



OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 18, 2013

Press Contact:

Jalyne R. Strong

(312) 603-5690

[jrstrong@cookcountycourt.com](mailto:jrstrong@cookcountycourt.com)

**CLERK BROWN'S OFFICE MAKES DRAMATIC PROCEDURAL CHANGES  
TO IMPROVE RESPONSE TIME TO STATE APPELLATE DEFENDER**

**(CHICAGO, October 18, 2013)** In a letter to the Office of the State Appellate Defender dated August 30, 2013, Honorable Dorothy Brown, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County, enumerated the dramatic alterations her Office developed to expedite the submission of court files to the State Appellate Defender's Office.

Clerk Brown's letter was in response to letters sent from the State Appellate Defender on April 8, 2013 and July 23, 2013 (attached), in which three (3) issues concerning response time delays were raised, including: in the processing of notices of appeals, the preparation of common law records and in obtaining records from prior appeals, which are needed for post-conviction appeals.

Clerk Brown was very alarmed and disturbed about the procedural delays that were pointed out. "I realized that the State Appellate Defender's concerns were not new," Clerk Brown said. "I had been assured by a former senior executive, now retired, that these procedural issues had been handled."

Clerk Brown immediately acted to resolve the matters. To ensure that the correction of these issues received the necessary attention, she personally visited the Criminal Division to assist her staff in evaluating the procedures and remedying the response time problems. She also dispatched a team of experts, a SWAT Team of sorts, to not only recommend corrective actions but to also swiftly implement needed adjustments.

Subsequently, in the July 23 letter, the State Appellate Defender's office took note of the corrections, indicated the positive results, and commented that there's hope that the progress made will be sustained and built upon.

Clerk Brown replied that her Office is committed to providing exceptional customer service. She wrote, "I recognize that there is always room for improvement and because you took the time to convey these ongoing issues, my Office is moving in a direction that will not only better serve you, but also the citizens of Cook County as well."

Additionally, Clerk Brown points out that the Circuit Court Clerk's Office is in the process of implementing the scanning and digitization of criminal court file information, which will make the process of responding to the State Appellate Defender even more efficient.