

# E-SJI NEWS

## SJI Receives FY 2014 1st Quarter Grant Applications

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For the first quarter, SJI received 15 grant applications totaling \$874,828. This included 5 Project Grant, 7 Technical Assistance (TA), and 3 Curriculum Adaptation and Training (CAT) grant applications. The SJI Board of Directors will meet on December 9, 2013 to make decisions on these applications.

Grant deadlines for the remainder of FY 2014 are as follows: 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter – February 1, 2014; 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter – May 1, 2014; and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter – August 1, 2014.



## Status of FY 2014 Appropriations



On October 16, 2013, the House and Senate passed the [Continuing Appropriations Act, 2014](#) (P.L. 113-36), which was signed by the President on October 17<sup>th</sup>. The CR funds the federal government (including SJI) at FY 2013 spending levels until

January 15, 2014. SJI will continue to provide updates as the appropriations process continues to move forward.

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## Triage Protocols for Litigant Portals

Through an SJI Strategic Initiatives Grant, the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and Self-Represented Litigation Network (SRLN) have developed case triage protocols for cases involving self-represented litigants, and developed a report offering best practices for the collection of litigant information. This innovative project will provide a basis for system redesign towards quickly and effectively serving litigants as they access the state courts (SJI -12-P-085).

The project team included representatives from the state courts, the civil legal aid community, and the private bar. These partnerships are critical, since successful triage requires coordination between the courts, litigants, and service providers. The project team met its goal of developing triaging processes to better serve litigants.

While the report begins with a brief historical framework for understanding triage in the legal context, particularly as it applies to the self-represented litigant, most of the focus in each legal issue section is on the application of stakeholder protocols, inclusive of: a) litigant choice protocol; b) court protocol; and, c) provider's protocol. The following legal issue sections (pp. 6 – 20) are included:

- Eviction Protocols;
- Family Law Protocols;
- Foreclosure Cases; and,
- Credit Card Cases



Each section addresses common issues and barriers to triage, as well as the most frequently applied policies and available resources. Specific information tailored to each section addresses the perspective of the individual stakeholder and seeks to identify elements of the triage critical to all parties.

Applicable to multiple [SJI Priority Investment Areas](#), this report offers stakeholders more detailed information and recommendations in the areas of self-represented litigation, state court reengineering, and the application of the protocols to improve access to limited English proficient (LEP) populations. While many jurisdictions already engage in some form of triage, the focus of this report is to:

- 1) Provide guidance on full integration of the court, litigant, and service providers as stakeholders;
- 2) Advance mechanisms for standardization of triage protocols; and,

- 3) Promote access to justice through the litigant portal, inclusive of self-help centers and websites

The project team is currently exploring the development of an implementation guide that will enable key stakeholders to implement these protocols through online portals. Topics for the planned implementation guide may include: resources required, sequential implementation tasks, governance, integration and information requirements, and how to best make litigants aware of the portal so they may access services.

The report, titled, [Triage Protocols for Litigant Portals: A Coordinated Strategy Between Courts and Service Providers](#) is available through the NCSC Library's eCollection and via their online [Self-Representation Resource Guide](#).

## SJI Releases FY 2014 Grant Guideline

SJI recently released the new [Grant Guideline](#) for FY 2014. The Grant Guideline appears as part of the National Archives and Records Administration's Federal Register, and sets forth the administrative, programmatic, and financial requirements for applying and administering SJI grants.

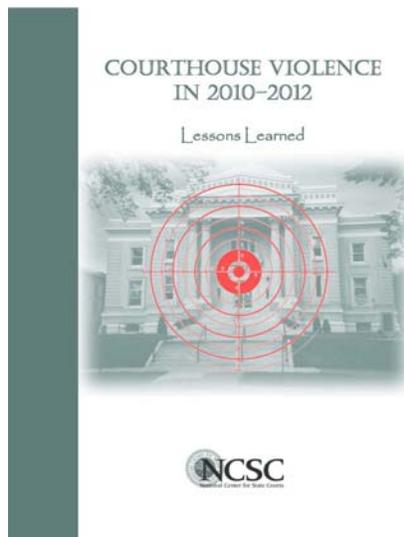


# Review of Courthouse Violence with Focus on Preparedness and Security

Developed with support from SJI, the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) recently released a report titled, [Courthouse Violence in 2010-2012, Lessons Learned](#) (SJI-13-T-089).

Through review of six tragic incidents of violence in court facilities or on premises occurring between December 2011 and February 2013, the report provides judges, court administrators, and security officers with a tool that catalyzes preparedness and planning.

The report was written with the assistance of several state court judges and administrators who shared their experiences and voiced lessons they had learned first-hand from recent security incidents. These jurisdictions were represented by rural, urban, and most frequently, suburban communities located in South Carolina, Minnesota, Washington, Oklahoma, Delaware, and Arkansas.



The report reveals four key lessons learned, they include:

- 1) Everything during a violent courthouse incident happens unbelievably fast.
- 2) It may not be possible to prevent a violent incident, but there may be “indicators” to look for in advance of the incident.
- 3) There are obvious needs for certain security measures, and courts need to be proactive in making sure those measures are in place.
- 4) There must be a focus on the impact of these incidents on court staff and their families.

Recommendations addressing each of these lessons learned, with input from NCSC Court security experts are included in the report. They provide valuable considerations for state courts to consider as they evaluate their emergency plans.

The report is available through the [NCSC Library eCollection](#).

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