

HOW TO READ THE OPEN DATA

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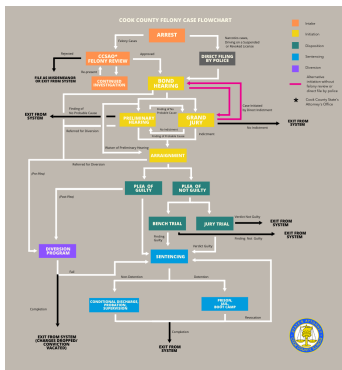
(https://www.cookcountystatesattorney.org/sites/default/files/files/documents/column_by_dataset_glossary_final_1.pdf)

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[Go to Open Data Portal](https://datacatalog.cookcountyil.gov/browse?tags=state%27s+attorney+case-level&sortBy=most_accessed) (https://datacatalog.cookcountyil.gov/browse?tags=state%27s+attorney+case-level&sortBy=most_accessed).

The Cook County State's Attorney's Office (CCSAO) publishes five case-level data sets with information on approximately 400,000 defendants and 1,000,000 charges. Each data set represents one step in the lifecycle of a felony case, including intake, initiation, and disposition (of which sentencing and diversion are more detailed outcomes). The data include only adult, criminal felony cases. Juvenile cases are not included.

Each table uses a different unit of measurement and the variables (columns) change across data sets. Please see the individual data set descriptions below for details. **Case_ID** and **Case_Participant_ID** are used as identifiers across all four data sets.

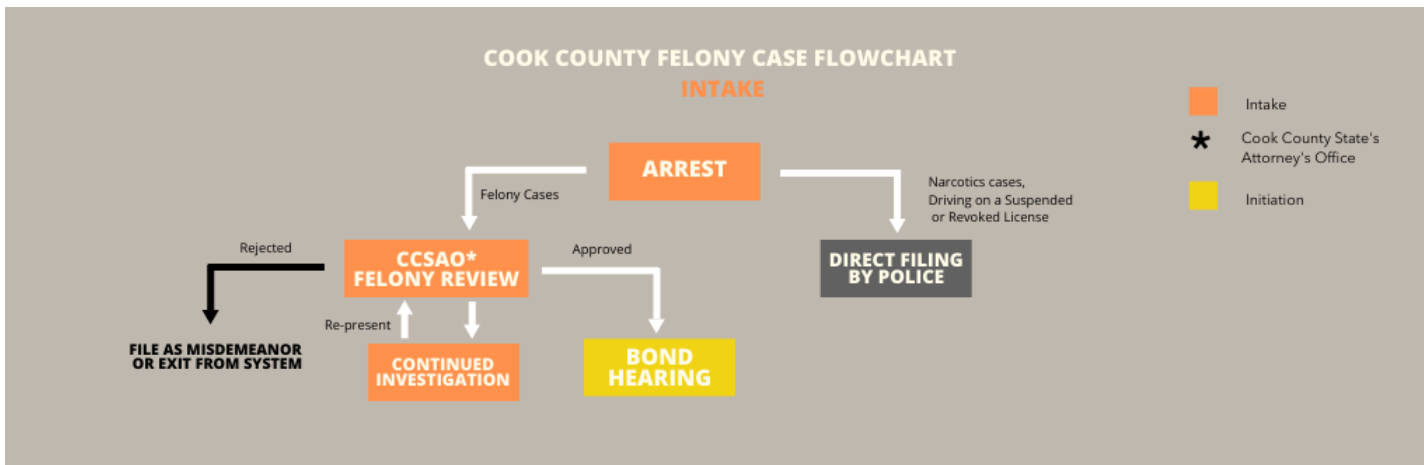


(https://www.cookcountystatesattorney.org/sites/default/files/files/documents/cook_county_felony_cases_flow_chart_final_0.pdf)

[Download Cook County Felony Case Flowchart](#)

(https://www.cookcountystatesattorney.org/sites/default/files/files/documents/cook_county_felony_cases_flow_chart_final_0.pdf)

[Intake](#)



(https://www.cookcountystatesattorney.org/sites/default/files/files/documents/cook_county_felony_cases_flow_chart_final.pdf)

The Intake data set illustrates the CCSAO's first contact with a felony case, which often occurs through the Felony Review process. When an arrest is made, and if the law enforcement agency decides to charge the arrestee with a felony, the CCSAO's Felony Review Unit (FRU) must be contacted for an Assistant State's Attorney (ASA) to review the evidence and decide whether charges can be filed. Exceptions to the Felony Review process include narcotics cases and driving with a revoked/suspended license, which can be directly filed by law enforcement. In some instances, a case may also be directly indicted by a grand jury instead of going through the FRU process.

Data Structure

The Intake data set only includes information on cases received by the CCSAO. Each row represents a potential defendant in a case (thus, a given case can be referenced by multiple rows if it has more than one defendant).

Please use this glossary of terms to better understand the data

(https://www.cookcountystatesattorney.org/sites/default/files/files/documents/column_by_dataset_glossary_final_1.pdf).

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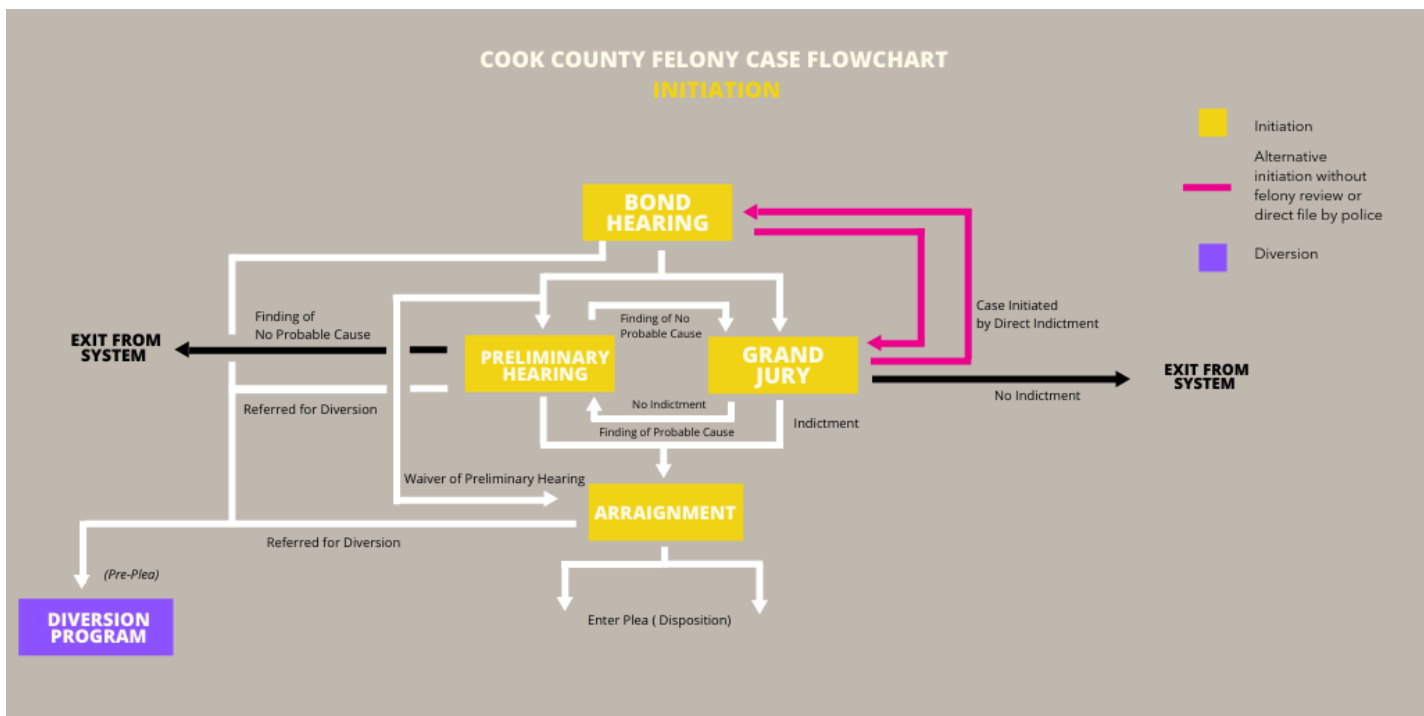
What's in the Data

Felony Review Results

How to read the data

- **Received_Date** indicates when the CCSAO first received the case. Note that *receiving* a case is not equal to *filing* charges.
- **Felony_Review_Result** captures the most recent result of the FRU process. For cases directly filed by law enforcement or indicted by grand jury, **Felony_Review_Result** will remain as "Null" because the cases were not brought to FRU.
 - Once law enforcement calls in a case, most common results from FRU are Approved, Rejected, and Continued Investigation (CI). Following an approval from FRU, a formal charge will be filed; at this point, the case will now appear, along with relevant information, in the Initiation data set. For cases rejected by FRU – unless police decided to file the case directly as a misdemeanor or re-present the case for a second review – no charges will be filed. A CI request indicates that more information is required to make a determination and that police have been instructed by the CCSAO to continue the investigation to prepare for an additional felony review and (eventually) subsequent approval or rejection.
- **Felony_Review_Date** captures the day of the felony review result. The data set does not reflect how a case was filed if it occurred outside of FRU (i.e. grand jury indictment or directly by law enforcement).

Initiation



(https://www.cookcountystatesattorney.org/sites/default/files/files/documents/cook_county_felony_cases_flow_chart_final.pdf)

An initiation is how an arrest becomes a “case” in the court system. In most instances, after an arrest, a defendant is taken to bond court where a judge determines whether the defendant should be released pre-trial and, if so, what conditions should be imposed on that release. In the following days or weeks, criminal court proceedings are formally initiated through either a grand jury indictment or through a finding of probable cause by a judge in a preliminary hearing. A case can also be initiated directly by grand jury without an arrest, this is called direct indictment.

Data Structure

The Initiation data set includes all charges that have been filed against a defendant. Again, multiple defendants may be associated with one case, and one defendant may be charged with multiple offenses. Therefore, each row represents one of the charges filed against one defendant in one case.

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What's in the data

Bond & Changes in Bond

Preliminary Hearing & Grand Jury Indictment

Finding No Probable Cause

Charges Initially filed

How to read the data

Charges Initially Filed

- **Charge_Offense_Title** indicates the offense the defendant is charged with at the start of a case. As a case evolves, the charges against a defendant may change (e.g., a charge can be dropped, or a specific offense may change).
- **Charge_ID** is a unique identifier for each charge against the defendant; it can be linked with the Dispositions dataset to find the ultimate charge(s) brought against a defendant.

Bond

Constitutionally, defendants are presumed innocent pre-trial. The purposes of bond are to protect public safety and ensure a defendant's return to court. During bond court proceedings, ASAs present information and, when appropriate, make recommendations so that defendants who present a danger to public safety are detained, while those who are not a threat are subject to the least restrictive conditions of pre-trial release to ensure their return to court. ASAs may make recommendations, but the court ultimately sets the bond type and amount. Four types of bond orders, including no bond, can be set by a judge while an individual awaits trial.

- Bond data included in the Initiation dataset comprises initial and current status of bond type, bail amount, the date issued, and whether an electronic monitoring (EM) device was ordered.
- **Bond_Type_Initial**, **Bond_Type_Current**, **Bond_Amount_Initial**, **Bond_Amount_Current** all reflect the decision by bond court. The bond data does *not* include the CCSAO's bond recommendation, the amount posted, or if the defendant bonded out.
- Bond status may change through the course of a case. The CCSAO tracks changes to bond status, specifically initial and most recently recorded bond status.

Example of a change in bond status:

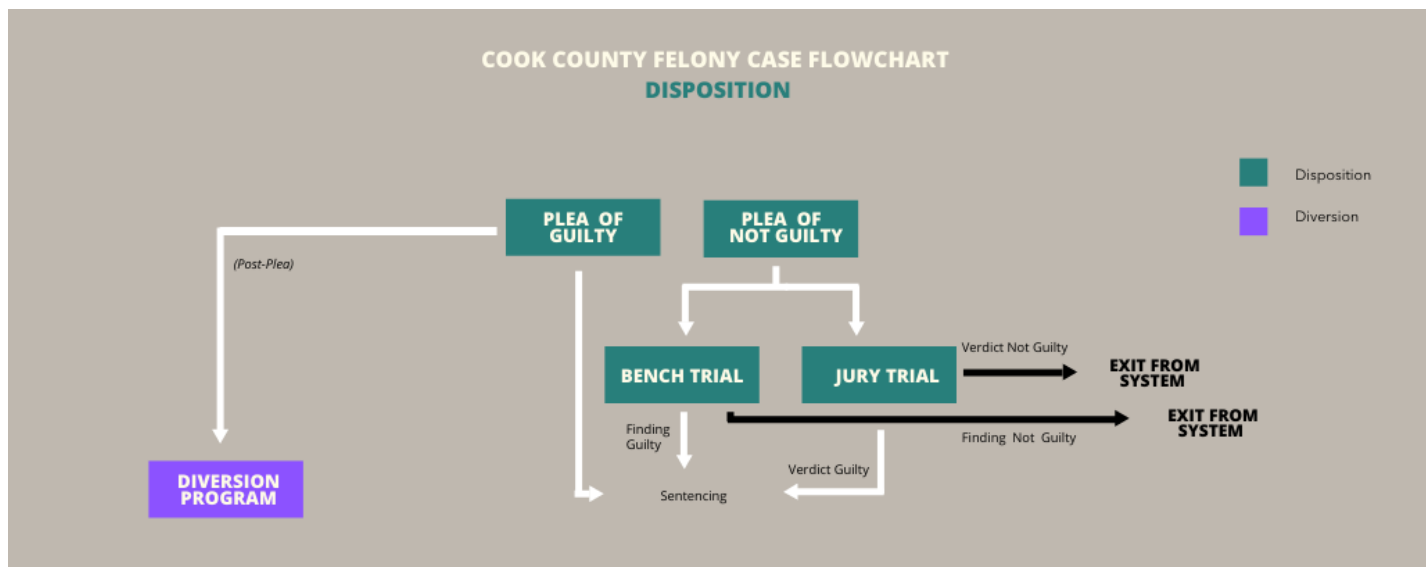
Phase 1- the court set a \$1,000 cash bond and no electronic monitor for defendant. Defendant doesn't like this result and decides to appeal.

Phase 2 - the court remade the decision and set a \$500 cash bond but orders defendant to wear electronic monitor. The court's decision has changed, but the CCSAO is not made aware of whether defendant has paid and bonded out.

Types of bond available in [Data Glossary](#).

(https://www.cookcountystatesattorney.org/sites/default/files/files/documents/column_by_dataset_glossary_final_1.pdf)

Dispositions



(https://www.cookcountystatesattorney.org/sites/default/files/files/documents/cook_county_felony_cases_flow_chart_final.pdf)

Data Structure

The Dispositions data set reflects the culmination of the fact-finding process that leads to the resolution of a case and its prosecutorial result. Each row in the Dispositions data set is a charge that has been disposed, meaning the case has been closed or completed. As discussed in the Initiation data set description, one defendant may face multiple charges in a case, and every charge ends up with a unique disposition (or result).

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What's in the Data

Disposition

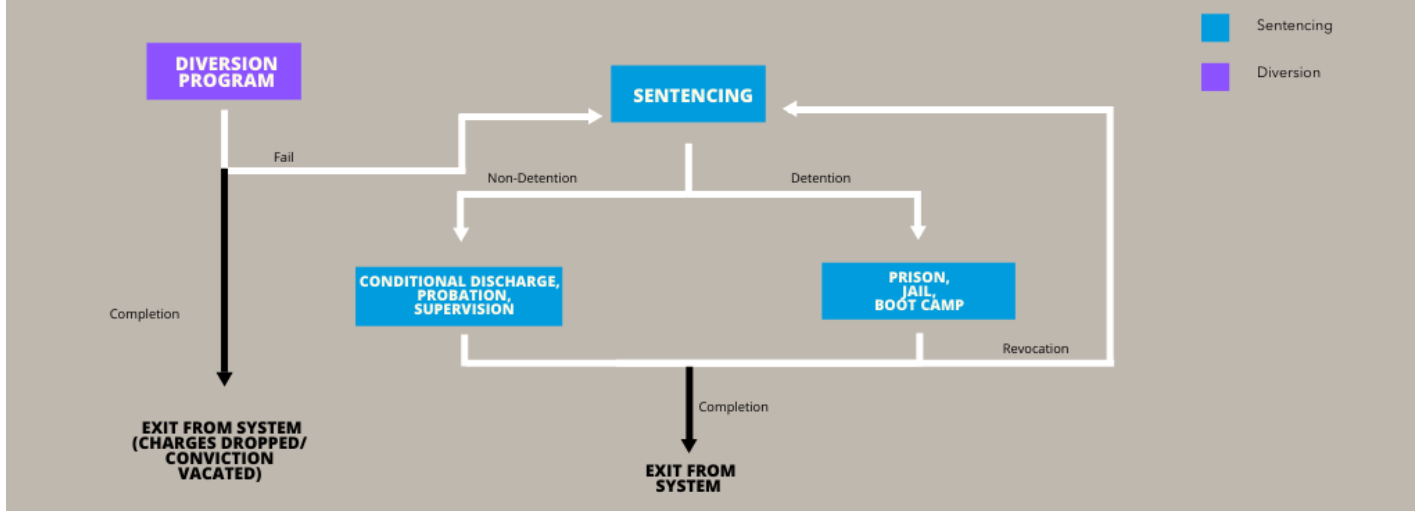
Charges filed at disposition

How to Read the Data

- **Disposition_Charged_Offense_Title** indicates the ultimate charge brought against a defendant
 - A charge against a defendant may change as a case evolves due to pleas or other circumstances. Therefore, **Disposition_Charged_Offense_Title** is the charge *at the time the case is resolved* and may be different from the original **Charge_Offense_Title** entered at the initiation stage.
- **Charge_Disposition** indicates the result of that charge (e.g., a defendant with **Disposition_Charged_Offense_Title** = "Criminal Sexual Assault" and **Charge_Disposition** = "Verdict Guilty" means that the defendant was found guilty for criminal sexual assault in a jury trial).

Sentencing

COOK COUNTY FELONY CASE FLOWCHART SENTENCING AND DIVERSION



(https://www.cookcountystatesattorney.org/sites/default/files/files/documents/cook_county_felony_cases_flow_chart_final.pdf).

Following a guilty plea or guilty verdict in a trial, a judge holds a sentencing hearing which determines the conditions and length of punishment. The Sentencing data set includes information on sentence type (see **Commitment_Type** and **Sentence_Type**) and sentence length (see **Commitment_Term** and **Commitment_Unit**). The most common sentences for felony cases are prison, probation, jail, conditional discharge, supervision, or Cook County Boot Camp (<http://www.digibridge.net/bootcamp/facts.htm>).

Data Structure

Each row in the Sentencing data set is a charge that has been sentenced. One defendant may be sentenced multiple times as they appeal the original sentencing decision or as other resentencing criteria are applied to a case. In this dataset, the latest sentence associated with a defendant is noted as **Current_Sentence**.

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Key Information

Sentencing

How to read the data

A **Current_Sentence** noted as "0" indicates a non-current sentence. For example, a defendant sentenced *initially* with probation but who violated that probation will be *resentenced* making the new sentence the **Current_Sentence** and reflected with a "1".

Person	Sentence	Current_Sentence	Sentence_Time
A	Probation	0	1-1-2019
A	IDOC	1	2-1-2019

- Cases listed as dismissed/*Nolle* that contain sentence information are likely to have defendants who completed a diversion program that led to a case dismissal.

Diversion

Diversion can occur at many points throughout the criminal justice process. As the prosecuting body for Cook County, diversion for the CCSAO refers to connecting defendants to services and programs (e.g., assistance with substance abuse, employment, mental health treatment, etc.), rather than sentencing them to time in custody. ASAs screen cases and refer eligible defendants to diversion programs.

There are pre-plea and post-plea court-based diversion programs available in Cook County; five are pre-plea diversion programs overseen by the CCSAO, and three are post-plea programs overseen by the Office of the Chief Judge. [Learn more about Cook County diversion programs.](#)
(<https://www.cookcountystatesattorney.org/resources/diversion-programs>).

Data Structure

The Diversion dataset contains information on defendants who receive a referral to a diversion program, including the type of program and date of referral; each row is a program to which a defendant has been referred.

Please use this glossary of terms to better understand the data

(https://www.cookcountystatesattorney.org/sites/default/files/files/documents/column_by_dataset_glossary_final_1.pdf).
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What’s in the Data

- Diversion programs
- Diversion program results

How to Read the Data

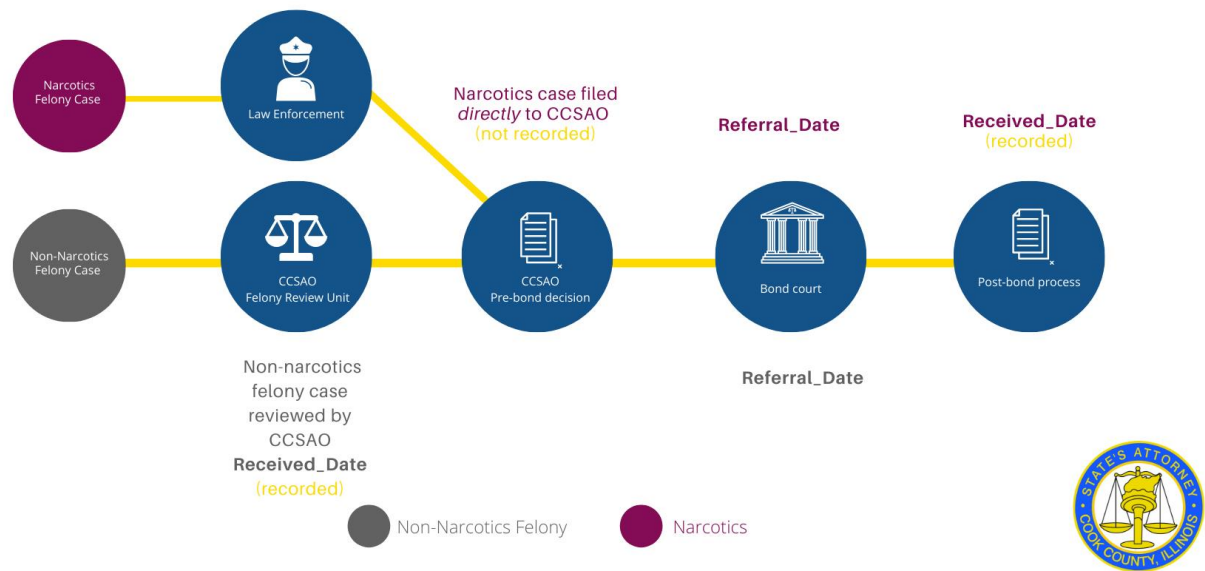
- Diversion program outcomes are recorded in two tables:
 - **Diversion Table:** Column **Diversion_Result** shows whether the defendant completed, failed, or is in progress of their program.
 - **Disposition Table:** “Nolle Prosecution” in the **Charge_Disposition** column indicates cases that a prosecutor didn’t pursue charges. The **Disposition_Reason** column indicates cases that were dropped due to various reasons. Diversion programs are listed in **Disposition_Reason** when a prosecutor has filed “Nolle Prosecution” in the disposition, upon an individual’s successful competition of a diversion program.

Even though the two columns are describing the same thing – the outcome of the diversion program – the numbers do not always add up due to multiple points of entry of the data. As a way to limit the modification of data, both columns are included in these datasets. When a referral date is not available, the earliest known date of participation in a diversion program is used.

Received_Date is often set to the day when the office first began data entry of this case. Most non-narcotics cases are first received by the CCSAO and entered in real-time during the Felony Review process. However, since narcotics cases are initiated directly by law enforcement and do not undergo the Felony Review process, case information for narcotics charges are not entered into the database until *after* bond court and diversion program referral.

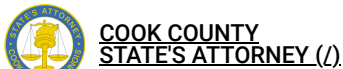
For narcotics cases where a defendant is referred to a diversion program however, the **Received_Date** is recorded as occurring after a program **Referral_Date** (i.e., the date CCSAO refers a defendant to a diversion program). This occurs in 4,000 of 20,000 diversion cases in our data. Among these 4,000, 90% only have a time difference of only a few weeks.

FELONY DIVERSION REFERRAL TIMELINE



If you are interested in working with the SAO on quantitative research that depends on more, or different, data than the case-level datasets provide, please [Submit a Data Request using this form](https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/4648212/SAO-Data-Request-Form) (https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/4648212/SAO-Data-Request-Form), so we can work to support you.

Questions about the case-level datasets, public analysis, data resources, and anything else can be directed to SAOData@cookcountyil.gov (https://mail.google.com/mail/?view=cm&fs=1&tf=1&to=SAOData@cookcountyil.gov).



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About the Cook County State's Attorney's Office

With more than 700 attorneys and more than 1,100 employees, the Cook County State's Attorney's Office is the second largest prosecutor's