



COOK COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY KIM FOXX'S FIRST 100 DAYS IN OFFICE: A REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

Kim Foxx was sworn in as Cook County State's Attorney on December 1, 2016, with a mission to run a fair, forward-thinking agency focused on restoring public trust and being proactive in the pursuit of public safety, while at all times seeking justice.

When she assumed office, State's Attorney Foxx released a transition report identifying key policy priorities and laying out an approach and philosophy to the work of the Office.

This update to the community serves as a first progress report, highlighting early steps taken to lay the groundwork for four years of change, and continuing the conversation with the County's residents about the work of the State's Attorney's Office.

SEEKING FEEDBACK FROM INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS:

The Office of the Cook County State's Attorney is the second-largest prosecutor's office in the country, employing close to 900 lawyers and over 1200 people in total. These men and women, who have dedicated their careers to public service, are the most critical piece of the Office's success. State's Attorney Foxx is committed to running a highly professional office that trains, supports, and elevates the work of these devoted public servants.

In her first 100 days in office, State's Attorney Foxx has undertaken a **comprehensive effort to hear from the Office's most valuable resources: its people.** The State's Attorney and executive team have visited the Office's locations at all County courthouses and all of the Office's specialty divisions - meeting people face to face where they work every day. The Office also undertook a comprehensive survey of all personnel, which had an over 65% participation rate, and which has identified critical areas of both concern and opportunity to improve the internal functioning of the Office. With assistance from the Civic Consulting Alliance and the Boston Consulting Group, the Office is developing comprehensive change plans to improve the internal operations of the

Office, a review of staffing needs, a performance management process, an improved process for transfers and promotion, and a more robust and useful process for ongoing training and professional development of our attorneys.

ALIGNING HIRING WITH KEY PRIORITIES:

The Office has hired its first-ever Chief Diversity Officer, as well as a Chief Ethics Officer. These key roles, which are new positions that were identified as priorities in State's Attorney Foxx's transition report, will be instrumental in implementing the professional and accountable culture that the State's Attorney is committed to creating throughout the Office.

BUILDING TRUST, TRANSPARENCY, AND LEGITIMACY:

To be effective in prosecuting crime and seeking justice, the Office of the Cook County State's Attorney must be viewed as credible and legitimate by stakeholders across the system – judges, opposing counsel, other county officials, defendants, and members of the public. The Office must be prepared to provide clear and consistent explanations to stakeholders and the public about how the Office conducts investigations and prosecutions, particularly on matters of historical mistrust, including police misconduct and wrongful convictions.

State's Attorney Foxx has already demonstrated her commitment to building trust and the legitimacy of the office, acting decisively, fairly, and promptly on matters critical to public trust.

Prompt and clear charging decisions in officer-involved shooting cases: The issue of police-involved shootings unfortunately remains at the forefront of the public discourse, with several officer-involved shootings occurring in the first weeks of 2017. The Office has worked diligently with investigators, including the Independent Police Review Authority, the Illinois State Police, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, to evaluate whether there was a sufficient basis to bring criminal charges. In two cases, this has resulted in first-degree

murder charges being filed within days, not months, of the incidents occurring.

Release of the Marquette Park 4: After thorough review of new evidence by the Office's Conviction Integrity Unit and the First Assistant State's Attorney, the SAO dropped charges against four men who had been convicted of a 1995 robbery and homicide, leading to their release from prison in February.

SMART STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE PUBLIC SAFETY:

State's Attorney Foxx is committed to using prosecutorial resources strategically and appropriately, **focusing resources on those matters that pose the greatest threat to public safety, while supporting reforms that avoid needlessly bringing people into the justice system.** In the first 100 days in office, State's Attorney Foxx has taken important steps towards this goal, laying the groundwork for being a just, ethical, and transparent prosecutor's office:

New Retail Theft Policy: The office has announced a policy that it will not seek felony retail theft charges in cases involving less than \$1000 in stolen goods absent extenuating circumstances.

Agreed I-Bonds to Address Need for Bond Reform: Far too many people in Cook County are detained before trial in Cook County Jail simply because they are too poor to pay even low amounts of cash bond, a system that comes at tremendous human cost and at great expense to county taxpayers. Recognizing this, the SAO has begun reviewing cases of people currently in jail who have bond amounts of \$1000 or less, and has begun entering agreed motions with the public defender to

seek to have non-violent offenders in this category released on I-Bonds (which allow them to be released on their own recognizance, with conditions as needed to secure their appearance in court.)

Gun Crime Strategies Pilot: to address the critical challenge of gun violence, the SAO has created a new task force focused on working closely with state and federal law enforcement to develop strategic intelligence, identify individuals driving violence in some of Chicago's most violent police districts, and vertically prosecute cases coming out of that effort with creative strategies and a dedicated team of prosecutors that will follow a case from charging through to trial.

A NEW DAY FOR COMMUNICATION AND PARTNERSHIP:

In her transition report, State's Attorney Foxx began a process of engagement with stakeholders and the public around the work of the office. This report represents a next step in that process. Already in the first 100 days, the Office has begun building the infrastructure for regular two-way engagement with the public, and for building strong partnerships with community groups, advocacy organizations, and justice system stakeholders. Some early examples include:

New website and social media channels. The SAO's Office of External Affairs has built a comprehensive set of tools to communicate with the public about the work of the office including a new website, and, for the first time, a digital program.

New Website: cookcountystatesattorney.org

Facebook and Twitter: [@SAKimFoxy](https://www.facebook.com/SAKimFoxy), [@CookCountySAO](https://twitter.com/CookCountySAO)

Public engagement Forums: In addition to her work traveling around to the SAO's various offices around the County, State's Attorney Foxx has begun traveling to communities around the County to hear from residents about what's important to them, answer questions about the work of the Office, and address their concerns.

Face to face engagement with stakeholder groups: State's Attorney Foxx has made it a priority to build relationships with stakeholders with deep expertise in important issues, meeting personally with advocates on issues related to domestic violence, campus sexual assault, bond reform, wrongful convictions, juveniles and emerging adults, the experience of girls and women in the justice system, substance abuse, mental health, restorative justice, and the experiences and needs of victims of crime.

Commitment to supporting immigrant communities: In a time of heightened fear and anxiety in our immigrant communities, the SAO is committed to building relationships and reiterating its commitment to serving all of the County's residents, including both documented and undocumented immigrants. The SAO has created a new immigration scam hotline, as well as a streamlined complaint form for reporting immigration scams, and is committed to proactively addressing those seeking to take advantage of vulnerable immigrant communities. The SAO has also affirmed its position that it does not and will not enforce immigration laws, and is committed to serving all victims of crime regardless of immigration status, including through procedures for certifying U- and T-Visas for qualifying immigrant victims of crime.

As we mark the first 100 days in office, State's Attorney Foxx has set the office on a course towards the fair administration of justice in its many forms. We look forward to the important work ahead and are, as always, honored to serve the residents of Cook County.

