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**CLERK DOROTHY BROWN AND COOK COUNTY SHERIFF JOIN FORCES
TO PRODUCE RAPID AND ACCURATE JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION**

Clerk Brown and Sheriff Tom Dart Collaborate on Automated Summons System

CHICAGO (January 7, 2008) – **The Honorable Dorothy Brown, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County**, in collaboration with the Cook County Sheriff’s Department, created and launched a new automated summons system that eliminates the redundant entry of data between the two agencies and expedites the flow of accurate information to judges.

The former summons system, which required eight manual procedures and two to three days of input by both agencies, has been automated to upload data in two easy steps in one day.

An initiative of the Cook County Integrated Justice Information System (CCICJIS) Committee, the automated system was one of several joint projects the Clerk’s Office and the Sheriff’s Department have in development. The mission of CCICJIS is to improve public safety and protect civil liberties by providing, judges, prosecutors and public defenders, lawmakers and policy makers and other related agencies with accurate, timely and complete information.

“I am pleased that we have successfully overhauled and streamlined an antiquated and disjointed summons system. The new system provides law enforcement agencies and the courts with an efficient and rapid means of summoning litigants, while reducing the labor intensity of data entry and decreasing the opportunities for errors,” said Clerk Brown.

Each night, the Clerk’s Office uploads all summons data that was entered into the Sheriff’s system that day. The uploaded information is automatically converted from the Sheriff’s coding structure to the Clerk’s structure and if the data meets all the criteria set in the computerized program the system will write the records to the 1st Municipal Civil Division Case Management system. Criteria for the cases include: valid case number, full or partial match of litigants’ names, service and filing date. In addition to streamlining the summons process, the new automated system also generates three reports for auditing and verification.

On average, the Sheriff’s Office delivers more than 35,000 summonses to the Clerk’s Office each month.

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“This new system allows for the rapid free flow of accurate information between the Clerk’s and Sheriff’s offices, thus providing both agencies with a better ability to assist the thousands of citizens who utilize our services daily,” said Sheriff Thomas Dart.

The automation is currently available in the 1st Municipal Civil Division, but a comprehensive rollout to the remaining court divisions is expected in later 2008.

Since its inception, the new automated system has helped to alleviate the lag time of information and duplication of efforts between the two agencies. In addition, it has reduced the occurrence of data errors, ensuring that the information on each docket is accurate for a judge’s decision.

Clerk Brown has transformed the Clerk’s Office into one of the most technologically advanced court systems in the country. The Clerk’s offers several automated services including public access computer terminals, downloadable online court forms, and free e-mail notification and case information for attorneys, to name a few technological innovations.

“With more than two million court cases handled each year by the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County, it is imperative that we implement innovative ways to efficiently and effectively serve the citizens of Cook County,” said Clerk Brown. “Technology has given us the opportunity to upgrade and enhance our services for the benefit of our customers and society in general.”

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