

SJI NEWSLETTER

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New Online Curriculum for State Courts on Unaccompanied Immigrant Children

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A new [online curriculum](#) has been developed to help state courts understand how to process the increasing numbers of unaccompanied alien children (UACs) coming into the United States.

Over the last several years, the number of UACs from Central America has been steadily rising, and this trend is anticipated to lead to an increase in filings in state juvenile courts on behalf of UACs seeking court findings to support applications for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status. With SJI support, the Center for Public Policy Studies and the National Center for State Courts developed the Unaccompanied Immigrant Children in the State Courts online curriculum.

The online curriculum will increase understanding among state court judges, court administrators, and court stakeholders about: 1) federal immigration law, policy, and practice, and the impact on state courts of cases involving UACs; 2) how the work of the state courts in cases involving UACs intersects with the needs of the federal immigration system; 3) the different types of cases and matters where UACs might appear in state courts; and 4) the potential role of the state courts in providing factual findings in cases



involving UACs. The contents of the curriculum include an inventory of core elements that should be included in educational programs for state court practitioners when working with UACs, along with variations in the core elements that target the needs of state-court-level trial-court-level, and juvenile- and dependency-court-focused programs. Also available on the site are downloadable PDFs of the *Guide for State Courts in Cases Involving Unaccompanied Immigrant Children*, and the *Unaccompanied Immigrant Children and the State Courts* quick reference information card.

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Pandemic Benchbook Now Available

The Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA) Pandemic and Emergency Response Task Force has recently published a new tool for courts titled, [Preparing for a Pandemic: An Emergency Response Benchbook and Opera-](#)

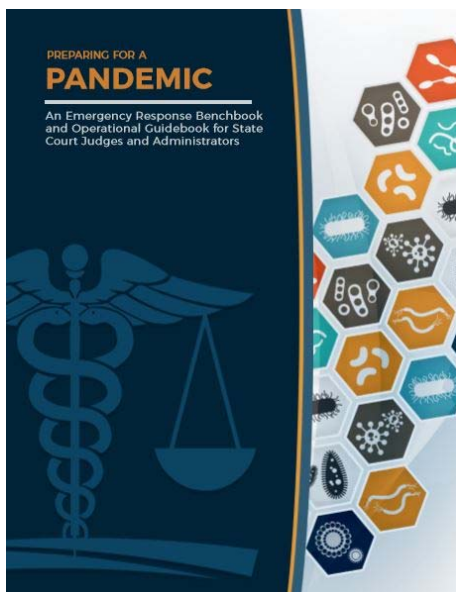
[tional Guidebook for State Court Judges and Administrators](#). This project was supported by SJI.

Facilitated with expertise provided by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), the Task Force highlights emergency preparedness as a necessary

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element of the court planning process. The objective is to prompt state and local court leaders without an existing pandemic benchbook to create one and keep it regularly updated, and their judicial officers and court staff trained. The benchbook briefly touches on recent natural disaster and public health crises where courts and their partners worked together to



ensure continuity of operations.

One of the features of the benchbook is its informed perspective that the Task Force assembled through both an extensive literature review and a visit to the University of Nebraska Medical Center and Nebraska Medicine's biocontainment unit. The Guide addresses a cadre of specific legal issues, authority, and notification that must occur. Content by chapter includes the following:

- Chapter 1 – Jurisdiction of Public Health Issues
- Chapter 2 - Executive Branch Authority in a Public Health Emergency
- Chapter 3 - Searches, Seizures, and Other Government Actions to Ensure Public Health
- Chapter 4 - Proceedings Regarding Limitations on Individual Liberties and the Rights of Petitioners
- Chapter 5 - Model Orders and Court Rules

After detailed appendices and references, which provide extensive content regarding the nature of a pandemic caused by biological hazards, examples of quarantine processes, and the order of agencies which should be notified and enlisted for assistance, Part II offers a template for a benchbook that addresses the legal questions that could arise during a pandemic. Some of the key issues addressed in the template include: Implications for the Courts; Powers of the Chief Justice or State Court of Last Resort; Appearance of Individuals Posing a Potential Threat to Public Health; Juror Management Considerations; Additional Judicial Personnel; Consolidation of Cases; Emergency Court Closure and Relocation of Court; Limiting Public Access to the Courts; Communication; and, Technology Preparedness

The Guide was dedicated in memory of former Arkansas Chief Justice Jim Hannah, who served as CCJ President when this grant was awarded and whose leadership formed the Pandemic Response Task Force.

Georgia AOC Offers Training for Court Managers

The Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) partnered with the Institute for Court Management (ICM), the education and training arm of the National Center for State Courts, to bring the Certified Court Manager (CCM) program to Georgia. Through a Curriculum Adaptation and Training Grant received from SJI, the AOC was able to re-launch a robust court management training effort that had largely been decentralized during the recession.

The CCM is the first of two certifications in ICM's [Court Management Program](#) (CMP). Initially, in-state court administrators and AOC staff became certified as faculty, allowing wider presentation of ICM courses in Georgia through a combination of Georgia's own freshly minted faculty, and occasional ICM faculty. Presently, the AOC has worked to disseminate more information about available ICM courses needed to complete the CMP's Certified Court Manager credential and offer multi-session, inclusive of virtual modalities, of the *Court Performance*

Standards - CourTools, Fundamental Issues of Caseflow Management, and Managing Court Financial Resources courses.

The [Georgia Council of Court Administrators](#) (GCCA) signed on as a partner for this training initiative in an effort to strengthen its existing Georgia Certified Court Manager Program. This program offers a 40-hour early career certificate, followed by an additional 60 hours to complete a 100-hour certificate. Up to 25 hours of this second certificate may be obtained through non-GCCA courses, such as those offered by ICM. GCCA President and ICM Fellow, T.J. BeMent, noted that this ICM curriculum will be part of a statewide effort to continue professional and ethical training of the Georgia's court managers.

For more information about how the AOC is coordinating and deploying court management training through this grant, contact [Stephanie Hines](#), AOC Human Resources Manager and EEO Officer.

President Nominates Two Chief Justices To Serve on SJI Board

President Obama recently nominated Chief Justice John Minton from Kentucky, and Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera from Maryland, to serve on the SJI Board of Directors. Both must be confirmed by the Senate.

John Minton has held the position of Chief Justice since 2008. He has served on the Kentucky Supreme Court since 2006. Previously, he served as a Judge on the Kentucky Court of Appeals from 2003 to 2006. From 1992 to 2003, he was a Circuit Judge in Kentucky's Eighth Judicial Circuit. From 1996 to 2003, he also served as Chief Administrative Judge for the 21-county Green River Region. He is currently a Member and President-Elect of the Conference of Chief Justices. He is also a Member of the Board of Directors of the National Center for State Courts. Chief Justice Minton received a B.A. from Western Kentucky University, and a J.D. from the University of Kentucky College of Law.

Mary Ellen Barbera has served as Chief Judge of the Maryland Court of Appeals since 2013 (Judge, 7th Appellate Judicial Circuit, Montgomery County, September 2, 2008 - present). She also serves

as Chair of the Maryland Judicial Conference. From 2002 to 2008 she served as a Judge, Court of Special Appeals (at Large). From 1985 to 1989 she was an Assistant Attorney General, and Deputy Chief, Criminal Appeals Division, from 1989 to 1998. She served for four years in the Office of Legal Counsel to the Governor of Maryland, from 1998 to 1999 as Deputy Legal Counsel, and from 1999 to 2002 as Chief Legal Counsel. She received her B.S. from Towson State College, and her J.D. from the University of Maryland School of Law.

Board Vice Chair Dan Becker, Justice David Brewer, and Judge Gayle Nachtigal were also recently re-appointed by the President to the SJI Board. For more information about current and previous Board members, please visit our [website](#).

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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.

