

STATE OF ILLINOIS
CIRCUIT COURT
SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

JOHN S. LOWRY
Chief Judge



WINNEBAGO COUNTY COURTHOUSE
400 WEST STATE STREET, SUITE 215
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS 61101
PHONE (815) 319-4806

January 5, 2023

For Immediate Release

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MEDIA RELEASE

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY COURTHOUSE BUILDING
TO PARTIALLY REOPEN TO PUBLIC ON JANUARY 9**

ROCKFORD, IL – Chief Judge John S. Lowry and Winnebago County Chairman Joseph Chiarelli are pleased to announce that the Winnebago County Courthouse, located at 400 West State Street, Rockford, Illinois 61101, will partially reopen to the public on January 9, 2023.

Individuals will be able to access the offices of the Winnebago County State’s Attorney, Winnebago County Public Defender, Winnebago County Coroner, and Winnebago County Jury Commission. The fourth floor courtrooms and traffic courtroom on the first floor will also be available for court proceedings. Remaining areas in the courthouse remain under various stages of remediation. A date for full re-occupancy has yet to be determined.

Certain Winnebago County court proceedings may be held in a location not listed on the original court notice. Similarly, virtual attendance may be the only option. The public is encouraged to check the status of scheduled court proceedings prior to the court date by viewing the “**Winnebago County Courthouse Operations and Scheduling Page**” on the 17th Circuit Court Website – <http://17thcircuit.illinoiscourts.gov>. A standing court calendar has been created to provide greater certainty and increase jury trial capabilities until a full re-occupancy of the courthouse can take place.

The Office of the Winnebago County Circuit Clerk will continue to provide public services from a satellite office located on the 2nd floor of the Winnebago County Criminal Justice Center (CJC), 650 West State Street, Rockford, Illinois 61102.

“The goal since the fire occurred on November 5 has been to return as quickly as possible but only when safe to do so,” said Chief Judge John S. Lowry. “Through the tireless work of remediation and industrial hygienist specialists, and with the approval of the City of Rockford Building Code Officials, the ability to safely return the public to the building and restore access to certain court offices and courtrooms is a positive step forward.”

“I’m proud of our quick actions following the fire which allowed us to maintain continuity of operations for the last two months,” said Chairman Joseph Chiarelli. “I want to thank our Winnebago County staff and Elected Officials for their commitment to providing these vital services for our residents, and we look forward to welcoming the public back into the courthouse soon.”

Individuals seeking emergency orders of protection in Winnebago County may come to the Winnebago County Criminal Justice Center (CJC) located at 650 West State Street for in person assistance or make use of the Court’s online request system available at <http://illinois17th.com/public-info/domestic-violence-help/online-orders>. A temporary Domestic Violence Assistance Center is open on the first floor of the Winnebago County CJC. Additional assistance is available from Remedies and the Family Peace Center – Remedies 815-962-6102, FPC 779-348-7600.

Ongoing announcements and scheduling changes will continue be posted on the Court’s website, www.17thcircuit.illinoiscourts.gov. **During regular business hours, contact the Winnebago County Circuit Clerk's Office at 815-319-4500 for assistance with case scheduling.**

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