



Supreme Court of Illinois

May 20, 2026

FIRST DISTRICT APPELLATE COURT INTRODUCES NEW CLERK AND CHIEF DEPUTY CLERK

Following the retirement of First District Appellate Court Clerk Thomas D. Palella on April 30, 2026, the First District has announced the elevation of Tina Schillaci and Lisa Franklin to the roles of Clerk and Chief Deputy Clerk, respectively.

Tina Schillaci was promoted to Clerk of the First District Appellate Court, effective May 1, 2026. Ms. Schillaci began her career in public service 27 years ago in the Domestic Relations Division where she became a trained mediator and worked as a case manager. She began her employment as a law clerk in the Chancery Division in 2008 and later worked as a law clerk on the Appellate Court. She was the Administrative Attorney in the Clerk's Office from 2013 until 2017, when she was promoted to Chief Deputy Clerk. She is the first female to serve in the position of Clerk of the First District Appellate Court.

“My appointment as Clerk of the First District is a tremendous honor and I look forward to continuing to serve the court in this new role. I am grateful to the Justices of the First District for their continued confidence and support,” Ms. Schillaci said. “I am also excited to have Lisa Franklin as the Chief Deputy Clerk. Her knowledge of court rules and procedures will help ensure that the Clerk's Office will continue to run efficiently.”

Ms. Schillaci received her Bachelor of Arts degree from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Juris Doctor degree from University of Illinois Chicago (formerly John Marshall Law School).

Lisa Franklin has been promoted to Chief Deputy Clerk. Ms. Franklin earned a Bachelor of Arts with a double major in English Literature and Communications from Blackburn College and a Master of Arts in Journalism from DePaul University. She is a graduate of Whitney Young High School and Edison Gifted Children's Center. Ms. Franklin began working for the Clerk's Office in 2013 and was promoted to Division Clerk two years later. She was promoted again in 2021 to Supervisor. Ms. Franklin is the first female African American Chief Deputy Clerk in the First District Appellate Court.

The First District Appellate Court is located in Chicago and hears cases appealed from trial courts in Cook County. Appeals enter the clerk's office, where deputy clerks assign each filing schedules and actively monitor and review cases as they progress through record preparation, motions, briefing, and oral arguments. After the court has heard an appeal, the clerk's office issues the court's decision and tracks all post-decision activity.

(FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: James Brunner, Public Information Officer of the Illinois Supreme Court at 217.208.3354 or jbrunner@illinoiscourts.gov.)