

Office of the Kane County State's Attorney



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ILLINOIS PROSECUTORS GATHER FOR BEST PRACTICES SUMMIT CONFERENCE IS LATEST FOR STATE AS PART OF NATIONAL EFFORT

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State's attorneys and senior prosecutors from across Illinois gathered Wednesday, April 29, 2015, at the Kane County Judicial Center in St. Charles to discuss techniques aimed at improving the state's criminal justice system.

The Illinois State's Attorney's Best Practices Committee met to collaborate on issues such as witness and photo identification, custodial statements, post-conviction review, diversion program effectiveness, charging crimes and discretion, plea offer procedures, officer-involved crimes, and working with informants.

Prosecutors from Boone, Champaign, Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Jackson, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, LaSalle, Lee, McHenry, Ogle, St. Claire, Sangamon, Stark, Tazewell, Whiteside and Winnebago counties were in attendance.

"It was good to have the opportunity to talk about these critical issues, and to recognize how to best use them in the pursuit of justice," said Kane County State Attorney Joe McMahon, who hosted the meeting. "This is a critical time for us because police and prosecutors nationwide are struggling with a crisis of public trust. When the guilty are held accountable through the framework of the constitution and the critical lens of fairness to everyone, justice truly is served."

The best practices effort is non-partisan and is built to be effective within the broad demographic of Illinois, from its largest county to suburban counties and Illinois' many rural counties.

The committee, which was formed in 2013, is a product of the nationwide "Best Practices for Justice" initiative being led Kristine Hamann, visiting fellow at the Bureau of Justice Assistance. Hamann is a former assistant district attorney in the Manhattan (N.Y.) District Attorney's Office.

Haman has worked with prosecutors from 15 states in the formation of the committees – Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Idaho, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia and Washington.

“Our goal is to better protect the innocent while also protecting the community and holding the guilty accountable. As we examine our procedures over time, we occasionally see paradigm shifts. With those shifts, it is important to re-examine our procedures to ensure we get things right,” McMahon said.

The mission of the Illinois State’s Attorney’s Best Practices Committee is to seek justice by equipping prosecutors with the tools necessary to ensure the full confidence of the communities they serve.