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## **Circuit Clerk's Office Announces New Case Portal for Individuals Representing Themselves in Court**

WOODSTOCK, Ill. – McHenry County Circuit Clerk Katherine Keefe announced a major step forward in improving access to justice for parties acting as their own attorneys with the addition of a Self-Represented Litigant Portal that allows individuals without legal representation to view their case files online.

One of the Illinois Supreme Court's strategic goals is to promote fairness by supporting self-represented litigants, removing obstacles, and empowering the self-represented to better participate in their case. While McHenry County has long offered an Attorney Access Portal, which gives attorneys access to all cases where they are the attorney of record, the SRL Portal is a significant step towards improving access to justice for the self-represented.

"This is about breaking down barriers," Keefe said. "By giving self-represented litigants online access to their case files, we are empowering them to participate more fully in the legal process, by being able to view their case file online, anytime, anywhere."

Parties with a case in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit can request access to their cases through the portal either online at [www.mchenrycircuitclerk.org](http://www.mchenrycircuitclerk.org), or at the Circuit Clerk's customer service counters located in Rooms 136 and 353 of the Michael J. Sullivan Judicial Center, in Woodstock. The person requesting access must be a party to the case, and the case must still be open. Parties will be required to provide government issued identification before online access will be granted to their case files, and online access automatically terminates 30 days following the last court date.

"All of us in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit are very excited about this newest innovation," 22<sup>nd</sup> Circuit Chief Judge Michael Feetterer said. "Use of this portal will help level the playing field between represented and unrepresented litigants and, in turn, remove another barrier in bringing access to justice for all litigants."

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