



## New Cook County Domestic Violence Courthouse Relies on Midwest Moving to Combine Five Locations

### Features of the Cook County Domestic Violence Courthouse

- 10 handicapped accessible, spacious courtrooms with full audio-visual capabilities
- Courthouse security maintained through a single point of entry to a four-story pedestrian atrium
- A dedicated, secure "Victim Support Area" addresses the special needs of victims
- The facility houses the Office of the Cook County State's Attorney, the Office of the Cook County Public Defender, the Circuit Court of Cook County's Social Service Department and Adult Probation Department, and advocacy groups
- Onsite daycare center provides the counseling and educational programs, as well as separate areas for infants, toddlers, and older children
- Located close to CTA bus routes, the Blue Line, the Eisenhower Expressway and Metra.

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Combining beauty, safety, functionality, and state-of-the-art "green" construction elements, the new Cook County Domestic Violence Courthouse opened to the public on October 11, 2005. Located at 555 West Harrison in Chicago in a renovated 19th century warehouse, the 169,000-square-foot, five story courthouse consolidates into a single convenient location all of the services provided to victims of domestic violence.



Brian Fritz

"The primary purpose of this project was to create a building that serves the needs of victims of domestic violence in a safer, better equipped building," explained Elizabeth Melas, Deputy Director of Capital Planning for Cook County and the overall coordinator for the massive undertaking. "The new building provides a safe, efficient environment for the handling of domestic violence cases."

"In the past, the cramped quarters were very overcrowded, and there wasn't adequate separation of victims from the accused," Melas noted. "Now, the facility provides secure areas for families as well as supervised childcare for children whose parents are in court."

### Building Design Reflects Needs of Users

The new facility's ten courtrooms replace six at the old site. "Convenience is an important feature of this building. This new facility makes it possible for abuse victims to deal with the court and social service systems in a single location," Melas explained. "For example, in the past Civil Orders of Protection had to be obtained in one location and the courts were in another. The new building now includes

offices for pro bono advocates, counseling services, domestic violence advocates, along with courts and holding cells."

### "Green" Construction Meets New Environmental Requirements

A Cook County ordinance, passed in 2002, requires all new buildings in Cook County to be LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) certified under the U.S. Green Building Council. The Cook County Domestic Violence Courthouse represents the county's first building to seek this certification.

A major "green" component in the new courthouse is a 110-kW photovoltaic solar panel system that will supply 5 percent of the building's power. The solar panels cover about 40 percent of the building's roof and will provide the equivalent of electrical energy used annually by 20-25 Chicago homes.

Other environmentally friendly elements include high-efficiency boilers, recycling of at least 50 percent of the construction waste, a system of capturing parking-lot rainwater into cisterns for watering the landscaping, and use of low-odor-emitting materials and paints.

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(Cook County Domestic Violence Courthouse, Continued)

## Midwest Moving Helps Make the Moves without Disrupting Services

Coordinating the moves of five different locations over a holiday weekend without disrupting any services to the public represented major coordination challenges. Thousands of files, court records, boxes, and reference books needed to be organized, packed, moved and unpacked in three days.

"Midwest Moving helped us in coordinating the entire undertaking," Elizabeth Melas recalled. "Ken and Mike Stone met several times with our people to explain how the move would be handled and answered all of the questions."

Melas added, "With Midwest's help, we were able to complete the entire move in just three days, without interfering with any of the services provided to the public."



Brian Fritz

"The people using this facility are very happy with the new building and the services provided here. The years

of planning for this project were definitely worthwhile."

## Planning a Household Move?

Are you planning to move your household in the near future? After the all-important selection of your moving company, following are some practical tips to keep in mind to make the move to your new home as pleasant as possible.

### One Month before Moving

- Complete a postal change of address card and send change of address cards to friends, family, and businesses
- Transfer memberships in places of worship, clubs and civic organizations
- Obtain medical and dental records, x-rays and prescription histories. Ask your doctor and dentist for referrals and transfer prescriptions
- Set up banking services in new city
- Take inventory of your belongings

before they are packed. Photograph or video tape your belongings. Record serial numbers of electronic equipment

- Start using up food items so that there is less to pack or dispose of

### One to Two Weeks before Moving

- Arrange for utility services at your new address. Schedule disconnection or discontinue electric, disposal, water, newspaper, magazine subscription, telephone and cable service at your present location. Tip: Have utilities disconnected the day after your move to insure that you will have heat, light, and water while you are in the process of moving.
- Clean rugs and clothing and have them wrapped for moving
- Collect valuables from safe-deposit

- box. Make copies of any important documents before mailing or hand carry them to your new address
- Check with your insurance agent to ensure you'll be covered through your homeowner's or renter's policy during the move
- Give a close friend or relative your travel route and schedule so you may be reached if needed.

*Need more help? Let the professionals at Midwest Moving handle your next household or business relocation. Just call us toll free at 1-888-722-MOVE.*

