

NEWS RELEASE

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GET CLEARED ILLINOIS CONVENES RACIAL EQUITY AND JUSTICE REFORM WORK GROUP ISSU

Aurie Pennick



GET CLEARED ILLINOIS-P.O.W.E.R COLLABORATES WITH CHICAGO LEGAL AID TO ISSUE RACIAL AND STRUCTURAL JUDICIAL REFORMS FOR COOK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, CHIEF JUDGE EVANS, CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT (CANDIDATES) AND STATE'S ATTORNEY KIM FOXX.

WORKGROUP CHAIRED BY RETIRED FOUNDATION LEADER AND CIVIL RIGHTS LAWYER AURIE PENNICK, ESW.

Brandon Johnson

GET CLEARED, ILLINOIS

The following describes one of the most immediate as well as one of the long-term structural goals.

*****Short Term Immediate Goal: Enlisting additional judges to sign orders for uncontested petitions on an ongoing, regular basis. Background: Per the Illinois expungement and sealing statute (20ILCS 2630/Criminal Identification Act) the only time the court is required to set a date for a hearing is if/when an objection has been filed. If no objection has been filed discretionary relief is warranted so on a regular basis a pool of judges could sign uncontested petitions to expunge or seal. This would more immediately address a high volume of uncontested petitions that are still currently being heard by a presiding judge, and formally read into the record on scheduled court calls. ***** Long Term Goal: Having additional judges permanently assigned to hear contested petitions (those with objections) on more than two days a week. Background: With uncontested petitions being handled administratively, and additional court dates and judges to hear only those petitions that are required to be set for hearing, this would address both the current backlog and work towards lowering the current wait time of approximately one year for a petition to be heard. Currently, one organization, Legal Aid Chicago has over 40 petitions pending that were filed between 11 and 14 months ago. To date, they have received no notice of objections or hearings on these petitions. They have over 75 petitions that were filed prior to March 2020 (over 8 months ago).**