



OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Contact:
Jalyne Strong (312) 603-5690
jrstrong@cookcountycourt.com

**CLERK DOROTHY BROWN TO LAUNCH
ONLINE TRAFFIC TICKET SYSTEM**
*Innovative Program Provides Opportunity to Handle Traffic Violations
Rapidly and Securely*

CHICAGO (August 20, 2009) – On Thursday, July 23rd, Dorothy Brown, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County joined by Mary Clark, Director, Traffic Safety at Northwestern University, Ron Fisher, Deputy Director of the Center for Public Safety, JJ Zurek, Regional Director, GPS, Craig Chico, GPS and Cook County law enforcement agencies from Bellwood, Berwyn, Chicago Heights, Forest Park, Flossmoor, Hoffman Estates, Matteson, Palatine, Rolling Meadows, Schaumburg, the Chicago and the Illinois State Police, demonstrated the first fully integrated online traffic ticket system in Illinois, a program through which individuals may plead and pay for traffic tickets online or schedule a court date or sign up for Traffic Safety School.

“This new service is a special convenience for the citizens of Cook County,” said Clerk Brown. “It enables individuals too rapidly and conveniently respond to their traffic violations and, if they so choose, pay associated fines and other charges, safely and securely on their home computers.”

“Online Traffic Ticket System offers solutions for the usual problems associated with handling one’s traffic citations. It’s a time saver for busy people, and the ability to use a credit card may help them manage payment more effectively,” Clerk Brown pointed out.

Online Traffic Ticket System is part of a series of Green Court/E-Court initiatives, all of which save taxpayers money, save time for court users, cuts costs for the court system, and conserve energy by reducing the impact on the environment.

The Online Traffic System became available on the Clerk’s Office web site on June 29, 2009, and these intervening days have been a testing phased. Before the public announcement, people in Cook County found and tried the system and were attracted to the ease of use. As of August 20, 2009 the Clerk’s Office has recorded:

- 2840 Total completed transactions
- 1164 Guilty Pleas
- 189 Requests for Court Hearing
- 1487 Requests for Traffic Safety School

\$73,195.00 total dollar amount collected (Not including the \$5.00 service fee (\$1162.25 for CCC))

As of Wednesday, July 22nd, one of the Clerk's District Office's reported experiencing a reduction in the number of people in line in for traffic violations:

In 2008 there were:

- 286,608 individuals eligible for court diversion filed:
 - 99,322 Individuals Plead Guilty
 - 127,432 Elected Traffic Safety School
 - 59,854 Requested a Court Date

The Online Traffic Ticket System project will allow people with Cook County traffic violations to conduct the following activities at the Clerk's Office website (www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org):

- Enter a plea of guilty and pay the fine; or
- Enter a plea of guilty, register for Traffic Safety School, pay the fine and registration fee; or
- Enter a plea of not guilty, request and receive a court hearing date.

The Court Diversion violations that can be handled through the Online Traffic Ticket system are:

| <u>Description</u> | <u>Statute</u> |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Failure to Wear Seat belt | 12-603.1 (Driver or Passenger) |
| Front/Side Windshield Unobst | 125030 (a) |
| Speeding | 11-601 (b) |
| Failure to Stop at Stop Sign | 9-24-010 (b) |
| U-turn in the Intersection | 9-16-040 (a) |
| Disobey, Turn Signal Indicator | 9-16-010 (b) |
| Yield to Pedestrian in Cross Walk | 9-24-050 |
| Improper Right Turn | 9-16-020 (a) |
| Turns on Red Prohibited | 9-16-030 (c) |
| No Turn Signs | 9-16-050 (b) |

The Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County became the first Illinois jurisdiction to implement a fully integrated "Online Traffic Ticket System." In fact, the Clerk's Office was the impetus for having the legislation changed to allow for the acceptance of pleas of guilty over the Internet. The Illinois Supreme Court approved the application, and now uses the guidelines the Clerk's Office created as the standard.

Clerk Brown pioneered the "Online Traffic Ticket System" project for the Circuit Court of Cook County upon receiving permission from the Illinois Supreme Court to take traffic ticket payments over the Internet. Designed in-house by the Clerk's Office, the system was **no** cost to the County. The project will enhance the Clerk's Office's operations by reducing traffic courthouse congestion and decreasing administrative and operational traffic citation processing and storage expenses.

The Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County is one of the first Cook County agencies to accept payments of fines and costs by credit card. Clerk Brown's innovative "Online Traffic Ticket System" system follows the groundbreaking Cash Bail by Credit Card program she implemented in the Clerk's Office in 2005. To date, the Cash Bail by Credit Card program had collected more than \$32 million.

###

