

CONFERENCE OF CHIEF JUSTICES
CONFERENCE OF STATE COURT ADMINISTRATORS
RESOLUTION 5

**Reaffirming the Commitment to Meaningful Access to Justice for
All**

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices acknowledged in 2001 in Resolution 23 that the promise of equal justice is not realized for individuals and families who have no meaningful access to the justice system and that the Judicial Branch has the primary leadership responsibility to ensure access for those who face impediments they cannot surmount on their own; and

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators passed Resolution 2 in 2008 recognizing that ensuring access to justice in adversarial proceedings involving basic human needs, such as shelter, sustenance, safety, health, and child custody is one of the Conferences' highest priorities and encouraged their members to take steps to ensure that no citizen is denied access to the justice system due to the lack of resources, or any other such barrier; and

WHEREAS, significant advances in creating a continuum of meaningful and appropriate services to secure effective assistance for essential civil legal needs have been made by state courts, national organizations, state Access to Justice Commissions and other similar bodies, and state bar associations during the last decade; and

WHEREAS, these advances include, but are not limited to, expanded self-help services to litigants, new or modified court rules and processes that facilitate access, discrete task representation by counsel, increased pro bono assistance, effective use of technology, increased availability of legal aid services, enhanced language access services, and triage models to match specific needs to the appropriate level of services;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators support the aspirational goal of 100 percent access to effective assistance for essential civil legal needs and urge their members to provide leadership in achieving that goal and to work with their Access to Justice Commission or other such entities to develop a strategic plan with realistic and measurable outcomes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conferences urge the National Center for State Courts and other national organizations to develop tools and provide assistance to states in achieving the goal of 100 percent access through a continuum of meaningful and appropriate services.

Adopted as proposed by the CCJ/COSCA Access, Fairness and Public Trust Committee at the 2015 Annual Meeting.