IN THE SIXTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
GENERAL ORDER 25-13
Effective December 8, 2025

IN THE MATTER OF AMENDING)
GENERAL ORDER 21-21)
ELECTRONIC RECORDING)
IN THE 16TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT)

This General Order is hereby adopted to comply with Illinois Supreme Court Rule 46 and is applicable in all courthouses and courtrooms in the 16th Judicial Circuit in which electronic recording equipment has been provided by the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC).

1) All felony, misdemeanor, mental health, juvenile abuse and neglect, juvenile delinquency and civil cases will be covered by Court Reporting Services through an official court reporter or electronic recording equipment approved by the AOIC. This Order excludes Branch Courts, Courtroom 120, Courtroom 220, and Courtroom 250 at the Kane County Courthouse. Court Reporting Services coverage of all other cases will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Chief Judge, the sitting judge and the Court Reporter Administrator.

2) All court reporting, including electronic recording, shall be conducted in accordance with Illinois Supreme Court Rule 46, any regulations adopted by the AOIC, and by the following rules.

3) The judge in each courtroom shall be responsible for ensuring that electronic recording is conducted pursuant to this Order.

4) The electronic recording equipment shall be turned on in each courtroom before the docket begins and shall be turned off after the last case of the day concludes in the courtroom. It shall not be turned off during any courtroom proceedings. However, the judge may mute the entire system for those proceedings that do not need to be recorded as explained in paragraph 7 below. The judge is responsible for unmuting the system when a recording is required.

5) When applicable, the circuit clerk of each courtroom shall scan each case by barcode into the system before each case begins.

6) Before each case begins, the judge shall identify each case by number and name, and shall identify the attorneys or have the attorneys identify themselves.

7) The procedures in paragraphs 5 and 6 shall be followed during trials or hearings, but do not need to be followed for non-trial proceedings, case management conferences, pretrial conferences or default orders.

8) Nothing in this Order requires the making of a record whenever an agreed order is tendered to a judge for signature or when a docket entry is entered by the judge in which a record was not normally made prior to the existence of electronic recording.

9) Nothing in this Order prevents a judge from making a record in those instances in which this Order exempts the making of a record.

10) A judge shall be entitled to go off the record in any instance in which a judge previously could go off the record when a certified court reporter was present. A judge may go off the record in those situations by temporarily muting the system, but the judge shall be responsible for unmuting the system when going back on the record. When necessary, the electronic recording control room shall initiate communication with the court and circuit clerk.

11) An attorney who consults with his client privately shall do so by pressing and holding the mute button on his microphone. The microphone becomes "live" once the attorney releases the button.

12) Electronic digital recordings of proceedings shall remain under the control of the court, with access to such proceedings subject to regulations set by the AOIC and such orders as may be entered by the court.

13) Electronic digital recordings of proceedings shall be disseminated only by transcripts prepared by official court reporters or certified court specialists. The transcript and not the medium shall be the official record. When an official court reporter is present, the transcript produced from stenographic notes will be the official record. When an official court reporter is not present and electronic recording is utilized, the transcript generated from the electronic recording will be the official record. A certificate is to be signed and attached to the transcript by the official court reporter or certified court specialist showing the foregoing to be a true, correct, and complete transcript to the best of his/her ability based on the quality of the electronic recording.

14) Unless specifically authorized by court order to the contrary, only a transcript certified by an official court reporter or certified court specialist shall be the official record. The official record shall be given preference for use in all courtrooms and as a part of the record on appeal for any case from this Circuit.

15) All transcript requests shall be in writing and submitted to Court Reporting Services and shall be subject to the policies set out by the AOIC.

16) Official court reporter notes, and electronic recordings, are not to be released to anyone except by order of a superior court. Attempts to subpoena notes or recordings or any pleading seeking the same shall be

referred to the Chief Judge immediately. However, a judge hearing a case may request that all or part of a proceeding be played back by the judge privately or in open court when allowed by law.

Entered this 4th day of December, 2025, and effective December 8, 2025.

Robert K. Villa, Chief Judge