

17<sup>th</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT

EUGENE G. DOHERTY  
CHIEF JUDGE



WINNEBAGO COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
400 WEST STATE STREET - ROOM 215  
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS 61101  
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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**17<sup>TH</sup> CIRCUIT COURT REMAINS OPEN, PAUSES JURY TRIALS**

Due to the growth of COVID in our area, the 17th Judicial Circuit announced that it is implementing a pause in jury trials effective November 23, 2020, through the end of January 2021. Chief Judge Eugene Doherty advises that, although the Court has already made extensive use of remote virtual hearings in 2020, it will be increasing its reliance on them to minimize the number of persons who must enter courthouse buildings. All court facilities remain open.

“This is a step taken out of caution,” Chief Judge Doherty said. “We have been very successful in minimizing the spread of virus in our facilities, but we know that the situation in the community is changing. We must all be mindful of the risk.”

Judge Doherty noted that litigants should be aware of the following:

- Litigants should be given instructions on how to attend court remotely, but if they have questions they should refer to <https://tinyurl.com/IL17thVC>.
- Some court locations may be moved or case times rescheduled. Litigants should make sure that the Circuit Clerk has their current contact information, including email address, to ensure proper notification.
- Any litigants who must appear in person are strongly discouraged from bringing other persons to court with them.

“We aren’t operating as we did a year ago, but we won’t be shut down to the degree we were in the spring,” Judge Doherty said. “The continued good work and cooperation of attorneys, staff, and the public have gotten us through this so far, and we are optimistic that the end is in sight.”

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