



## Office of the Kane County State's Attorney

**JAMIE L. MOSSER**

**STATE'S ATTORNEY**

### **COLLABORATION LEADS TO KANE COUNTY'S NEWEST PROBLEM-SOLVING COURT DUI PROBLEM-SOLVING COURT NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS**

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Kane County's new DUI Problem-Solving Court, recently launched after being approved by the Administrative Office of Illinois Courts, has accepted its first applicant.

The DUI Problem-Solving Court is a product of nearly three years of collaboration among multiple Kane County justice partners, including the Kane County State's Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, the Judiciary and Adult Court Services, along with other public safety partners in the county.

The newest Kane County specialty court is an alternative to incarceration for felony DUI offenders to better help them address underlying issues that lead to drunk driving. The wide range of support helps offenders in their recovery and reduces recidivism.

"This is a response to a need and an investment in our community and residents," Kane County State's Attorney Jamie Mosser said. "We have specialty courts for offenders who commit crimes related to a mental health diagnosis or have a substance use disorder related to illegal drug use, but we had nothing for multiple DUI offenders."

DUI Problem-Solving Court is a two-year program that seeks to rehabilitate felony DUI offenders who are a high risk to reoffend. It is modeled after Kane County's Drug Rehabilitation Court, which has shown great success over many years in helping those in need. It will focus on intensive monitoring and supervision, as well as treatment, while holding participants accountable. Participants must be Kane County residents. Judge Rene Cruz will preside over DUI Problem-Solving Court.

DUI Problem-Solving Court is Kane County's fourth problem-solving court, joining Drug Rehabilitation Court, Treatment Alternative Court and Veteran's Court. Kane County is the only Illinois county with four certified treatment courts, according to 16<sup>th</sup> Circuit Chief Judge Clint Hull.

“I first want to thank Kane County Assistant State’s Attorney Lindsey Lachanski, who handles these problem-solving courts for our office,” State’s Attorney Mosser said. “The specialty courts need an experienced and dedicated prosecutor who understands the underlying issues that lead some people to commit crimes. I also wish to thank Nathan Lanthrum, Clinical Director and co-owner of Lighthouse Recovery Center in St. Charles, Assistant State’s Attorney Kim Klein, who supervises the specialty courts for our office, Sheriff Ron Hain, Public Defender Rachele Conant, Assistant Public Defenders Juanita Archuleta and Michelle Tilmon, Executive Director of Kane County Adult Court Services Lisa Aust, DUI Court and Veterans Court Coordinator Philip Wessel, Adult Court Services Director Emily Saylor, Adult Court Services Deputy Director Josh Osborn, Judge Marmarie Kostelny, Kane County Board Member Michelle Gumz, Judge Cruz and Chief Judge Hull. I appreciate that these individuals see those with substance use disorder or a mental health diagnosis through a different lens and understand that with many nonviolent offenders, treatment is what makes our community safer. They all worked together to make this program a reality.”

DUI Problem-Solving Court involves collaboration inside and outside of the court system. In addition to judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, law enforcement and probation officers, it also involves treatment providers and community leaders.

“Individuals struggling with alcohol use disorders need treatment and opportunities for rehabilitation just the same as individuals struggling with other substance-related issues,” Nathan Lanthrum of Lighthouse Recovery said. Strictly punitive approaches to individuals with multiple DUI offenses do very little to address the underlying issues for the behavior. We believe this new court will help make our communities safer through this rehabilitative approach.”

To assist with the DUI Court implementation, Kane County Adult Court Services applied for and received a \$135,000 grant from the Illinois Department of Transportation. These funds will support treatment, training, education, drug-testing supplies, and part of the salary paid to the assistant public defender assigned to the program.

“DUI offenders don’t get the help they need in prison,” Public Defender Conant said. “Once they’re out, they are highly likely to reoffend. And eventually, instead of driving their car into a tree, they strike a pedestrian. I believe DUI Court will be an important tool in preventing people from becoming a fixture in court and in making our streets safer.”

“Our research into jurisdictions that have a DUI Court shows that participants are unlikely to commit a DUI while participating in DUI Court,” Adult Court Services Director Aust said. “Kane County’s specialty courts are much more effective than prison at stopping risky behavior. My thanks to Emily Saylor, Josh Osborn and Philip Wessel from my office for their hard work on this project.”

“It is a privilege to join the collaborative effort of the Kane County Justice Partners and preside over the DUI Problem-Solving Court,” Judge Cruz said. “There is proven success in similar programs that provide participants access to the tools needed to manage their substance use disorder in a controlled program under close supervision and interaction with treatment professionals as an alternative to incarceration. It keeps the community safe, saves taxpayer dollars and most importantly transform participants into productive members of the community.”

“This is the latest in Kane County’s focus on rehabilitative efforts, joining Deferred Prosecution and Collaborative Diversion, along with our other specialty courts,” State’s Attorney Mosser

said. “Each endeavor is different but they all serve the purpose of helping individuals address underlying issues so they may be productive for themselves, their families and their neighbors. Programs like this have proven to make our community safer.”