

## SJI Newsletter

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### New Resource Links Courts to Funding Opportunities

SJI recognizes that funding plays an important role in fostering innovation. However, many courts are unfamiliar with these funding opportunities, and how these resources can be leveraged. In response, SJI, in partnership with [Rulo Strategies](#), launched a [Funding Toolkit for State Courts and Justice System Partners](#).

The [online toolkit](#) launch was accompanied by a 90-minute [webinar](#) that provided an overview of the online toolkit, as well as details about: federal funding sources; current funding opportunities for courts; current funding opportunities for court partners; grant writing tips; and how to access virtual technical assistance.

The contents of the online toolkit are updated weekly with new resources, including:

- specific federal non-profit funding resources most relevant to courts;
- an overview of each funding opportunity along with detailed guides and sample templates for required application documents;
- virtual learning opportunities such as webinars and podcasts;

- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ); and
- virtual technical assistance related to current grant opportunities and/or general funding inquiries.

To request virtual technical assistance, or to submit a funding question, contact us at [fundingtoolkit@sjj.gov](mailto:fundingtoolkit@sjj.gov).

Join the Funding Toolkit [mailing list](#) to receive notifications about upcoming virtual learning opportunities, new resources and other updates to the toolkit.

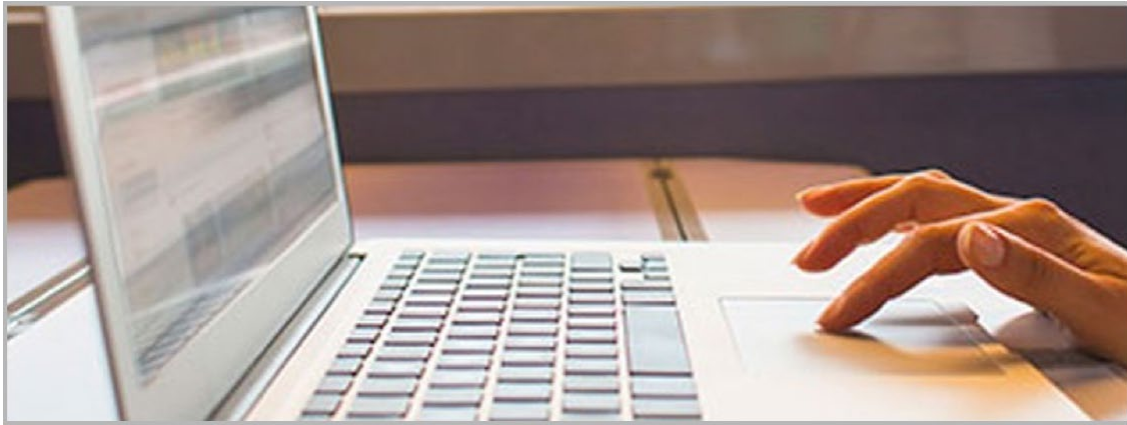


## Court Support Organizations Provide Resources on COVID-19

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has impacted operations significantly in state courts across the United States, and courts across the world. SJI has assisted a number of key partners in the immediate release of resources to judges, administrators, clerks, staff, and justice system partners.

The list below contains an overview of some of these resources:

1. [National Center for State Courts \(NCSC\)](#) has several resources to help courts through this public health emergency: [www.ncsc.org/pandemic](http://www.ncsc.org/pandemic)
2. The [National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges \(NCJFCJ\)](#) is continuing to provide information related to COVID-19: <https://www.ncjfcj.org/covid-19-resources-and-updates/>
3. The [National Judicial College](#) has been offering regular webcasts and more information via the NJC Podcast: <https://www.judges.org/>
4. [National Association of Drug Court Professionals \(NADCP\)](#) is hosting a centralized portal for drug treatment court teams to access a variety of information: <https://www.nadcp.org/covid-19-resources/>
5. The [National Association of Women Judges \(NAWJ\)](#) is keeping their site updated on the pandemic <https://www.naw.org/covid>



## NCSC Tiny Chats: Short Annotated Videos with Practical Advice

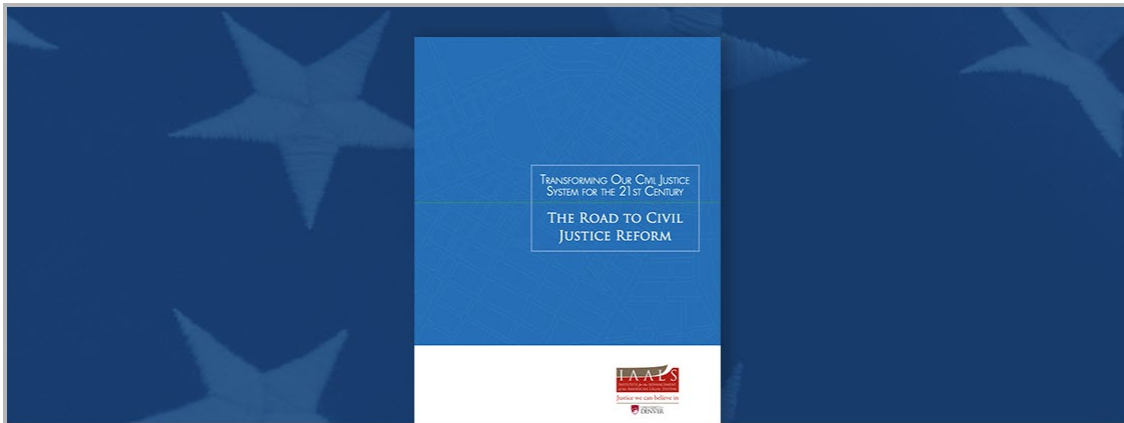
Learn about best practices, hear from experts from the [National Center for State Courts \(NCSC\)](#) and elsewhere, and have a chance to think through court operations in the time of COVID-19, with an access to justice lens.

Subscribe: [ncsc.org/tinychatsubscribe](https://ncsc.org/tinychatsubscribe)

See all Tiny Chats: [ncsc.org/tinychats](https://ncsc.org/tinychats)

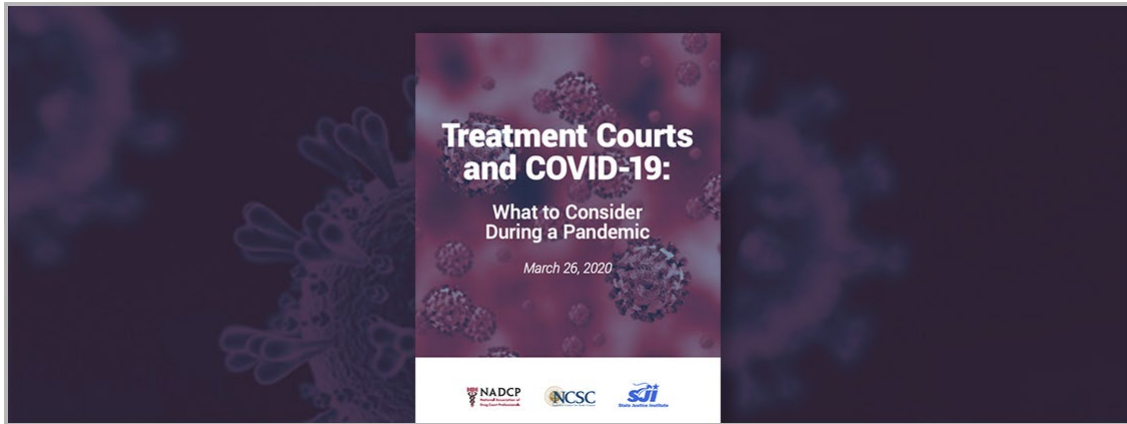
Schedule a 30 minute brainstorming session: [ncsc.org/drtinychat](https://ncsc.org/drtinychat)

In direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic, [Karen Lash](#), from [The Justice Government Project](#) at American University has developed a compendium of the federal block/formula/open-ended reimbursement funds (AKA federal pass through funds), which are available *now* to state and local courts to support civil self-help, technology innovation, and domestic violence. To support jurisdictions interested in exploring these kinds of funding opportunities, the NCSC has released a 15-minute [conversation](#).



## New Report Highlights States' Civil Justice Reform Efforts

[The Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System](#) (IAALS), and the [National Center for State Courts](#) (NCSC) finalized a three-year project with the release of their new report, [Transforming Our Civil Justice System for the 21st Century: The Road to Civil Justice Reform](#). The report highlights the experiences of four states—Idaho, Maine, Missouri, and Texas – as they worked to implement guidelines adopted by the [Conference of Chief Justices](#) (CCJ) and the [Conference of State Court Administrators](#) (COSCA) to ensure the just, prompt, and cost-effective resolution of civil cases in state courts. With support from SJI, IAALS and NCSC provided each state with the guidance and tools necessary to support successful implementation, and then circled back to interview those involved. Due to COVID-19, courts are currently operating under uniquely challenging circumstances and a tight timeframe—while reform takes time, the need for change has been accelerated. The experiences of the states in this report, and their use of [Transforming Our Civil Justice System for the 21st Century: A Roadmap for Implementation](#) – a set of seven clear steps for courts to follow when implementing change – can provide invaluable guidance to other courts. The *Roadmap* steps provide a key framework for reform that states can follow: leadership; assessment and definition of issues; engagement of stakeholders to gain input; development of vision and goals for reform; clear recommendations; and action.



## Treatment Court Resources During the Pandemic

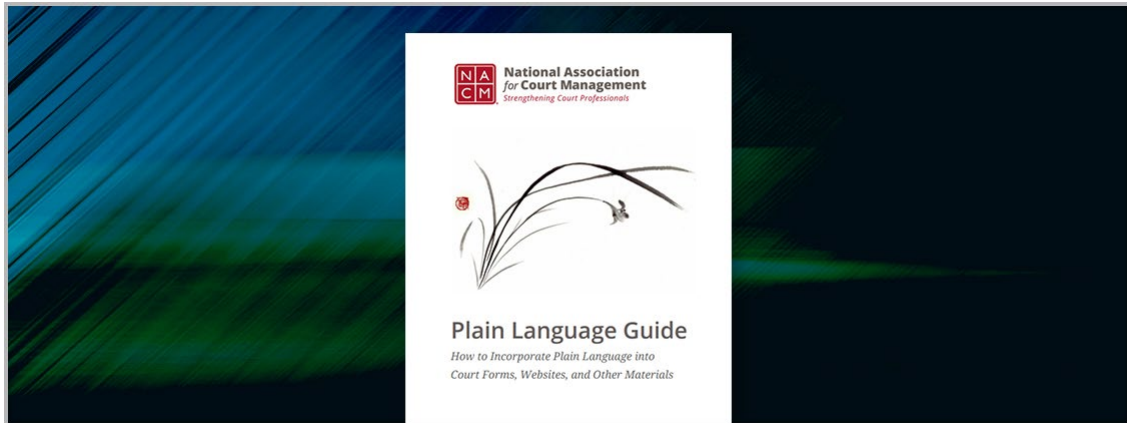
With support from SJI, [the National Association of Drug Court Professionals \(NADCP\)](#) and the [National Center for State Courts \(NCSC\)](#) has released a new guide: [Treatment Courts and COVID-19 What to Consider During a Pandemic](#). The guide provides practical solutions for treatment courts as they adapt to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, including timely information for judges, practitioners, and partners involved in treatment courts. The guide includes both short- and long-term examples on ways courts can maintain positive outcomes, while protecting the safety of treatment court participants and the community.

In addition to this guide, the NADCP is maintaining a COVID-19 Resources [website](#) for the treatment court community. The website includes:

- Adaptations by treatment courts to state/local restrictions regarding
- COVID-19; A Hot Topics, Q&A, and A-Z Resource Index;
- Numerous Training and Publications, including webinars and resources from NADCP for programs responding to COVID-19; and,
- Relevant federal, state, and national partner resources from the experts in federal and state governments and national associations.



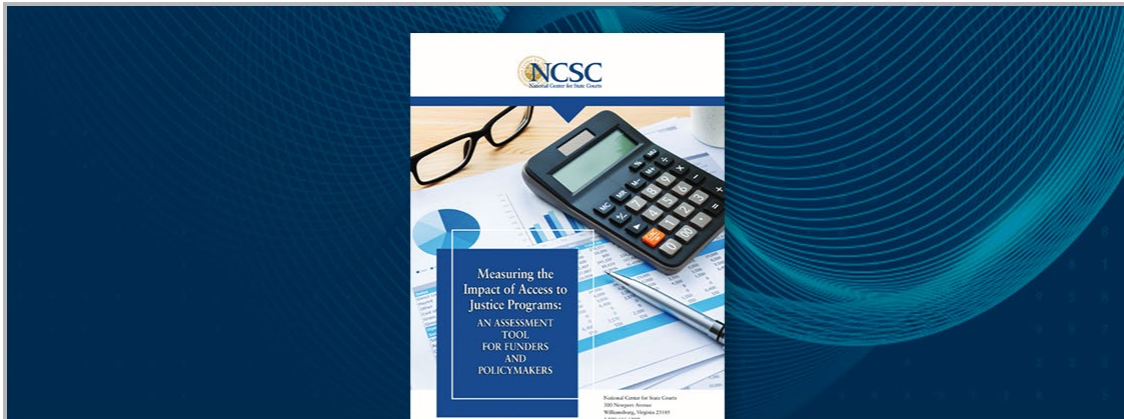
NADCP's annual conference – [All Rise](#) – made the decision to go virtual in May 2020. Those interested in the world's largest conference on addiction, mental health, and justice reform, will join experts from across disciplines for the latest on COVID-19 responses and much more.



## NACM Plain Language Guide Re-Released as Downloadable PDF

Courts and legal services organizations are creating new resources to help people with legal issues navigate the justice system during the pandemic. To support legal professionals engaged in these initiatives, the [National Association for Court Management \(NACM\)](#) is re-releasing the [NACM Plain Language Guide](#) as a free downloadable PDF.

NACM hopes that this comprehensive guide on how to incorporate *plain language* into court forms, websites, and other materials will help authors and designers create content and solutions that are easily understandable by everyone. Even in these challenging times, courts and legal professionals are working hard to improve access to justice. NACM applauds the undeterred efforts of the court community and will continue to serve as an access point for resources and timely information.



## Using Alternative Dispute Resolution to Meet Justice Needs

The [National Center for State Courts](#) has released a new [white paper](#) for evaluating the cost/benefit of various strategies for expanding access to justice, with a particular focus on litigant portals and Online Dispute Resolution (ODR). The paper proposes more of an “engineering” approach by introducing an analytical tool for organizations working on closing the access gap to estimate the potential impact of proposed solutions.

The tool can be used to:

1. assess the magnitude of an access problem that could be solved by a specific capability;
2. identify barriers that must be surmounted or reduced to achieve program objectives;
3. prioritize the tasks that must be performed and the capabilities that must be implemented to close the targeted gaps.

The sub-equations in the tool can also be used to systematically think through steps to be taken for successful implementation

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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.