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Law judge to manage Oak Park's administrative adjudication program

An administrative law judge with extensive experience as an arbitrator and attorney has been selected to manage the Village of Oak Park's [Office of Administrative Adjudication](#).

Robert H. Anderson of Chicago was chosen from more than 30 applicants to head the Village's in-house program that hears civil cases related to a wide range of local ordinance violations, including parking tickets and building and health code citations.

Anderson, an administrative law judge with Oak Park, has served as an arbitrator for the Better Business Bureau in Chicago and a hearing officer for the Chicago Public Schools. He also was an arbitrator with Cook County. He succeeds Wayne Moran who is leaving Oak Park this month to set up a Cook County program for adjudicating misdemeanors and code violations.

"The Village was fortunate to have a strong field of candidates from which to choose for this important position," said Village Manager Tom Barwin. "Not only does Robert have experience in a wide range of related legal proceedings, he has actual experience with the Oak Park adjudication program. He will be able to step in and manage the operation from day one."

Anderson, whose first day on the job will be Mon., Feb. 1, said the opportunity to manage the Oak Park adjudication operation is both an opportunity and a challenge.

"Oak Park helped write the book on how to set up and manage a legal proceeding that helps expedite resolutions, reduce litigation expenses and provide a local, more convenient venue to contest a parking ticket or other citations," he said. "I am looking forward to the opportunity to serve Oak Park and its citizens, and to work with the fine staff and judges of the Adjudication Office."

Anderson has a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from Roosevelt University and a Juris Doctor degree from the DePaul University College of Law.

When Oak Park launched its adjudication program in 2004, it was among only a handful of communities to offer an opportunity to contest a citation without entering the formal county court legal system. Since then, communities throughout Illinois have set up similar programs.

An adjudication hearing is a civil, not a criminal proceeding. Cases are punishable by fines and a variety of other penalties, excluding jail time. Under the adjudication hearing system, an administrative law judge certified by the state hears cases. Anyone not satisfied with the law judge's ruling still has the option of having the case heard in the circuit court.

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Adjudication manager named
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Last year, Oak Park's adjudication program brought in about \$2.7 million, some \$1.2 million more than in years when cases were heard exclusively in the Cook County Circuit Court. Officials estimate that more than 50,000 cases have been heard in Village Hall since the program began – all handled by the adjudication director and a staff of two administrative clerks, two bailiffs and three administrative law judges who rotate through the program.

In addition, to handling cases more efficiently and closer to home, hearing cases in Oak Park rather than in the Cook County Circuit Court means all revenues from enforcement actions are kept in Village coffers.

For more information on Oak Park's adjudication program, including a list of the types of violations heard, visit www.oak-park.us/adjudication.

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