

## SJI Newsletter

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### New Evaluation and Performance Measures Framework for Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) Programs

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, state courts accelerated efforts to implement online dispute resolution (ODR) programs that offer litigants a software platform in which to resolve legal problems, including negotiating settlements or exchanging information in preparation for in-court hearings. ODR programs are intended to increase access to justice, especially for self-represented litigants, through increased convenience, case processing efficiency, and awareness of litigant options, while decreasing costs. With SJI support, the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) has issued a new report describing a framework for program evaluation, as well as ongoing performance measures for ODR programs. The framework employs a “balanced scorecard” approach to ensure that evaluation and performance measures take into account perspectives of important stakeholders, including courts, litigants, access-to-justice advocates, and funders of ODR programs. All of the measures

address the same underlying primary question: to what extent does the ODR program improve access to justice? The report is available [here](#). The NCSC project team is also available to provide technical assistance to courts implementing new ODR programs.

Given the rapid advancement of technology solutions such as ODR, litigant portals, and artificial intelligence, SJI has committed to not only provide seed funding for these efforts, but also play a critical leadership role. SJI is promoting the development and implementation of these technologies, and working with key stakeholders both nationally and internationally to adapt proven technology platforms in the state courts. These developments will fundamentally change the way individuals interact with the courts, in addition to further streamlining court operations.



ROBERT F. KENNEDY NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE PRESENTS

## **Transformation of Youth Justice**

SYMPOSIUM & TRAINING INSTITUTES

September 8-10, 2021 | Nashville, Tennessee | [www.rfknrcjj.org/events](http://www.rfknrcjj.org/events)

### 2021 National Juvenile Justice Transformation Symposium

The Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice, with SJI support, is hosting the **Transformation of Youth Justice Symposium** (September 8-9, 2021) and supplemental half-day **Training Institutes** (September 10, 2021). The two-day symposium is designed for multi-disciplinary professionals and youth-serving stakeholders seeking to learn, network, and become part of the nationwide movement to effectively transform youth justice and improve outcomes for children and families.

The Symposium will feature five plenaries and 30 workshops focused on current and significant cross-cutting issues impacting the youth-serving field. Participants seeking to expand their knowledge may also register to attend a

supplemental half-day Training Institute session following the Symposium. Focused on six critical topics, these deep-dive sessions will highlight opportunities and methods to significantly enhance current practice to improve system performance and ensure the highest likelihood of achieving positive outcomes for youth and families. The Symposium and Training Institutes will emphasize the importance of peer-to-peer learning and collaboration to identify common challenges and solutions that lead to meaningful, sustainable, and measurable policy and practice change. **To learn more, please visit:** [www.rfknrcjj.org/events](http://www.rfknrcjj.org/events).



## Tools Available to Help Courts Assess Their Continuity Programs

The [National Center for State Courts](#) (NCSC) has released a new resource, the [Courts Continuity Assessment Tool](#) (C-CAT), to help courts determine where the gaps may lie in their current continuity programming.

Available as an interactive [online self-assessment survey](#) (as of June 2021), or [for download as an Excel spreadsheet](#), the C-CAT builds on prior NCSC work in this area funded by SJI. This work includes the [NCSC Courts Continuity of Operations \(COOP\) Planning Guide and Template](#) and the [NCSC Emergency Management Lessons Learned Focus Group Report](#). The C-CAT incorporates advice from these new resources, and provides an interactive

platform for assessing nine key areas of court continuity of operations:

1. Address Leadership Issues and Dedicate Staff
2. Build and Strengthen Collaborative Relationships
3. Identify Essential Functions
4. Develop Redundant Communications
5. Support the Needs of the Workforce
6. Address Courthouse Infrastructure Needs and Alternate Facilities
7. Address Information Technology (IT) Resilience
8. Identify Reconstitution and Cost Recovery Processes
9. Train and Exercise the Program

Many of the questions included in the C-CAT are based on those found in the [Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\) Continuity Assessment Tool \(CAT\)](#), and the interactive guidance is consistent with available [FEMA Continuity Planning Resources for Non-Federal Entities](#). Following FEMA recommendations, courts should complete an assessment of their continuity programs on a regular basis (e.g., annually).

The NCSC provides other resources related to continuity of operations and court security, including an [Updated Personal Security Tips](#) document – revised since 2009, that covers several areas related to the personal safety of judges and court staff in various settings.

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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.*



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