



## Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

# News

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### **Raleigh County Judicial Center to open Tuesday**

For immediate release Tuesday, March 27, 2012

BECKLEY, W.Va. – Raleigh County judicial officers, Supreme Court justices, and state and county elected officials will celebrate the opening of the Raleigh County Judicial Center with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at noon on Tuesday, April 3, at the Judicial Center, 222 Main Street, Beckley.

The ceremony will be followed by tours and a demonstration of new courtroom technology. There also will be a reception paid for by Raleigh County Commissioners Pat Reed, John Aliff, and David Toliver, who “have all three been very, very supportive of our needs in their planning of this project,” said Tenth Judicial Circuit Judge John A. Hutchison.

The 69,500-square-foot building will house all the county judicial officers under one roof. They currently are in two buildings. The Probation Office will continue to be in a separate building.

The county’s three circuit judges will have separate courtrooms and chambers on the third floor. Three family court judges will have separate courtrooms and chambers on the second floor. The Circuit Clerk’s Office also will be on the second floor. The first floor will have two courtrooms for the county’s five magistrates, the Magistrate Clerk’s Office, and a holding facility. The building also will have parking for more than thirty employees.

The county commission will maintain a ceremonial courtroom and judicial chamber in the historic Raleigh County Courthouse, built in 1937 around a structure built in 1893. That courtroom will be used by visiting judges and the Mass Litigation Panel. Another courtroom on the second floor also will be maintained for mental hygiene hearings or other hearings, Judge Hutchison said.

Construction on the new judicial center, which began in 2008, cost the county \$17.5 million. The Supreme Court contributed another \$1.1 million for technology, equipment, and furniture, including 180,000 feet of wiring.

“We’re happy to help counties that make such an enormous commitment to modernize their court facilities,” said Supreme Court Administrative Director Steve Canterbury. “This extraordinary project is a great example of a county commission thinking strategically and acting decisively. The annex completes the judicial square in the heart of town.”

“The Supreme Court has worked diligently and very well with the county commission and the architects in making sure the new space was appropriate and reasonable for new technology,” Judge Hutchison said.

“Going from where we are to where we are going will be like going from the eighteenth century to the twenty-first century in terms of technology. It will make it so much easier for trials, hearings, remote witnesses, videoconferencing, and providing technology so jurors will be able to view evidence, documents, and see and hear a video record,” the judge said.

Circuit judges are scheduled to move in to the new facility during the week of April 9. Family court judges will move the following week and magistrates the week after that. The building should be completely occupied and all offices fully functional by May 1, Judge Hutchison said.

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