

SJI Newsletter

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New Project Addresses Children Impacted by the Opioid Epidemic

The opioid epidemic has had a devastating impact on families, especially on the children of parents who abuse substances. SJI recently awarded the [National Center for State Courts \(NCSC\)](#) a grant to determine how state courts can best help the children who end up in the justice system because of family substance abuse.

The grant will support the efforts of the [National Judicial Opioid Task Force's \(NJOTF\) workgroup on Children and Families](#), which is working to identify and pilot innovative state court practices to help children impacted by the opioid crisis.

With the grant, pilot courts will be selected to focus on the following areas:

- Identify early intervention court strategies to help parents with substance abuse issues who are at risk of losing custody of their children.
- Promote evidence-based prevention, identification, and treatment for children and their parents related to Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome and Substance-Exposed Infants.
- Reduce trauma and promote safe and timely placement of children, including the use of trauma assessment instruments, for children, especially those under five years of age.

More information will be available soon on the selection process for pilot sites.

The [National Judicial Opioid Task Force \(NJOTF\)](#) is a project of the [Conference of Chief Justices](#) and [Conference of State Court Administrators](#). The NJOTF, which is funded by SJI, consists of three workgroups: Children and Families; Civil and Criminal Justice; and Collaboration and Education.



PDMPs and the Courts Webinar: Part 2

The [National Judicial Opioid Task Force \(NJOTF\)](#), in collaboration with the [Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Training and Technical Assistance Center](#), will hold the second of three webinars in November. The series intends to help participants gain greater knowledge about how state court systems can, and already are, working with prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs) to address the opioid crisis.

Part 2 of this series will address access to, and use of, information contained in PDMPs and feature guest presenters from state courts in Kentucky that are successfully using PDMP data in the justice system process.

To join this webinar on November 15th at 3:00 PM Eastern Time, click on [PDMPs and the Courts: Part 2](#) or copy and paste this link (https://iir.adobeconnect.com/ncsc_20181115/) into your browser bar.

Advance registration is not required. Adobe Connect will be used for the presentation and may need to be downloaded before the webinar begins.

If you missed Part 1 in this webinar series, you can access it via the NJOTF website: <https://pdmpassist.wistia.com/medias/c8m8cs9ruw>.

Courts and their stakeholders are encouraged to share this content and invitations to future webinars.



HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND THE COURTS



CCI Releases Two New Resources on Human Trafficking

As part of the [Human Trafficking and the State Courts Initiative](#), the [Center for Court Innovation \(CCI\)](#) has developed a video and user guide focusing on court-led responses to human trafficking.

The [video](#) and the accompanying [viewers' guide](#), titled, *From Defendant to Survivor: How Courts are Responding to Human Trafficking*, profile some of the innovative ways courts are responding to the needs of human trafficking victims. While each court is unique, they share a set of common principles including: responding to defendants' trauma, connecting them to services, fostering collaboration across the agencies that support victims, and taking a flexible approach to how success is defined in light of the complex and unique challenges facing these victims.

Survivors of sex trafficking are usually treated as criminals who are arrested and prosecuted rather than victims. But some courts are changing their approach, recognizing that those arrested on prostitution charges are often victims of coercion, violence, and trauma.

CCI has also made the following related resources available on their site:

- [Youth Involvement in the Sex Trade](#);
- [Responding to Sex Trafficking in Your Jurisdiction: A Planning Toolkit](#);
- [Navigating Force and Choice: Experiences in the New York City Sex Trade and the Criminal Justice System's Response](#); and,
- [Houston's SAFE Court Offers Victims of Human Trafficking a New Path](#).



NCSC Helps Courts Prepare for Disaster

Last year's wildfires in California destroyed the houses of three Sonoma County Superior County judges, enveloped the Santa Rosa courthouse with smoke for weeks, and forced the deputies assigned to that courthouse to leave and help other first responders. The wildfires closed the courthouse for two weeks, leading to a caseload nightmare and initial confusion about how to notify the public about rescheduled court dates.

Stories like this and in other places that recently have had to deal with the aftermath of natural disasters made it clear to [National Center for State Courts \(NCSC\)](#) staffers that many courts need help to better prepare and better respond to emergencies that force courts to close. NCSC recently received a grant from SJI to help court officials in hurricane-vulnerable places such as Florida, Texas, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and in California (wildfires) and Hawaii (volcanoes).

The first step will be a lessons-learned summit early next year, where court officials from those six states and territories will share what has worked and what hasn't. Sometime after the summit, NCSC consultants will travel to the six states and territories to review their natural disaster and emergency management plans. The consultants will also make recommendations to update and improve the plans, known as continuity of operations plans, or COOPs.

The grant will also allow NCSC to update its COOP template, which is 10 years old. An updated COOP template will identify essential steps that court officials should take, and help them know how to connect with state and federal government agencies that can assist them before, during, and after natural disasters.

Finally, NCSC will use a portion of the grant to package the information and make it user friendly, creating an interactive COOP template, and interactive website that court officials can turn to for updated information.



SJI Releases FY 2019 Grant Guideline

SJI recently released the [Grant Guideline for FY 2019](#). 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 for and administering SJI grants.

Fiscal Year 2019 Deadlines for Project, Technical Assistance, and Curriculum Adaptation Grants are as follows:

- 1st Quarter November 1, 2018;
- 2nd Quarter February 1, 2019;
- 3rd Quarter May 1, 2019; and,
- 4th Quarter August 1, 2019.

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The State Justice Institute is a federally-funded, non-profit corporation established by federal law in 1984 to improve the quality of justice in the state courts.

Products and Resources

Since 2011, SJI has designated the library at the National Center for State Courts as the official repository of published work related to SJI-supported grant projects. You can search the ecollection online by using the term, State Justice Institute.

Share the News

SJI uses [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) to promote the work of its grantees and also shares information of interest to the entire state court community. If your organization's work complements ours, let us know and we will share.