

# State Dockets Research:

Demystifying online research of the Chicagoland Trial Courts

# Who We Are

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# The Research We Do

## Shari & Law firms

- Who For & Why
  - Attorneys & Paralegals
  - Legal Secretaries, Business Development, Firm Dockets Team, and Fellow Librarians
  - Research, Training, and Business Development
- How I Learned
  - Most was not straight docket or litigation history searching, though that was certainly part of it.
  - Over the years, most was really learned doing public records and background research on plaintiffs and experts across the country
- What I use
  - Many of the major vendors
  - Court Websites



## Clare & Academia

- Law faculty:
  - Researching whatever happened to SCOTUS defendants
  - Recent example BIPA cases
- Law students
  - Teaching about dockets in Advanced Legal Research
  - Finding cited information for journals

# What Do Users Need to Know?

**All Users: NOT EVERYTHING IS ONLINE!**

Who you are may determine what you can access on court websites or if you need to find another way!

- Judges & Clerks, Attorneys (and their assistants or other designee), General Public (including Librarians!)

**Students:** docket v. court record, PACER, law firm helpers, phone etiquette

Docket numbers are important. Share that info!

**Law Firm Users:**

- Most of the points Clare I have just mentioned
- Reasonable Expectations and Turnaround Times
- Costs (Court Websites)
- Costs (In-House Docket Services / Via the Court Directly / Document Delivery Services)
- Costs (Client Concerns)

What Do We Need To Know?

# Jurisdiction

102 counties

“Collar”

- DuPage
- Kane
- Lake
- McHenry
- Will



# Docket Numbers: Don't Let Them Drive You Crazy...

- Docket/Case number formatting varies widely from court to court
- Why? Just a few examples:
  - Different case types, their abbreviations, and are they included?
  - Is it a 2 or 4 digit year?
  - Do you need leading zeroes?
  - Do you have to include dashes or spaces? Can it run together?
- Searching in major vendors can be affected by this. Best case scenario...you will also have party names, the court, and maybe the filing date
- Worse case scenario...you get next to nothing or possibly only a case number which may or may not be correct!



# Let's Look at Examples for Cook and DuPage...

## Cook County (in Courtlink via Lexis)

### Illinois State Courts - Cook County (Chicago)

YYYY-A-000000  
YYYY-A0-000000  
YYYYA000000  
YYYYA00000000  
YYYYAA00000  
YYYY-AA-00000

## DuPage County (in Westlaw Dockets)

### DuPage County Dockets Scope Information

**Example:** If you are looking for docket number 10CM6092, enter 10CM6092 in the DOCKET NUMBER field on the Template.

**NOTE:** In this court, docket numbers are formatted as follows:

Format:	Example:
YTTNNNN	10CM6092
YY	Year
TT	Case Type
NNNN	Sequence Number



# And Kane in Westlaw and Courtlink...

The format for Kane County Court docket numbers is:

YYCCNNNNNN, where YY is a 2 digit year, CC is the casetype, and NNNNNN is a 6 digit sequence number.

Example: 21AR000001

## Illinois Circuit Courts - Kane County

YYAN  
YYANN  
YYANNN  
YYANNNN  
YYANNNNN  
YYANNNNNN  
YYYYAN  
YYYYANN  
YYYYANNN  
YYYYANNNN  
YYYYANNNNN  
YYYYANNNNNN  
YYAAN  
YYAANN  
YYAANNN  
YYAANNNN  
YYAANNNNN

YYAANNNNNNN  
YYYYYAAN  
YYYYYAANN  
YYYYYAANNN  
YYYYYAANNNN  
YYYYYAANNNNN  
YYYYYAANNNNNN  
YYspAspN  
YYspAspNN  
YYspAspNNN  
YYspAspNNNN  
YYspAspNNNNN  
YYspAspNNNNNN  
YYspAAspN  
YYspAAspNN  
YYspAAspNNN  
YYspAAspNNNN  
YYspAAspNNNNN

YYspAAspNNNNNNN  
YY-A-N  
YY-A-NN  
YY-A-NNN  
YY-A-NNNN  
YY-A-NNNNN  
YY-A-NNNNNN  
YY-AA-N  
YY-AA-NN  
YY-AA-NNN  
YY-AA-NNNN  
YY-AA-NNNNN  
YY-AA-NNNNNN

# Docket Numbers: Where to Find

Following a hearing on remand, the district court concluded that the omission of the divorce from the Affidavit, while misleading, was not knowingly false or made in reckless disregard for the truth. See *United States v. Kyllo*, No. Cr. 92-51-FR, 1996 WL 125594 (D.Or. Mar. 15, 1996). \*1045 The district court, after hearing further evidence, made factual findings on the capabilities of the Agema 210 and concluded no warrant was required before the thermal scan. The district court therefore found probable cause to issue the warrant, and denied the motion to suppress. See *id.* Kyllo now challenges this decision. <sup>6</sup>

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Criminal Docket 34715  
See Misc. 1209

THE UNITED STATES  
vs.  
CHARLES KATZ

18 USC 1084: Interstate Transmission of bets and wagers  
and information assisting in the placing of bets and  
wagers.

Date	Name or Receipt No.	Rec.	Disb.
6-22-65	C. K. (Fine)	300.00	6-25-65

8 cts.

# “Coverage” and “Access”

Can't say it enough! There is NO 100% online access and coverage anywhere for state courts, including IL, regardless of how you try to combine all search options.

## Vendors & Court Websites

- Some overlap in the vendors (Ex: Cook Co tends to be in all) but definitely differences
- Current vs Archived?
- Filings vs No Filings ; Dockets vs Index Listing Only ; Alerts & Tracks
- Court Website Interfaces, Coverage, Access, and Costs vary greatly!

## The only constant is change...

- Vendors are always adding or removing courts. Keep coverage & status pages handy and check regularly!
- Access Issues and Outages
- Court websites can change too both for the better and...well...

## Nothing is uniform!

- Lack of uniformity across the board makes things difficult to search in major vendors and on court websites
  - Docket Formats, Case Types, Nature of Suit
  - Filing Names (Ex: Complaints vs Petitions)
  - Docket vs Register of Actions vs Events
  - Clerk of Court or Prothonotary
- Nationwide/Statewide or Court-by-Court?
  - Search criteria & options
  - User interface
  - Different access points for different case types

# Online Access Through the Clerk of the Court

# Cook

## About the Court:

- 6 locations/districts (1st Judicial District in the Loop, 5 Suburban)
- 3 Departments (County, Juvenile, Municipal)
- Multiple Divisions within each Dept.

## Searching

- Free to search most types of dockets. Traffic dockets are only criminal option available
- Dockets are easily printable to pdf and go back several years
- <https://casesearch.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org/>

## Filings

- No filings available online via the clerk's website.
- Most common filings available anywhere are complaints for Law Division and Chancery Division cases.
- Other filings can be obtained
  - In-person: should be able to see cases from all divisions and also suburban courthouses at the Loop Office. Criminal misdemeanor information can be obtained at the Loop Office, but felony case information is only at 26th & California Courthouse
  - or via an online multi-step process (that can take a few days) of submitting the request, waiting for the cost, paying, and then receiving the copies and receipt for payment.
- CCC has a system open to registration by attorneys only.

## Online Case Search

### Civil, Law, Chancery, and Domestic Relations/Child Support Search

Search the full electronic docket for cases filed in the Civil, Law, Chancery, and Domestic Relations/Child Support divisions.

[Start Search](#)

### Probate Docket Search

Search records for cases filed in Probate Court related to claims against estates and guardianships.

[Start Search](#)

### Probate Will Search

Search records related to Wills filed with the County of Cook, Illinois.

[Start Search](#)

### Traffic Ticket Search

Search for tickets and cases related to moving violations, DUI, speeding, and suspended licenses.

[Start Search](#)

### County Division Search

Search for cases related to name changes, election matters, real estate tax matters, and other related actions.

[Start Search](#)

### Court Call Search

Search for data related to court cases being heard today and for the next five business days.

[Start Search](#)

### Unclaimed Child Support Check Search

Check to see if the Clerk's Office is holding an undeliverable child support check for you.

[Start Search](#)

### Naturalization Declaration of Intention Search

Search more than 400,000 records for Declarations of Intention filed by those who wished to become U.S. citizens between 1906-1929.

[Start Search](#)

### Mortgage Foreclosure Surplus Search

Search the list of surplus and equity money from property foreclosures to see if the Clerk's Office is holding money for you.

[Start Search](#)

**Key Piece of Information:** Cook Co dockets can be tracked in the major vendors, but there are no manual updating capabilities. All major vendors will update their Cook Co dockets (and thus produce a hit on any track), when the court updates the docket in the clerk's system which then sends updates to the vendors. But beware... the same case docket might also be current as of different times in different vendors!

# Lake & McHenry

## **Search:** Free

- McHenry: They actually provide formatting tips on their search page!
- Lake & McHenry: Both allow searching of all case types...including up to criminal felony!

**Dockets:** No option to print a full docket if more than 1 page. It has to be pdf'd page by page and then combined into 1 pdf.

- Lake: check circle next to case listing result, confirm & submit you are human in order to see the docket
- McHenry: click on Open Case Record

**Filings:** No filings are available online on the court websites

<https://circuitclerk.lakecountyil.gov/publicAccess/html/common/index.xhtml>

<https://caseinfo.co.mchenry.il.us/pca/>

# Kane

**Search:** Free. Click on Search Court Records. Basic and advanced search options are available. All case types are available going back several years.

**Dockets:** Full dockets can be easily printed to pdf

**Filings:** No filings are available online

<https://kanecoportal.co.kane.il.us/portal>

# DuPage & Will - Searching & Dockets

## DuPage County

**Search:** Free. Not very user-friendly to work with search results and navigation.

**Dockets:** No option to print a full docket if more than 1 page. It has to be pdf'd page by page and then combined into 1 pdf.

**Filings:** No filings on the court website but they are available for a fee via i2File.

<https://epay.18thjudicial.org/Clerk/allsearch.do>

## Will County

**Search:** Free by clicking on Case Lookup I Agree...but...now you have to enter your email to receive a code to access the search page.

**Dockets:** Like DuPage, there is no option to print a full docket if more than 1 page. It has to be pdf'd section by section and then combined into 1 pdf.

**Filings:** No filings on the court website but they are available for a fee via i2File.

<https://www.circuitclerkofwillcounty.com/Public-Access>



# DuPage & Will - Filings via i2File

## Free Registration!

### Multi-step process to request filings:

1. Identify the items you need, sign in and click Request a Document. Select DuPage or Will, and then click Request a Document Copy. You need to request each item individually. Be as detailed as possible with the filing description in the comments field..
2. Within 2 business days, you will receive notification if you are approved to pay and access the filing(s), along with the costs. Then log back into i2File to pay for and print out and/or save your copies.

**Costs:** Same as ordering in person or via mail, so might as well try to do it

\$2.00 for page 1

\$0.50 cents per page from page 2 - 20

\$0.25 cents per page thereafter

\$6.00 per document certification

## Request Document Copy

### Case Information

Case Number \*  (For example:2007CM000015, 2005DT000050 )

Do you want Certified Copy or Regular copy?

Last Name/Company

Plaintiff/Petitioner \*

Defendant/Respondent \*

Document Type \*

Comments \*

# Major Vendors

# Bloomberg

**Coverage Generally:** Good state court coverage overall and interactive [Coverage/Status Page](#) with large number of filtering options

**Searching:** Many criteria options available ; can now filter search results by county (recently added!)

**IL Coverage:** 13 Counties

- Breaking complaints: current within a few days for DuPage & Lake Co Civil Dockets; not current for Cook Co Law & Chancery Divisions
- Currency varies greatly for the 13 Counties.
- Some filings are available but primarily for Cook Co, plus the available breaking complaints
- Some current criminal dockets are available for Cook Co along with select archived criminal dockets in others
- Alerts and Tracks are possible for any of the current counties.

**Filings generally:** Available for many courts in the system at no charge and updating can generally be done at no charge for state courts. If a fee will be incurred for electronic retrieval or if you will need to use their Document Retrieval Courier Service, you'll be warned first!

**Law School Access:** We are at your mercy!

# Westlaw

**Coverage Generally:** Good combined state court coverage between [Dockets and Courtwire](#)

Remember...Check the “i”, the [Coverage Map](#), and the [Court Status](#) Pages

## Searching

- Some states or counties cannot be searched as part of statewide or nationwide searches (Ex: DuPage Co Dockets)
- Search criteria options available which can change depending on the court(s) selected

**IL Coverage:** 16 Counties with coverage in Dockets and/or Courtwire.

- Not all courts are current.
- Some are Courtwire (complaints) only, some are dockets only, some are both.
- Some have both civil and criminal, while others do not.
- Some allow alerts & tracks, and others do not.

Don't forget trial court documents and orders (both hit or miss)

# CourtLink (via Lexis)

**Coverage Generally:** Good state court coverage overall and always adding more

Helpful information on [Court Availability](#) and [Court Information](#) pages

## Searching

- Some states or counties cannot be searched as part of statewide or nationwide searches
- Search criteria options available which can change depending on the court(s) selected

**IL Coverage:** 11 Counties. All but 1 is current at the moment. No filings online, but allow alerts & tracks.

Don't forget briefs/pleadings/motions and trial court orders (both hit or miss)

# Docket Alarm

One of the newer kids on the block!

**Coverage Generally:** Very good state coverage overall and adding new courts all the time, but IL not so much.

- Only 3 IL counties (Cook, Kane, and Tazewell) but only dockets (no filings).
- **Cook:** 4.25 million cases ; **Kane:** 395K cases

Interactive Pages for [Court Coverage](#) and [Jurisdiction Status](#)

## Searching:

- Several search options, criteria, and filtering options.
- Platform is interactive so as you filter, it makes the adjustments in real-time.

Tracks can be set up on cases anywhere in-between continuous (as available) to weekly.

# Law360

 **LAW360®**

News, cases, companies, firms

Northwestern University Sch...

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY SECURITIES BANKRUPTCY COMPETITION EMPLOYMENT WHITE COLLAR LEGAL INDUSTRY ACCESS TO JUSTICE LAW360 UK PULSE || SEE ALL SECTIONS || NEWSLETTERS

## Enterprise To Pay \$505K To End Ill. Workers' BIPA Claims



By [Lauraann Wood](#) ·  [Listen to article](#)

Law360 (May 8, 2023, 9:13 PM EDT) -- Enterprise is set to shell out nearly \$505,000 to resolve Biometric Information Privacy Act claims from hundreds of employees who say the vehicle rental company required them to use a fingerprint timekeeping system without first obtaining their consent.

**Attached Documents**

-  [Order](#)
-  [Proposed Settlement](#)

**Useful Tools & Links**

(note: don't forget it's accessible via Lexis if you don't have a standalone link)

# Law.com Radar

Recently launched media brand within the ALM Law.com family (in 2020)

## Alerts

- My Radar: Can be set on any combination of industry, firm, practice area, topics, companies, regions, blip type (ex: news, new litigation, etc.) ; View online and receive emails
- New Litigation: “New Suit” Alerts can be set on a variety of criteria as above plus the by court, and can run as immediately, hourly, daily, or weekly
  - **NOTE:** keywords are in beta at the moment
  - Coverage of 10 states so far but adding new states/courts regularly

## Daily Case Reports

- Daily summaries of new civil litigation ; 1 email per jurisdiction ; similar to Courthouse News (CNS) Dingers
  - Case Caption, Party Names, Case Type, Representation, Date Filed, Summary, and links to the complaint
- Currently 6 IL Counties available (Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, & Will)



# Law.com Radar Alerts - My Radar

## Filter My Radar ⓘ

Apply

### By Blip Type

- ☐ New Suit
- ☐ Who Got The Work
- ☐ News From Law.com
- ☐ News From Law.com International
- ☐ Removed To Federal Court
- ☐ Litigation Surge

### By Industries

- ☐ Legal Services
- ☐ AI & Automation
- ☐ Aerospace & Defense
- [See All Industries](#)

### By Law Firm Groups

### By Practice Areas

### By Topics

### By Law Firms

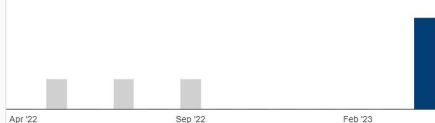
### By Companies

### By Regions

Apply

Reset Filters

#### Litigation Surge • Class Actions | Honeywell International



Honeywell International was hit with a cluster of class actions last month, primarily over employment issues. At least three federal class actions were initiated against Honeywell in April, including two wage-and-hour lawsuits claiming that the company failed to compensate employees for mandatory COVID-19 screenings. Plus, Ace Hardware employees who are required to use 'Honeywell Voice' headsets while picking merchandise accuse Honeywell of collecting and storing employees' voice prints in violation of the Illinois Biometric Information Privacy Act; the suit was filed by Bursor & Fisher and Wolf Haldenstein.

✓ Latest surge detected: 20 hours ago

Labor & Employment Class Actions + 5

#### News From Law.com

"We don't want to grow for growth's sake" — It's a common refrain of law firm leaders when describing their aversion to adding timekeepers for the purpose of growing revenue without a greater strategic plan. Yet with all the advantages that can be yielded by scaling up attorney headcount and geographic presence—from absorption of fixed costs to more capital for tech investments—there's no wonder why law firm leaders are tempted to see growth as a self-evident virtue. There are many challenges facing business leaders today that are easier to tackle for organizations with scale and greater financial coffers. Consider technology.

4 hours ago

Legal Services



#### New Suit • Employment Class Action

CASE  
Bredlau v. The County of Kane

COURT  
[Illinois Circuit Court, Kane County](#)

#### SUMMARY

Kane County was hit with an employment class action on May 5 in Illinois Circuit Court for Kane County over its collection of health insurance payments from government employees. The suit, filed by Foote Mielke Chavez & O'Neil, accuses the defendant of inflating premium prices during open enrollment and withholding excessive amounts for premiums from employees' wages. The case is 2023LA000177, Bredlau et al. v. County of Kane.

20 hours ago

Illinois Labor & Employment + 3

# Daily Case Reports & New Litigation Alerts - Sample Hits

ILLINOIS CIRCUIT COURT, DUPAGE COUNTY

**Veiga v. Respondus, Inc.**

2023LA000430

## Parties

**P** Alex Parker Zimmerman,  
Brittany Harvey, Cody  
Powell, Courtnie  
Patterson, Daniel Fee,  
Lucius Veiga, Trevonte  
Johnson

**D** Respondus, Inc

## Case Type

Class Action - Violation of  
BIPA ( Biometric Information  
Privacy Act)

## Legal Teams

**P** Milberg Coleman Bryson  
Phillips Grossman, Murray  
Murphy Moul + Basil LLP,  
Turke & Strauss, LLP,  
Paronich Law, P.C.

## Summary

Respondus Inc., a provider of software for remote exams, was hit with a biometric privacy class action on April 26 in Illinois Circuit Court for DuPage County. The lawsuit alleges that one of Respondus' automatic proctoring tools captures and stores students' facial recognition data and other information without their consent in violation of the Biometric Information Privacy Act. The complaint was filed by Milberg Coleman Bryson Phillips Grossman; Murray Murphy Moul + Basil; Turke & Strauss; and Paronich Law. Counsel have not yet appeared for the defendant. The case is 2023LA000430, Veiga v. Respondus, Inc.

Date Filed 04-26-2023

[Read complaint](#)

ILLINOIS CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY

**Williams v. Walgreen Co.**

2023L004599

## Parties

**P** Betty Williams

**D** Boehringer Ingelheim,  
Boehringer Ingelheim  
Pharmaceuticals,  
GlaxoSmithKline,  
GlaxoSmithKline, Pfizer,  
Sanofi, Walgreens Boots  
Alliance, Walgreens Boots  
Alliance, Boehringer  
Ingelheim USA  
Corporation, John Does 1-  
100 Inclusive, + 1 more

## Case Type

Personal Injury - Product  
Liability

## Legal Teams

**P** Parafinczuk Wolf, P.A.,  
Barnes & Thornburg,  
Sandberg Phoenix & Von  
Gontard, King & Spalding,  
Dechert, Brown & James  
P.C., Goldman Ismail  
Tomaselli Brennan & Baum  
LLP, Fox Smith LLC,  
HeplerBroom

Date Filed 05-03-2023

[Read complaint](#)

# Trellis

Another newer player in the field

- Originally focused on CA and a few states for attorneys to use for legal research
- Now 25+ states with more in the pipeline for this year
- Adding new features and content regularly
  - Daily Filing Reports: similar to CNS Dingers

**IL Coverage:** 11 counties (including Cook, DuPage, and Kane)

- Dockets available, but only Cook has available filings
- Civil, Family, and Probate Cases
- Bios & Analytics available for judges in select IL counties

# Keeping Up With All Of This

Keep checking

- Vendor coverage/status pages and “i” links
- Big Red Book
- Courts themselves - websites or actually call
- Any internal documentation or “experts” on your team and in your circle of colleagues

Once again...keep checking periodically - we can't say it enough!!

- Important to know not just for searching, but also for alerts & tracks

Questions?