



# Supreme Court of Illinois

Joseph R. Tybor  
Director of Communications

222 North LaSalle Street, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, Illinois 60601  
Telephone (312) 793-2323  
Mobile (312) 636-0479  
Fax (312) 793-0871  
jtybor@illinoiscourts.gov

**February 14, 2014**

## **SUPREME COURT APPROVES CAMERAS IN PEORIA COUNTY; FOUR ADDITIONAL COUNTIES IN TENTH CIRCUIT TO FOLLOW**

The Illinois Supreme Court announced on Friday that news cameras and microphones will be allowed in trial courtrooms in Peoria County in the 10<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit. Peoria County becomes the 36<sup>th</sup> county in Illinois to participate in the pilot project allowing cameras in trial courtrooms.

Under Local Rule 15, the remaining four counties in the Circuit will also join the pilot project in 60 days, bringing the grand total of participating counties in Illinois to 40 and the total number of participating circuits to 14. The 10<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit consists of Marshall, Peoria, Putnam, Stark and Tazewell counties in central Illinois.

"The extended media coverage pilot project serves a very important purpose in bringing transparency to the court system," Chief Justice Rita B. Garman said. "I am pleased to see that the Tenth Circuit has agreed to participate, and the Court thanks Chief Judge Stephen Kouri and former Chief Judge Michael Brandt for their planning in getting to this point."

Approval of the 10<sup>th</sup> Circuit expands the pilot project in the Third Judicial District where cameras have been approved and used since the Supreme Court announced the pilot project in January 2012.

"With Peoria, there are now seven counties in the Third Judicial District participating in the extended media coverage project and there will be four more counties to follow," said Justice Thomas L. Kilbride, whose Third Judicial District includes the Circuit. "With today's announcement, more Illinoisans will be able to see how the administration of justice operates in their courtrooms."

Tenth Circuit Chief Judge Stephen A. Kouri thanked the Supreme Court for its approval and said that the judges in the Circuit are committed to the success of the program.

"We appreciate the confidence of the Supreme Court in approving our application for extended media coverage," Chief Judge Kouri said. "For the past year and a half, we've held several meetings with judges and area media to ensure that while cameras are allowed in the courtroom, justice is not compromised in any manner."

**MORE**

## **Supreme Court Approves Cameras in Peoria County Add One**

"We are excited about it and look forward to participating in the pilot project."

The Supreme Court Order approving the 10<sup>th</sup> Circuit requires that a judge presiding over a proceeding in which cameras or audio are allowed must file a report with the chief judge of the circuit, the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court Justice in the judicial district the Circuit is located.

In 2012, the Supreme Court announced its approval of a pilot project to allow news media cameras and audio equipment in trial courtrooms in Illinois. Since then, 35 counties in 13 judicial circuits across Illinois have been participating in the pilot program, opening the trial courtrooms to news photographers and electronic news media to cover cases.

The Supreme Court has allowed cameras to broadcast its own oral arguments, and those of the Illinois Appellate Court, since 1983. At that time, however, the Court specifically rejected allowing news cameras during trial proceedings, and the issue made little headway until the Supreme Court took another look in 2011.

Peoria in the 10<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit joins 35 other counties where extended media coverage has been approved by the Supreme Court: Champaign, DeWitt, Douglas, Macon, Moultrie and Piatt counties in the Sixth Judicial Circuit; Kane County in the 16<sup>th</sup> Circuit; Lake County in the 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit; DeKalb and Kendall counties in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Judicial Circuit; Knox County in the Ninth Judicial Circuit; McLean County in the 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit; DuPage County in the 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit; Alexander, Jackson, Johnson, Massac, Pope, Pulaski, Saline, Union and Williamson counties in the First Judicial Circuit; Boone and Winnebago counties in the 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit; Carroll, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle and Stephenson counties in the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit; Madison County in the Third Judicial Circuit; Kankakee County in the 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial Circuit; and Henry, Mercer, Rock Island and Whiteside counties in the 14<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit.

–30–

**(FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Joseph Tybor, director of communications to the Illinois Supreme Court, at 312.793.2323 or Dawn Frison Cook, senior communications specialist to the Illinois Supreme Court, at 312.793.0870)**