and citation procedures, provisions mandating adequate access to legal counsel, meaningful pretrial release hearings, and the establishment and monitoring of conditions of release.

Implementing these changes required the involvement of nearly every agency within the criminal justice system. Municipal Law Enforcement Agencies, Sheriff's Office, Corrections, State's Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, Circuit Clerk, Probation and Court Services, Court Administration, and all members of the judiciary had different responsibilities under the new law. Each had its own operational requirements, but the success of the overall process depended on how well those agencies worked together.

In McHenry County, the approach was to bring everyone to the table, identify the challenges, and develop solutions that would work for the entire system. The result was an internally developed process that incorporated electronic complaints, automated notifications, electronic documents, and new workflows that significantly changed how criminal cases move from arrest through what would become known as Initial Appearance Court.

The presentation will share how these processes were developed, the challenges encountered along the way, technological advancements, and the lessons learned. It will also examine the importance of communication, cooperation, and a willingness to reconsider long-established practices when implementing changes that affect multiple agencies. This year's conference theme, *"The Power of Partnership: Advancing Justice Through Collaboration,"* reflects the approach taken in McHenry County.

The National Association for Court Management brings together court administrators and other justice professionals from across the country and many foreign countries, to share experiences, discuss challenges, and identify practices that improve the administration of justice. The 22nd Judicial Circuit's selection to present provides an opportunity to share McHenry County's experience on a national level and highlight the good work accomplished by the many individuals and agencies involved in this significant transition.

For additional information about the 22nd Judicial Circuit of McHenry County, please contact:

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