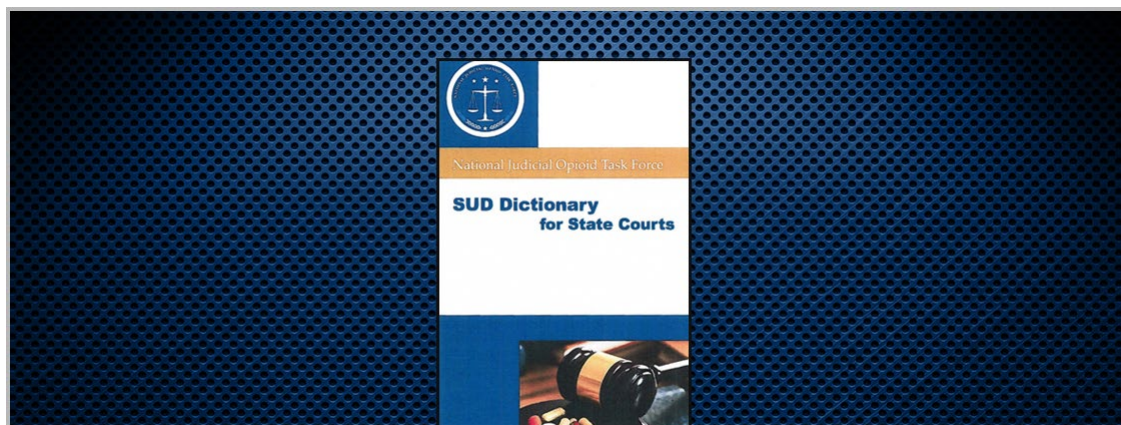


SJI Newsletter

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New Substance Abuse Disorder Dictionary Available for State Courts

The [National Judicial Opioid Task Force \(NJOTF\)](#), a project of the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ), Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA), National Center for State Courts (NCSC), with support from the State Justice Institute (SJI), has crafted a [substance use disorder \(SUD\) dictionary](#) based on a common language glossary produced by Ohio state courts.

The primary purpose of the guide is to enhance communication between state court judges, practitioners, treatment professionals, and the law by providing “language” used by both the legal community and medical providers, addiction specialists, and other treatment professionals. As both sides may be unfamiliar with terminology, but are now responsible for shared work, caseloads, and in the instance of treatment courts, decision-making, the guide provides a common set of words used.

The 19-page guide, sorted alphabetically, includes many terms and references that are specific to the opioid crisis, it is broader in scope and covers the language related to substance use disorders of all types. It is available online for ease of use.



SJI Priority Investment Areas for FY 2020

Each fiscal year, SJI allocates significant financial resources to support its Priority Investment Areas. The Priority Investment Areas are applicable to all grant types. SJI strongly encourages potential grant applicants to consider projects addressing one or more of these Priority Investment Areas. For FY 2020, the Priority Investment Areas are the following listed below in no specific order:

Opioids and the State Courts Response – SJI is supporting a comprehensive strategy for responding to the challenges facing state courts in addressing the national opioid crisis. The [National Judicial Opioid Task Force](#) is documenting current responses and developing effective solutions; identifying and addressing the impact on children, with specific emphasis on foster care/orphans, and child placement across state borders; establishing mechanisms for engaging justice system partners; providing immediate tools for use in the state courts, including treatment alternatives and assistance to establish local interdisciplinary treatment/care teams; and promoting information-sharing and collaboration at both the state and federal level, with a focus on strengthening Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs).

Human Trafficking Issues and the State Courts – Through the [Human Trafficking and the State Courts Collaborative](#), SJI is addressing the impact of federal and state human trafficking laws on the state courts, and the challenges faced by state courts in dealing with cases involving trafficking victims and their families. These efforts are intended to empower state courts to identify victims, link them with vital services, and hold traffickers accountable.

Guardianship, Conservatorship, and Elder Issues – SJI is assisting the courts in improving their oversight responsibilities through visitor programs, electronic reporting, and training. SJI supported the development of an electronic conservator-ship monitoring program, which is currently being adapted by other states. SJI recently provided support to develop a parallel guardianship monitoring program, with goal of adaption in other states.

Juvenile Justice Reform – SJI is supporting innovative projects that have no other existing or potential funding sources (federal, state, or private) that will advance best practices in handling dependency and delinquency cases, including cases involving special populations such as military families. These projects promote effective court oversight of juveniles in the justice system; address the impact of trauma on juvenile behavior; assist the courts in identification of appropriate provision of services for juveniles; and address juvenile re-entry.

Reengineering to Improve Court Operations – SJI continues to assist state courts with the process of reengineering, regionalization or centralization of services, and structural changes while providing access to justice. This includes the innovative use of remote technology to improve the business operations of the courts and provide for the transaction of court hearings without an appearance in a physical courtroom.

Fines, Fees, and Bail Practices – SJI is assisting state courts in taking a leadership role in reviewing fines, fees, and bail practices to ensure processes are fair and access to justice is assured; implementing alternative forms of sanction; developing processes for indigency review; and transparency, governance, and structural reforms that promote access to justice, accountability, and oversight. Projects that address this Priority Investment Area are informing the work of the CCJ/COSCA [National Task Force on Fines, Fees, and Bail Practices](#).

Family and Civil Justice Reform – Americans deserve a civil legal process that fairly and promptly resolves disputes for everyone. Runaway costs, delays, and complexity are denying people and businesses the justice they seek. SJI is promoting court-based solutions to address increases in self-represented litigants, including domestic relations cases which are overwhelming court dockets. Specific focus is on making courts more user-friendly to individuals, families, and businesses, and implementing the recommendations of the [Family Justice Initiative](#) and the [Civil Justice Initiative](#).

Self-Represented Litigation – SJI is promoting court-based solutions to address increases in self-represented litigants; specifically making courts more user-friendly by simplifying court forms, providing one-on-one assistance, developing guides, handbooks, and instructions on how to proceed, developing court-based self-help centers, and using Internet technologies to increase access. These projects are improving outcomes for litigants and saving valuable court resources.

Language Access – SJI is improving language access in the state courts through remote interpretation (outside the courtroom), interpreter training and certification, courtroom services (plain language forms, websites, etc.), and addressing the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act.

Emergency Preparedness and Cybersecurity – State courts must be prepared for both man-made and natural disasters, pandemics, and other threats. In addition, the increase in cyberattacks on court operations is impacting the ability to provide access to the courts. SJI is interested in supporting projects that address these areas, including innovative approaches to ensuring courts are prepared to respond to disasters and attacks on electronic systems. Beyond physical security of courthouses, SJI will assist the state courts in preparing for, and responding to, the increase in natural disasters (such as hurricanes, earthquakes, and wildfires), and man-made disasters including denial of service and ransomware attacks on court case management systems, websites, and other critical information technology infrastructure.



SJI Releases FY 2020 Grant Guideline

SJI recently released the [Grant Guideline for FY 2020](#). 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 2020 Deadlines for Project, Technical Assistance, and Curriculum Adaptation Grants are as follows:

- 1st Quarter – November 1, 2019
- 2nd Quarter – February 1, 2020
- 3rd Quarter – May 1, 2020
- 4th Quarter – August 1, 2020



Illinois Courts Complete Three-Year Strategic Visioning Work

A panel of Illinois judiciary members and stakeholders has developed a [three-year plan](#) with support from SJI, and technical assistance provided by Brenda Wagenknecht-Ivey from Praxis Consulting, Inc.

The plan outlines a mission statement, vision edict, and five core values meant to be its “blueprint for the future” developed through the Illinois Judicial Conference, which included non-judicial members – the Director of the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts and 13 other justice partners selected by the Court from the following categories: court clerks, court administrators, attorneys, and public members.

“If the courts are to continue to make good on the promise of equal justice under law in this new and challenging environment, we must be proactive. Waiting for problems to develop and then responding will no longer do,” Illinois Chief Justice Lloyd Karmeier wrote in the document released last week. “Rather, it is critical that we anticipate the difficulties ahead and prepare for them in a reasoned and coordinated way, drawing on the insights and experience of every part, every level and every region of the Judicial Branch.”

The Judicial Conference crafted [the Strategic Agenda's five goals](#) to address those difficulties, and strive for ensuring that state courts throughout Illinois are, “trusted and open to all by being fair, innovative, diverse, and responsive to changing needs.”

A panel of 29 conference members — 15 judges from varying levels and geographic areas and 14 non-judicial members – worked to provide the basis of the 13-page document, and promised to revisit for progress at regular intervals.

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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.