COLORADO ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOLLOWING THE 2021 STATEWIDE LISTEN & LEARN TOUR
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Prepared by Colorado Access to Justice Commission Executive Director, Elisa Overall (Emo) and Colorado Supreme Court Justice Melissa Hart. Copyright March 2022
Executive Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic has put into stark relief the realities of what is known as the “justice gap”—the divide between people’s civil legal needs and the resources available to meet them. Coloradans increasingly face civil justice issues that impact vital human needs, like housing, safety, family, physical and mental health, and economic security. Most people must try to resolve these issues without legal help, despite being ill-equipped to navigate an unfamiliar and complex civil justice system alone.

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In 2021, Colorado’s Access to Justice Commission (ATJC) sought to capitalize on newfound comfort with virtual meeting platforms to conduct a statewide “listening tour.” Under the leadership of Colorado Supreme Court Justice Melissa Hart, in her capacity as the Court’s ATJC Liaison, the ATJC spoke with community stakeholders in each of the state’s twenty-two judicial districts to understand the current challenges and identify working solutions for those seeking access to the civil justice system.

This Report examines the results of forty-one different Listen & Learn sessions and considers the voices of 519 community stakeholders to highlight the most pressing civil legal issues Coloradans face as well as the consequences of inadequate assistance with resolving these issues. The Report also highlights solutions that a broad range of legal and community service providers have employed to accommodate emerging needs. Finally, it offers recommendations for how the many stakeholders committed to an equitable justice system can steward progress.
Findings On The Civil Justice Gap

Coloradoans from all walks of life face daunting barriers to civil justice, including the complexity of legal matters and the often-prohibitive cost of legal assistance. For particularly vulnerable populations, these barriers can have especially destabilizing and compounding effects on their lives.

Vulnerable populations that participants mentioned included aging adults; people with disabilities; people of color; and people experiencing poverty, homelessness, mental health or addiction challenges, language and/or cultural barriers, and domestic violence.

The most prominent access-to-justice barriers identified:

- The complexity of the court system
- Distrust and fear of the legal system
- Scarcity of free civil legal aid
- Lack of affordable legal advice
- Underserved rural communities
- Technology challenges
- Language
- Court fees
Innovative solutions for bridging the civil justice gap must span the breadth of the gap itself. The following is a non-exhaustive list of ways that stakeholders in our civil justice system can individually and collectively help bridge the civil justice gap.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

• Significantly increase legislative funding for Coloradans to access civil legal aid.

• Ensure adequate funding so Judicial Department infrastructure can support continued virtual court appearances as an enduring access-to-justice tool and not just a health and safety measure during the COVID-19 pandemic.

• Support and fund Judicial Department programs that increase access for limited English proficient (LEP) individuals, plain language materials, and resources for people with disabilities.

• Implement state-sponsored financial incentives — such as salary subsidies, tax credits, and loan repayment assistance programs — for lawyers who primarily serve rural Coloradans in communities with few lawyers.

• Prioritize legislation that directly promotes access to justice, for example, bills that make legal processes less onerous for self-represented parties.

• Incorporate plain language into bills that affect participation in the civil legal justice system.

**JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT**

• Ensure the availability of a remote appearance option for certain court proceedings. Even if an option for remote appearance is not required, each judicial officer should make remote appearance an option for certain proceedings.

• Continue developing and expanding technology infrastructure for virtual proceedings across Colorado.
• Offer training for judges and judicial staff in best practices for serving people experiencing trauma. Judges should seek out this and other training that will help them serve the public and self-represented litigants particularly.

• Continue efforts to make access to the courts more affordable through measures like simplifying in forma pauperis\(^1\) eligibility and waiving electronic filing fees for self-represented litigants.

• Continue expanding simplified and standardized forms and procedures.

• Increase services for LEP individuals and for people with disabilities.

• Develop community-based, non-lawyer navigator\(^2\) programs in the courts.

• Establish a licensed paraprofessional program so that legal advice can be provided at lower cost to consumers.

• Offer public guidance to clarify how non-lawyers can help self-represented litigants without fear of engaging in the unauthorized practice of law.

**LAWYERS**

• Take and fulfill the Colorado Supreme Court’s Pro Bono Recognition Program pledge to dedicate fifty hours or more of pro bono legal services every year.

• Commit to supporting or providing affordable legal services such as unbundled, low bono, and sliding scale services.

• Dedicate a meaningful portion of your efforts to helping Coloradans in rural communities with few local lawyers.

• Join any of the robust and growing programs tackling the civil justice gap, like the Virtual Pro Se Clinic, the Colorado Lawyers Committee, Metro Volunteer Lawyers, the Colorado Federal Pro Se Clinic, other local bar association pro bono programs, and local access to justice committees.

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\(^1\) “In forma pauperis” (IFP) status is available to those who the court determines do not have the resources to pay filing fees.

\(^2\) “Nonlawyer navigators” come from outside the state courts and help self-represented litigants with basic civil legal problems without providing legal advice and without formal legal credentials and training. Programs may be volunteer-based, government sponsored, or privately funded.
**LAW SCHOOLS**
- Encourage law students to do pro bono work through programs specifically focused on providing legal services to those unable to afford attorneys and to rural Coloradans.
- Expand incentive programs to encourage law students and recent graduates to open or join law practices in rural Colorado.

**ACCESS TO JUSTICE ADVOCATES**
- Collaborate with local community service providers in advocacy measures such as programming, outreach, and communication campaigns.
- Collaborate with local libraries and librarians to support self-represented litigants.
- Promote low or no cost mediation and/or online dispute resolution programs in your judicial district for case types like eviction, small claims, and divorce.
- Promote the creation of eviction diversion programs.
- Coordinate with existing advocacy efforts for the expansion of public broadband, especially in rural Colorado.
- Organize an advocacy effort that engages judicial nominating commissions and judicial performance commissions as important decision-makers in ensuring that judicial officers are committed to access to justice.
- Serve in a leadership role on your local access to justice committee.
The “justice gap” – the divide between people’s civil legal needs and the resources available to meet those needs – is a significant problem in Colorado, and throughout the nation. While low-income individuals are often the focus of conversations about the civil justice gap, access to adequate legal resources is a problem that reaches well into the middle class, where many individuals find the cost of hiring a lawyer is more than they can afford. The result is a fundamental challenge to the ideal of equal justice under the law. Coloradans with legal problems connected to their most basic needs – housing, family, food security, health care, job security, immigration status, and safety, among others – are often left to navigate the exceedingly complex legal system without the help of an attorney.

Since 2003, the Colorado Access to Justice Commission (“Commission” or “ATJC”) has been collaborating with organizations concerned about this gap to develop and support a range of tools to address it. That work has included advocacy for increased funding for Colorado Legal Services (CLS), which provides free legal advice and representation in civil matters to eligible low-income Coloradans; partnership with the Colorado Supreme Court to sustain and expand the court’s annual Pro Bono Recognition Program, which recognizes law firms and other entities that provide the recommended fifty hours of pro bono legal services per Colorado attorney each year; and active engagement with the State Court Administrator’s Office to help develop plain language forms, online dispute resolution, expanded language access, and other measures that make courts more accessible.

In both 2007 and 2013, the ATJC conducted hearings to better understand and draw public attention to Coloradans’ unmet legal needs. In 2017, the Commission was awarded a “Justice for All” (JFA) grant by the National Center for State Courts with funding from the Public Welfare Foundation. This grant allowed the Commission to conduct an expansive survey of legal service providers and courts in Colorado, to inventory their efforts, and to host a summit attended by lawyers and Judicial Department employees from every corner of the state. As a result of the ideas and priorities generated through this process, the Commission approved a JFA Strategic Action Plan, detailing the measures that various stakeholders could take to continue to address the justice gap.

Over the past two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought the challenges of the justice gap into dramatic focus. It has also forced the justice system and service providers to innovate in ways that may offer long-term solutions to shrink the justice gap. In the winter of 2020, the Commission recognized that a second summit, similar to the successful 2017 meeting, would not be possible in the pandemic climate. Commissioners also recognized that society had adapted to online meeting formats that had not been the norm before the COVID-19 pandemic. With this in mind, the Commission decided to conduct a series of online meetings, reaching out to every part of Colorado to learn how the justice gap was experienced in diverse communities around the state.

This report summarizes the themes that emerged from this 2021 remote Listen & Learn Tour, identifying the access-to-justice challenges that remain in Colorado, including those that have emerged since the COVID-19 pandemic. It then discusses solutions to those challenges and offers recommendations for moving forward.
The 2021 Listen & Learn Tour was designed to allow service providers around the state to share their knowledge and experiences regarding access-to-justice challenges. With support from members of local access to justice committees, leaders of local bar associations, and CLS attorneys in different regions, the Commission began the project by creating local invitation lists comprised of each region’s local community and legal service providers. Stakeholders were then invited to attend their community’s virtual meetings and to share comments on access-to-justice barriers.

From March to September 2021, the Commission held forty-one virtual convenings, with an average of two virtual meetings in each of Colorado’s twenty-two judicial districts.

A total of 295 Judicial Department representatives and legal service providers and 224 community service providers attended the meetings. Judicial representatives included judges, clerks, court executives, interpreters, self-represented litigant coordinators (SRLCs), family court facilitators (FCFs), and probation officers. Other legal service providers included local access to justice committee chairs, leadership from local bar associations, mediators, attorneys heavily involved in pro bono efforts, government attorneys, and legal aid attorneys.

Attending social service providers included a wide variety of civil servants and private sector stakeholders, including representatives from departments of human services; county commissioners and administrators; state legislators; court-appointed special advocates; educational and library professionals; agencies that support aging adults; and representatives of domestic violence organizations, immigration services, veteran services, religious organizations, disability services, homeless shelters, and behavioral and mental health services providers.

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4 “Local access to justice committees” are region-specific committees made up of professionals and community members committed to creating tailored solutions that promote greater access to civil justice, such as legal aid clinics and resource fairs.

5 See Listen & Learn Participants, Appendix A.

6 “Self-represented litigant coordinators” help facilitate access to the courts by helping self-represented litigants. They may provide general information about court procedures, rules, and logistics; help self-represented litigants select the correct forms; provide some assistance with filling out court forms; answer general questions and provide other services consistent with Chief Justice Directive (CJD) 13-01.

7 “Family court facilitators” provide case management services and coordination in family-related matters, including domestic relations, domestic violence, dependency and neglect, and delinquency cases. They may provide information about domestic violence resources, assist in calculating child support, help parties understand court processes, and provide other services consistent with CJD 13-01.
Each convening began with brief introductory remarks by Justice Melissa Hart and Commission Executive Director Elisa Overall. Participants then introduced themselves and shared what they believed to be the greatest civil access-to-justice barriers facing their constituents. Time permitting, participants also shared information on lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic and identified solutions that had proven successful in their communities. Each session lasted between sixty and ninety minutes. The Commission maintained detailed notes of each participant’s comments. Participant comments were then categorized and quantified by the types of barriers, legal topics, and client populations they mentioned.

After the final session of the Listen & Learn Tour, the Commission asked all attendees to participate in an online survey to share any additional thoughts on potential short-and long-term solutions and to provide information on any new access-to-justice efforts that had emerged in their region. The themes reported here are culled from both the conversations and the survey results.

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**Barriers**

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**THE COMPLEXITY OF THE LEGAL SYSTEM**

Participants repeatedly emphasized that individuals facing a civil legal problem frequently feel overwhelmed by the complex nature of both the law and court procedures. This is true not only for lay people with less education but even for people with advanced degrees, including lawyers.

Becky Casey, FCF and SRLC in Fremont County, described how these issues cascade: “The entire process is confusing and not understandable. The statutes are unreadable, and the forms are difficult to understand. People need help understanding how court works and how to prepare. Once in court, they are so intimidated by the process they don’t know what to say, or when to say it. Afterwards they feel like they didn’t get a chance to talk.” Arapahoe County Court Judge Michael Roche told the Commission, “It is very clear that the forms make people freeze and lock up because they are so difficult to understand.” As a result, he said, “it is rare that someone comes into my court who has read any of the documents other than the notice of hearing.” He does not blame the litigants. Rather, he urges, the forms need to be written in plain language.

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8 After each session, participants were given the option to remain anonymous in the notes that informed this report.

9 “Plain language” refers to materials that are easily understood by the intended audience.
Many participants, including several attorneys, experienced the same confusion. One senior judge expressed frustration with the complexity of the law and forms litigants must use, saying even he had to hire a lawyer to navigate a relatively straightforward civil legal issue. Ellen Giarratana, Managing Attorney with the Colorado Center on Law and Policy, echoed this sentiment, explaining that the jargon and legalese in many documents like notices about public benefits, are hard to understand even for trained lawyers. Participants explained that for litigants who are illiterate or have minimal education, the expectation that they navigate a legal issue on their own is not realistic.

And the complexities that are hard for anyone trying to access the court system are even more significant for vulnerable populations such as aging adults and people suffering with addiction or mental health challenges.

"The entire process is so confusing that many people give up before even getting into court."

— Beatriz García
Program Manager with Compañeros (Southwest Colorado)

People with limited English proficiency (LEPs) face even greater difficulties when attempting to resolve a legal issue. A service provider for Centro de la Familia in Colorado Springs, explained that there are fewer community services and resources for LEP individuals to begin with. In addition, they are often first-generation immigrants trying to navigate a foreign culture and other unfamiliar systems on top of having to decipher the American legal system. She explained that, sooner or later, many just give up. Moreover, when LEP individuals approach community organizations asking for help with court forms, non-lawyers working in those organizations are often unsure of how much assistance they can provide without engaging in the unauthorized practice of law. This limitation particularly concerns providers given that court documents must be completed in English.

Some participants described how this steep and nearly universal barrier has caused many of their clients to lose their cases by default. Participants shared stories of people losing their homes or custody of their children because, despite trying, they did not understand the court’s requirements. “Every day, we see tenants who don’t know that they need to go to court for these eviction cases and then they get default judgments entered against them,” said Carey Degenaro with the COVID-19 Eviction Defense Project. She described how disheartened these tenants are “when they realize they will lose their home because they don’t understand a system that clearly isn’t geared toward everyday people; it’s geared toward lawyers.”
DISTRUST AND FEAR OF THE LEGAL SYSTEM

Many who described this complexity also stressed that, as a result, people lose faith in the justice system as a whole. Legal and community service providers voiced the opinion that people are not wrong to conclude that the justice system is at times quite unjust. State Representative Mike Weissman, also a lawyer, noted unhappily that it seems self-represented litigants are not truly afforded a fair opportunity in our current civil justice system. One judge reflected with visible regret that self-represented litigants enter his courtroom with a strong sense of fatalism: “They view the courts as an arm of the haves, shaking down the have-nots. This does not lend itself to much faith in the judiciary.”

Shut-downs from the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these trust issues. Some court staff reported that reduced court hours decreased customer service. “This has eroded public confidence in the judicial system as a whole,” said Magistrate Marianne Tims of the 1st Judicial District, based in Jefferson County. Other participants described frustrated litigants, unable to tell from a court’s website whether the courthouse was open, who appeared in person only to learn that they could not enter the courthouse and would need to find a way to appear virtually.

“[People] view the courts as an arm of the haves, shaking down the have-nots. This does not lend itself to much faith in the judiciary.”

— County Court Judge

Providers shared that, for many of their clients, engaging with the court system is a source of anxiety and trauma, particularly when their legal issue has already caused distress. Participants highlighted that a courthouse is an intimidating space for most laypeople. This is especially true for vulnerable populations such as those experiencing homelessness, mental health, or addiction issues. Mary Pat Bowen, Director of Victim Services with the Park County Sheriff’s Office, explained that the people she works with quickly become overwhelmed with the process. “There is a need for legal advice on the front end to lighten the stress and let people know what is going to happen and what it will look like,” she said. Advocates and service providers emphasized that victims frequently feel intimidated, ignored, undermined, or retraumatized by the civil justice system.

Several service providers noted that the differences between the criminal and civil justice systems are difficult for the general public to appreciate: both processes occur in the same courthouse, in the same types of courtrooms, before identical looking and acting judges. Most people with direct or even indirect experience with a criminal case associate the justice system as a whole with fear of negative consequences. This fear carries over into their efforts to resolve civil matters. Given the overrepresentation of people of color in the criminal justice system, fear is more acute and pervasive for those communities.
Participants explained that this fear is also magnified for immigrant communities. Christian Luna-Leal with Full Circle of Lake County shared that for many immigrants the greatest access-to-justice barrier is fear of being deported. Beatriz García of Compañeros: Four Corners Immigrant Resource Center in Durango said that even clients with urgent needs and legitimate claims are too terrified to set foot in a courthouse. Much of that fear is a result of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) using courthouses to track down and detain immigrants. Although the General Assembly has enacted a law prohibiting civil arrests in courthouses, the fear engendered by past practice remains. Ms. García explained that it will take years if not generations for immigrants to lose the feeling that they are taking their chances going into a courthouse.

SCARCITY OF FREE LEGAL AID

Many participants stressed that, while legal aid attorneys provide valuable, life-altering assistance, there simply are not enough of them to meet the need. First, due to underfunding, the entire state of Colorado has a total of just 86.3 legal aid attorneys, or 0.66 legal aid attorneys for every 10,000 eligible residents, ranking it second-to-last among America’s western states. Colorado Legal Services (CLS) participants reported that they must turn away roughly half of those eligible who have applied for their services.

In addition to the shortage of legal aid lawyers for eligible people, participants emphasized that large groups of people in need are ineligible. To qualify for legal aid, one must make less than 125 percent of the Federal Poverty Guideline. This translates to an annual income of roughly $16,100 for an individual or $33,125 for a family of four. According to the 2020 census, fewer than nine percent of Coloradans are considered persons in poverty, yet many more Coloradans cannot afford an attorney.

Moreover, CLS generally cannot represent people who are undocumented due to federal legislation. Legal service providers repeatedly shared their frustration with this restriction, stressing that it leaves a significant gap in services for these communities. Although the Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network provides free legal services in immigration matters, Executive Director Mekela Goehring shared that its services are grossly underfunded: roughly 70 percent of those held at the immigration detention centers go unrepresented. And immigrant children frequently represent themselves before a judge, against a government attorney, in proceedings to determine whether they will be deported.

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10 See § 13-1-403, C.R.S. (2021) (prohibiting civil arrests in courthouses and allowing judges to issue a writ of protection to those “going to, attending, or coming from a court proceeding.”).
All participants agreed that traditional legal services are not affordable, while limited scope representation\textsuperscript{13} and similar efforts are underutilized. Andrea Shahmardian, Family Court Facilitator (FCF) in Larimer and Jackson Counties, said she sees nontraditional legal services as a potential solution to the cost issue. “We really need more attorneys to offer unbundled services,” she said. But Ms. Shahmardian and other participants explained that it was hard to know whether lawyers would agree to unbundled services or similar affordable options.

Many participants noted the positive impact of pro bono legal services but explained that few attorneys provide such services in their communities and lamented the difficulties they encounter when trying to recruit pro bono lawyers. This challenge appears particularly significant in some rural areas where, participants reported, there are few attorneys and even fewer interested in performing pro bono work. And in areas where small contingents of attorneys offer the lion’s share of the region’s pro bono services, these attorneys described high levels of burnout.

Notwithstanding the strong sense of frustration about the low numbers of attorneys offering pro bono services, participants also commended various robust pro bono projects and legal information clinics. No effort was more frequently mentioned than Colorado’s Virtual Pro Se Clinic (VPC), which came up in nearly every session. The VPC partners with libraries all over Colorado and allows library patrons to sign up for fifteen- to twenty-minute slots at monthly virtual clinics. During these sessions, attorneys offer guidance over Zoom, which the VPC has been using since 2013. The VPC also maintains a publicly available online library of self-help resources covering over sixty civil issues.\textsuperscript{14} Ric Morgan, founder and coordinator of the VPC, participated in several of the listening sessions, where he shared that the program recently served its 10,000th patron. Many participants highlighted the benefits of offering these services through the libraries and urged the creation of more models like the VPC.

\textsuperscript{13} “Limited scope representation” refers to the notion that an attorney and her client may agree that the attorney will handle part of a matter, rather than an entire case from start to finish. For example, the attorney may prepare certain forms, but the client will file them and represent herself in any hearings. This is also called “unbundling.”

\textsuperscript{14} See VPC, Checkerboard, \url{www.checkerboard.co} (last visited Jan. 29, 2022).
In almost every session, participants expressed frustration with the fact that only attorneys can provide legal advice. Several self-represented litigant coordinators (SRLCs) and family court facilitators (FCFs) shared that self-represented litigants become frustrated when they explain that they cannot provide “legal advice” but only “legal information,” which limits how much they feel they can help people who are struggling with complicated court forms and procedures. Many highlighted the value that a lower-cost paraprofessional—one who could give legal advice—would offer to low- and middle-income Coloradans struggling to navigate legal issues.

Community service providers also mentioned that many people need the most help when they are inside the courtroom and unsure about how to address judges or present their cases, but SRLCs and FCFs are not authorized to help litigants inside the courtroom. Many community service providers, like Deb Hamilton, law librarian with the Pike’s Peak Library District, said they and their colleagues are eager for more training on how to help people outside of courts.

Several participants suggested that mediation could reduce costs in housing disputes, family law cases, contract disputes, and small claims cases. Court personnel, judges, and other participants reported that mediation is becoming more common for such cases. Participants described the many benefits of programs for reduced-cost mediation, which some district courts offer, or free mediation, as modeled by La Plata and Boulder counties in eviction cases. Several participants noted that mediation would be more effective if there were a way to reach parties before a lawsuit is filed, when it may be easier to resolve a dispute.

UNDERSERVED RURAL COMMUNITIES

With roughly two-thirds of the virtual Listen & Learn sessions in rural Colorado, the Commission heard resoundingly that very few lawyers are available outside many of Colorado’s metro areas. As one family court facilitator put it, “we can’t refer people to attorneys when there are no attorneys.” He went on to share that in the very rural courthouse he serves, 80-85 percent of the civil litigants are self-represented.

Participants reported that, in rural areas, often one or a handful of legal aid attorneys must cover large geographic areas. Rural legal aid attorneys explained that they struggle to make sure people across the vast regions they serve are aware of their services, and they reported having to make hard decisions about which cases to take and the extent of any involvement in a matter. For example, Jeanna Baillon runs a one-person CLS office in Salida that serves the 11th Judicial District, covering Chaffee, Custer, Fremont, and Park counties. Because of the volume of demand, size, and topographical challenges of the region she serves, she estimated that about 85 percent of her legal practice consists of offering limited legal advice, as opposed to providing full legal representation for qualifying individuals.
Participants who have wrestled unsuccessfully with the challenge of legal deserts—communities without many or any attorneys—explained that the issue is complex. They have difficulty recruiting attorneys to practice in rural areas in part because those regions’ economies are shrinking and populations are skewing older, making them less desirable for new younger transplants. Concerted efforts by Colorado’s two law schools have been minimally effective, according to one career development staff member, who said even fellowships for relatively attractive rural government jobs for new lawyers cannot be filled. Wes Hassler, ATJC Commissioner, whose private firm in Pueblo has focused on recruiting and mentoring law students for years, conceded that even those his firm is able to recruit often eventually leave for better-paying jobs in larger cities.

Participants who organize pro bono programs described recent efforts to virtually connect urban attorneys with rural clients. More uniformity in court forms and processes across judicial districts would make recruiting attorneys to take on cases in rural areas easier.

Participants who organize pro bono programs, described some more recent efforts to virtually connect urban attorneys with rural clients. Some of these attempts have been successful, particularly where attorneys offer limited legal advice. Indeed, participants reported that attorneys are hesitant to take on larger scope representation, in part due to the vast differences across courtrooms. As Lauren Rafter of the Colorado Poverty Law Project explained, “pro bono attorneys from the metro areas are hesitant to take cases in the mountain towns because they don’t know what the procedures of the court are going to be. They don’t know what they’re getting themselves into.” Many participants emphasized that more uniformity in court forms and processes across judicial districts would make recruiting attorneys to take on cases in rural areas easier.

TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGES

Many participants pointed out that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a silver lining: virtual court appearances. One Colorado Legal Services (CLS) attorney who serves the vast southeastern corner of Colorado, which encompasses ten counties and two judicial districts, described having turned away an eligible client because the judge assigned to his case would not permit any virtual proceedings, and she could not drive the 3.5 hours each way to appear in person for a 15-minute scheduling hearing. Luckily, a different judge who was open to virtual appearances took over the case, allowing the CLS attorney to represent the client. Virtual court appearances also resolve profound access-to-justice barriers such as lack of transportation, the need to find childcare, missing work in order to appear in person, and safety fears for survivors seeking protection orders.

Despite the advantages of virtual court proceedings, many participants bemoaned the lack of broadband service in their regions—a fact underscored by regular interruptions to the listening sessions themselves, particularly those focused in rural areas. Indeed, rural participants were often forced to turn their video cameras off during virtual sessions to preserve bandwidth so they could at least hear and participate by audio.
Participants reported that many Coloradans cannot afford high speed wireless internet or adequate cellular data plans and that, in rural areas, broadband is often scarce or entirely unavailable. This lack of widespread broadband significantly impeded the otherwise overwhelmingly welcome advent of virtual court proceedings. Bob Kreiman, Court Executive for the 3rd Judicial District, which covers Las Animas and Huerfano counties, pointed out that judges and attorneys tend to be more open to virtual appearances when litigants can appear with their videos on, rather than just over audio. Lack of broadband access also frustrates the effectiveness of other access-to-justice solutions, such as virtual mediation and clinics, e-filing, and online self-help tools.

“We truly live in a tech desert. Broadband is scarce and many people don’t have access to a computer.”

— Kate Johnson
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator for the 3rd Judicial District (Southern Colorado)

In addition, participants stressed that when it comes to technology, the populations they serve vary widely in access and literacy. Kate Johnson, SRLC in Huerfano and Las Animas counties, explained that the communities she serves “live in a tech desert.” Similarly, Lisa Ault, Clerk of Court for Sedgwick and Phillips counties, shared that “people don’t have access to computers.” Many who do not have computers may try using smart phones (if they have them) to access things like forms and instructions but quickly realize the fonts are too small and they would need a printer to fill out and sign the forms anyway. Yet most courthouses do not have computers or printers for litigants to use. Frustrated judicial staff described the absurdity of having to send self-represented litigants away from the courthouse and to the local library to access the technology they need to participate in the court system. Moreover, unlike many public-serving government centers, Colorado courthouses do not have publicly accessible wireless service.

Participants also shared that WebEx, Colorado’s current platform for virtual court appearances, is suboptimal for LEP individuals and people with disabilities. Daniel Quinlan, an interpreter who covers Southwest Colorado, explained that, compared to other platforms, WebEx is ill-suited for simultaneous interpretation, which is necessary for court appearances. Similarly, deaf and blind advocates described WebEx as “unusable.” One ombudsman with Vintage, a nonprofit organization that assists aging adults, explained that “while COVID has improved some access due to technology, it has decreased access for the hearing and visually impaired.”

Technology also presents challenges for immigrant communities and older individuals. Nelly Navarro and Reid Petersen with Comunidad Integrada, which serves northwest Colorado, described some hidden cultural barriers that prevent immigrants from using the same tools that many take for granted. For example, the courts’ automated phone systems are not usable for many immigrants, including English speakers, as the options and sequences are not culturally intuitive. And one participant with the City of Longmont’s Community Neighborhood Resources Department described spending much of her time trying to help elderly community members use the computer to access legal forms and information.
Nearly all participants with experience assisting those with limited English proficiency (LEPs) with civil legal issues agreed that language access is one of the most pronounced barriers to access to justice. This is because nearly all the existing access-to-justice resources, from self-help materials to court and legal services, are either in English only or are not reliably accessible for LEP individuals.

The Judicial Department’s website is almost entirely in English, and basic information, instructions, and forms are immediately available only in English or Spanish. While the Judicial Department has a service that translates forms, it is not widely known, and the forms must be completed in English. Likewise, nearly all self-help materials are in English only. As one immigrant advocate explained, “with so many resources that are only in English, [it can be] difficult for people to even look for help. It creates stress that often leads people to give up.”

Participants frequently pointed out that inside courtrooms, spoken interpretation services are largely available, with some wait, for those who request language services. This is a major and welcome improvement from years past. However, sometimes litigants want legal advice from the interpreters, but court interpreters like other judicial employees, cannot provide legal advice. Court interpreters have a very different role than people think. They cannot advocate, guide, or explain. They cannot help litigants better understand legal issues, though such restraints do not exist for community interpreters. And service providers who work with LEP individuals frequently pointed to a widespread lack of interpretation services outside the courtroom. Existing services such as the Language Line, they explain, are so expensive they are not practical solutions. Moreover, municipal courts still lack language access services, as various judges, clerks, and residents emphatically noted.

In addition to these challenges, service providers and advocates statewide repeatedly noted that there are very few Spanish-speaking lawyers, especially in many rural areas of Colorado, and even fewer who speak less common languages. For example, Ricardo Perez of the Hispanic Affairs Project, which covers nearly all of western Colorado, emphasized that there are only two or three bilingual attorneys the whole region. Whereas privately retained attorneys often have staff able to interpret, the shortage of Spanish-speaking lawyers means many LEP individuals have virtually no chance of finding pro bono legal help.
Participants also repeatedly identified court fees as a major barrier to access. As one county sheriff’s officer explained, “filing fees are always an issue. To file a claim of physical assault or elder abuse, the cost is $85. That initial cost actually keeps people from filing.”

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— Deputy Sheriff

Additionally, issues with the process for determining fee waiver eligibility arose in many sessions. Participants described the process as lacking uniformity and often difficult to understand. One attorney described confronting dramatically different fee waiver eligibility requirements for nearly every judicial district and county in the Denver Metro Area. She further described sending clients into courthouses with all of the required forms and paperwork only to learn later that they were denied fee waivers due to a failure to present something not previously required nor listed on the court’s webpage.

One district court judge wondered out loud, “why does waiving fees have to be so difficult? Why can’t we have one automated process for people who get certain low-income benefits like SSI [Supplemental Security Income] or free and reduced lunch?”
Progress Since 2014

Following the Access to Justice Commission’s 2013 Hearings, the Commission published a report, *Justice Crisis in Colorado 2014: Report of Civil Legal Needs in Colorado*, which made several recommendations based on the findings resulting from the seven hearings conducted around the state. Those recommendations included several approaches to increased funding for civil legal aid, enhanced resources for self-represented litigants, and expanded provision of pro bono services by lawyers. In the ensuing years, many of the recommended actions have been taken. In particular, with regard to efforts to increase funding for civil legal aid:

In the ensuing years, many of the recommended actions have been taken. In particular, with regard to efforts to increase funding for civil legal aid:

- **State legislative funding for civil legal aid has increased significantly.** Between 2013 and 2014, the amount in the Family Violence Justice Fund more than doubled, reaching $1 million. That amount doubled again in 2015 and, from 2016 through 2020, was at $2.5 million. Due to COVID-19 cuts in 2021, the Fund was cut back to $2 million, but in 2022 that amount was supplemented with $750,000 additional support from American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) funds. In 2019, the General Assembly established the Eviction Legal Defense Fund, with an initial appropriation of $750,000. COVID-19 cuts in 2021 reduced that appropriation to $600,000, which will be supplemented in 2022 with $1.5 million in ARPA funding. Finally, in 2021, the General Assembly established an Immigrant Legal Defense Fund and provided $100,000 to support that Fund.

- **Amendments to Colorado Rule of Professional Conduct 1.15** were adopted in 2014, requiring interest rate comparability for Colorado Lawyer Trust Account Foundation (COLTAF) accounts. This requirement helps ensure that COLTAF accounts consistently receive the highest rate generally available to the bank’s other customers on comparable non-COLTAF accounts. The impact of the comparability requirement varies with the interest rate cycle, but over time it should help maximize this important source of funding for civil legal aid.

- **An amendment to Colorado Rule of Civil Procedure 23** was adopted in 2016, requiring that at least 50 percent of any class action residual funds be disbursed to COLTAF to support activities and programs that promote access to the civil justice system for low-income Colorado residents. To date, COLTAF has received two cy pres awards pursuant to this rule for a total of $70,560.

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15 “Cy pres awards” consist of unclaimed money from class action settlements after all class members have been paid.
• An amendment to Colorado’s Unclaimed Property Act was adopted in 2015, exempting funds held in COLTAF accounts from the provisions of the Act. Amendments to Colorado Rule of Professional Conduct 1.15B were approved in 2016, giving lawyers the option of remitting to COLTAF funds in their COLTAF accounts when, after reasonable efforts, the owner cannot be identified or, if identified, cannot be located. The only alternative to remitting such funds to COLTAF is for the lawyer to continue to hold those funds in a COLTAF account indefinitely. To date, COLTAF has received $621,800 in unclaimed funds.

The Commission’s recommended steps for assisting self-represented litigants have also been taken, at least in part:

• Between 2014 and 2021, the number of self-represented litigant coordinators (SRLCs) in the state’s courthouses increased from 14 to 44, with at least one SRLC in every judicial district.

• Beginning in 2019 with a pilot effort in a few judicial districts, the Judicial Department has rolled out e-filing for self-represented litigants in domestic cases. As will be discussed further below, there is still much work to do with this and other technology efforts in the courts.

As for the 2014 Report recommendations for mobilizing private resources to help meet legal need:

• Significant work has been undertaken to encourage lawyers to expand pro bono services. This includes work to expand the number of law firms and lawyers who have taken the Colorado Supreme Court’s Pro Bono Pledge and who have met the Pledge’s 50-hour pro bono goal; development by Colorado Legal Services of programs that allow metro area lawyers to provide pro bono services to clients in rural parts of the state; and continued efforts by what is now the ATJC Delivery Committee to develop rule changes and other approaches that will increase pro bono services.

• The legal community has continued to encourage innovation that allows lawyers to provide cost-effective representation of moderate means clients. Of note, initiatives such as the Colorado Bar Association’s (CBA’s) Modern Law Practice Initiative have championed affordable representation, offered Continuing Legal Education credits (CLEs) around the state, and helped establish the CBA/CLE’s first Solo and Small Firm Practice Conference. And, beginning in 2018 Colorado became home to its first affordable law practice incubator, Legal Entrepreneurs for Justice (LEJ). LEJ, which is now housed in the Colorado Attorney Mentoring Program, provides support and education for lawyers committed to running affordable law practices that service low- and moderate-income clients.

• Colorado has seen progress on civil access to justice in numerous other ways not directly connected to recommendations set out in the 2014 Report. Those will be highlighted in the following recommendations for future progress.
Based on what the ATJC heard during its Listen & Learn Tour with service providers throughout the state, the Commission recommends that the General Assembly:

Significantly increase legislative funding for low-income Coloradans to access civil legal aid. In 2021 and 2022, the increased appropriations due to the availability of ARPA funds will allow legal services providers to assist more Coloradans facing eviction and domestic violence and the harms attendant to these disruptive events. As ARPA funds cease to be available, the General Assembly should commit to raising funding for the Family Violence Justice Fund and the Eviction Legal Defense Fund to at least pre-COVID levels.

Ensure adequate funding so Judicial Department infrastructure can support continued virtual court appearances as an access-to-justice tool and not just a health and safety measure. COVID-19 highlighted the value of virtual court appearances not only as a health and safety measure but also as a significant access-to-justice tool. But it also highlighted the need for greater technology infrastructure within the Judicial Department to support, among other things, successful virtual proceedings, and that infrastructure will require funding.

Support and fund Judicial Department programs that increase access for LEP individuals, plain language materials, and resources for people with disabilities. A consistent theme emerged from the listening sessions: our courts need to be more accessible. Increasing the availability of materials in languages other than English; converting forms, instructions, and other resources such as web content into plain language; and ensuring that the courts work for Coloradans with disabilities are essential and resource intensive.

Implement state-sponsored financial incentives, such as salary subsidies, tax credits, and loan repayment assistance programs, for lawyers who primarily serve rural Coloradans in legal deserts. The listening tour highlighted the dearth of attorneys in many parts of rural Colorado and the reality that the problem is only getting worse. Other states have started offering financial incentives for attorneys who commit to practice in more rural communities. South Dakota, for example, offers a salary subsidy to lawyers who spend five years serving underserved rural communities. And Maine’s legislature recently enacted a tax credit to encourage attorneys to commit to serving the state’s rural populations.

Prioritize legislation that directly promotes access to justice, for example, bills that make legal processes less onerous for self-represented parties.

Incorporate plain language into bills that affect participation in the civil legal system. Court forms and instructions are based on the language used in statutes. When statutes use plain language, it is easier for the courts to do so as well.

The Commission further recommends that judges and the Judicial Department should take the following measures:

Ensure the availability of a remote appearance option for certain court appearances. The experiences of litigants around the state during the COVID-19 pandemic were varied. Attendees at the listening sessions reported that remote proceedings allowed their clients to attend a 10-minute status conference without taking a day off of work or finding child care or transportation; permitted attorneys on the eastern plains to appear on behalf of clients who would have had to appear without representation because an in-person appearance would have meant a seven-hour roundtrip commute; let victims of domestic violence feel safer because they did not have to appear in the same space as their abusers; and offered innumerable other benefits. For certain kinds of judicial proceedings – particularly brief appearances that do not require the presentation of evidence – the courts should always offer an option for remote attendance. Ideally, the Judicial Department should standardize this option by specifying the types of proceedings for which a remote option would be required.

Continue developing and expanding technology infrastructure for virtual proceedings across Colorado. Virtual proceedings have been vital during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the experience demonstrated that their benefits exceeded health and safety, and expanded access to our court system. However, many courthouses still don’t have the infrastructure to make remote proceedings as effective as they could be, which means that some Coloradans are better positioned to take advantage of the benefits of remote proceedings than others. Continued infrastructure support, particularly in rural parts of the state, is essential to making court proceedings accessible.

Offer training for judges and judicial staff in best practices for serving people experiencing trauma. Judges should receive this and other training that will help them serve the public and self-represented litigants particularly. One of the most consistently expressed barriers to accessing the courts is the intimidating and complicated nature of the system. When individuals are facing a civil justice need, they are almost certainly experiencing trauma, and the complexity of court processes exacerbates those feelings. Many participants in the listening tour reported that their clients had encounters with judges and judicial staff that might have been more successful with a trauma-informed approach.
Continue efforts to make access to the courts more affordable, through measures like simplifying in forma pauperis (IFP) eligibility and waiving electronic filing fees. For indigent Coloradans seeking to participate in the court system, the complexity of the process of seeking IFP status – and therefore being entitled to waive filing fees – is a significant barrier. In 2021, the courts began accepting proof of certain public assistance as evidence that an individual is entitled to proceed IFP. However, the types of public assistance that satisfy this waiver of the complex IFP requirements are very limited. The Judicial Department should expand this option so that any individual receiving any income-based government benefits can participate in court proceedings without paying filing fees. Another cost barrier presented by current Judicial Department processes is the requirement that anyone wishing to file documents electronically pay a $12 processing fee by credit card for each filing. For indigent litigants and for those without a credit card, this fee is a significant impediment to participation in the civil justice system.

Continue expanding simplified and standardized forms and procedures. One consistent theme in every listening session was that the complexity of the legal system is overwhelming for self-represented litigants and the community service providers who try to help them. Converting court forms into plain language would help court users to better understand the forms and complete them more accurately. Using the same simplified forms in every court in the state would permit self-represented users who face legal needs in different jurisdictions – and the community service providers who help individuals in multiple jurisdictions – to navigate courts more easily and provide them equal access. The movement to increase the use of plain language materials and simplified processes in courts is a nationwide effort. In fact, the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators in 2019 adopted a resolution “urg[ing] courts, when drafting policies, procedures, and protocols, as well as associated documents, forms, and other information, (1) to write in a manner that is clear, concise, and easily comprehensible to all court users; (2) to make them publicly available online and in physical locations where they are readily accessible to court users; and (3) where possible, to make them uniform statewide within the court system.” Colorado’s Judicial Department has taken steps to meet these goals, for example, with a pilot plain language effort in domestic cases in the 1st, 5th, 12th, and 19th judicial districts. The Department should expand these efforts statewide, not only for domestic cases, but many other case types, including eviction and debt collection cases, in which most litigants are self-represented.

Increase services for LEP individuals and for people with disabilities. Although the complexity of the language and procedures in courts are impediments for every self-represented litigant, they present especially large challenges for LEP individuals and those with intellectual disabilities and certain physical disabilities. Judges and judicial staff should be educated about best practices for serving LEP individuals, such as the courts’ responsibilities regarding language access, the role of the managing court interpreter, and the basic policies and procedures of the Judicial Department’s language access program. The Judicial Department should investigate alternative virtual platforms to Webex, which is not effective for LEP individuals or individuals with disabilities.

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18 “In forma pauperis” (IFP) status is available to those who the court determines do not have the resources to pay filing fees.

19 See, e.g., Conn. Gen. Stat. § 52-259b(b); Me. R. Civ. P. 91(a)(3); Minn. Stat. 563.01(3)(b); NMRA Rule 23-114(A)(1).

Develop community-based, non-lawyer navigator programs in the courts. Colorado’s SRLCs and family court facilitators (FCFs) provide a remarkable service to self-represented people in the courts. SRLCs and FCFs, however, can only assist customers outside of the courtrooms. A growing number of courts around the country have utilized community navigators who can provide support in the courtroom, where self-represented litigants are often unsure and scared.21

Establish a licensed paraprofessional program so that legal advice can be provided at lower cost to consumers. The dearth of lawyers in rural communities and the overall cost of legal services was a consistent message in the listening sessions. In 2019, the Colorado Supreme Court directed the Attorney Regulation Advisory Committee to put together a proposal for the licensing and regulation of Licensed Legal Paraprofessionals who could provide services in certain domestic matters in which people are now overwhelmingly self-represented.22 The Court should approve that new, lower-cost category of legal services providers and should explore whether a similar model could be used in other case types.

Offer public guidance to clarify how non-lawyers can help self-represented litigants without fear of engaging in the unauthorized practice of law. One of the concerns that several community service providers raised is that they are fearful of helping people fill out legal forms because of concerns that they will be accused of engaging in unauthorized practice of law. Greater clarity on the kinds of assistance these community partners can provide without risking unauthorized practice would enable them to better help their clients.

The Commission recommends that the University of Colorado Law School and the University of Denver, Sturm College of Law take steps to address the civil justice gap, including:

Encourage law students to do pro bono work through programs specifically focused on providing legal services to those unable to afford attorneys and to rural Coloradans in legal deserts. If law students learn during law school about the ways they can serve high-need populations with their law degrees, they will be better positioned to pro bono service when they become attorneys and will have more knowledge about the programs available to enable them to do so.

Expand incentive programs to encourage law students and recent graduates to open or join law practices in legal deserts of rural Colorado. While current programs are not having the hoped-for success, continued and expanded attention to the needs of all Coloradans is essential to tackling the problem of legal deserts.

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For Colorado’s lawyers, the Commission recommends the following actions:

**Take and fulfill the Colorado Supreme Court’s Pro Bono Recognition Program pledge to dedicate fifty hours or more of pro bono legal services every year.** Each year, the Court recognizes those law firms, solo practitioners, and in-house counsel or government groups that have committed to the annual goal of providing fifty hours of pro bono legal services by their Colorado-licensed attorneys. If every Colorado attorney provided this 50-hour service, thousands of Coloradans who must address their civil justice needs without legal assistance would be helped.

Commit to supporting or providing affordable legal services such as unbundled, low bono, and sliding scale services. Legal services are unaffordable for the vast majority of Coloradans. Recent years have seen an increased focus on how lawyers can make a good living while offering their services at more affordable rates and reaching clients who would otherwise go without legal advice.

Dedicate a meaningful portion of your efforts to helping rural Coloradans. The number of attorneys in most of rural Colorado is shrinking steadily, leaving many rural Coloradans without easy access to legal advice. Colorado Legal Services and other legal aid providers offer a range of virtual and in-person clinics around the state that offer opportunities for lawyers to help Coloradans outside metro areas.

Join any of the robust and growing programs tackling the civil justice gap. Lawyers can volunteer with programs like the Virtual Pro Se Clinic, the Colorado Lawyers Committee, Metro Volunteer Lawyers, other local bar association pro bono programs, and local access to justice committees. Colorado’s pro bono portal, Succession to Service, is an easy online platform where attorneys, law students, and retired lawyers can find volunteer opportunities that fit their skills, interests, and availability.

Finally, the Commission recommends that Access to Justice Advocates take these steps:

Collaborate with local community service providers in advocacy measures such as programming, outreach, and communication campaigns. The listening sessions highlighted that there is a wide range of help available to Coloradans struggling with civil justice issues but that information about that help is not widely available. Research shows that people with civil justice issues often don’t realize they might have a legal remedy that would help them address those issues. Outreach and communication are essential to help inform people throughout the state about available resources.

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Collaborate with libraries and librarians to support self-represented litigants. People often initially turn to libraries for legal information. Since 2013, the Virtual Pro Se Clinic has taken advantage of that fact, partnering with libraries all across the state to offer virtual assistance to customers who schedule appointments to use library computers to meet with attorneys over Zoom.\textsuperscript{27} Access to justice advocates should explore other ways to work with libraries to help Coloradans with civil justice needs.

Promote low- or no-cost mediation and/or online dispute resolution programs in your judicial district for case types like eviction, small claims, and divorce. In some judicial districts, mediation is provided at no cost through city or county mediation services.\textsuperscript{28} The Office of Dispute Resolution at the State Court Administrators Office also maintains a list of low-cost mediators who work around the state. Mediation can be a cost-effective and less complex way to resolve a legal issue. Expanding the availability of low- or no-cost mediation, particularly in rural communities, would offer access to this service to a broader range of Coloradans.

Promote the creation of eviction diversion programs. Many states have recently established successful eviction diversion programs that have helped tenants avoid the terrible consequences of losing their housing while working to ensure that landlords’ concerns are addressed.\textsuperscript{29} Several judicial officers have been exploring how to implement similar efforts in Colorado, but these efforts require community partnerships. Advocates of closing the justice gap should work to connect community service providers, courts, and other governmental entities to explore eviction diversion opportunities.

Coordinate with existing advocacy efforts for the expansion of public broadband, especially in rural Colorado. While participants in the listening sessions highlighted the benefits of remote proceedings for access to justice, they also noted that not all Coloradans can take advantage of remote options or otherwise access services because they do not have access to the necessary technology or to broadband.

Organize an advocacy effort that engages judicial nominating commissions and judicial performance commissions as critical decision-makers in ensuring access to justice. The judicial selection process in Colorado begins at the nominating commissions, where citizens interview candidates to recommend for judicial appointments. If commissioners understand the importance of access-to-justice concerns, they can question and recommend judicial applicants with these concerns in mind. Judicial performance commissions review judges and make recommendations about judicial retention. When these commissions are considering judges’ performance, they should be reminded to consider judges’ demonstrated commitment to a fair and accessible justice system as part of that evaluation.

Serve in a leadership role on your local access to justice committee. Nearly every region in Colorado has an active local access to justice committee eager for more motivated, passionate advocates to help organize locally-tailored community-driven solutions like legal information clinics, civic engagement campaigns, CLEs, and much more.

\textsuperscript{27} See Ric N. Morgan, The Virtual Pro Se Clinic Concept, 43 Colo. Lawyer 77 (2014).


One clear message of the 2021 Listen & Learn Tour is that there is no shortage of community and legal service providers, Judicial Department staff, and judges in Colorado who are interested in finding ways to address existing access-to-justice barriers. But it is also clear that there is a long way to go in this effort, and it will require time and resources on many different fronts. Each of the barriers that participants mentioned during these listening sessions is alone enough to make accessing the civil justice system difficult, but the barriers don’t operate in isolation. Instead, participants noted that the barriers build on each other. Solutions must similarly be interconnected and build on each other as we work to address these challenges. The recommendations included in this Report offer a non-exclusive set of steps that will move our state towards a civil justice system that provides meaningful access.

The Commission, too, has no small role to play. It will continue convening strategic partners to coordinate solutions, raising awareness about barriers to access, and advocating for civil legal aid. The Commission’s strategic action plan for 2022-2023 will also include two focal initiatives: 1) advancing an online portal to guide Coloradans searching for help with legal issues to the information and assistance they need, and 2) supporting a coalition effort to expand the availability of legal services in rural legal deserts statewide. The voices of the 519 participants of the 2021 Listen & Learn Tour have helped underscore that Coloradans urgently need an army behind the effort to break down access-to-justice barriers. Despite the disparities and vulnerabilities exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, stakeholders across Colorado have an unprecedented opportunity to work together in increasing meaningful access to justice in our state.
Appendix A:
Listen & Learn Participants

Denver Metro Area (1st, 2nd, 17th, 18th Judicial Districts)

Johanny Alston
Participant Experience Specialist | The Action Center

Michelle Amico
Chief Judge | 18th Judicial District

Amber Hill Anderson
Mediator | Community Mediation Concepts

Beth Andersen-Filson
Attorney | Andersen Law PC

Angela Arkin
Arbiter | Judicial Arbiter Group, Inc.

Jean Arnold
Partner | Arnold & Arnold LLP

Jonathan Asher
Executive Director | Colorado Legal Services

Spencer Bailey
Housing Attorney | Colorado Poverty Law Project

Sally Boccella
Regional Director, Northern Colorado | US Senator John Hickenlooper

Lizbeth Campuzano
Employment Specialist | Servicios De La Raza

Michele Clark
President | Mediation Association of Colorado

Alisha Coombe
CEO | Colorado Children First

Carey DeGenaro
Director of Legal Services | Covid-19 Eviction Defense Project

Geneva DeHoyos
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 17th Judicial District

Heidi Dobbins
Lead Legal Advocate | Family Tree

Leslie Ebert
Supervising Attorney - Housing Unit | Colorado Legal Services

Alicia Ehr
Language Access Manager | 2nd Judicial District

Adam Espinosa
District Court Judge | 2nd Judicial District

Jennifer Eyl
Executive Director | Project Safeguard

Beth Faragher
County Court Judge | Denver County Court

Casey Fazio
Library Program Associate | Denver Public Library

Wendy Ferrell
Executive Director | Denver Asset Building Coalition

Molly French
Technology Manager | Colorado Legal Services

Sara Garrido
County Court Judge | Jefferson County

Kimberly Gent
Attorney | Harris Family Law

Ellen Giarratana
Managing Attorney | Colorado Center on Law and Policy

Donna Gibbs
Court Liaison/Paralegal | Jefferson County Child Support Services

Mekela Goehring
Executive Director | Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network

Diana Goldberg
Executive Director | SungateKids

Julie Gonzales
Senator | Colorado State Senate

Crystal Guthrie
Family Court Facilitator | 17th Judicial District

Jeffrey Hahn
Program Director | Family Tree

Bradly Halm
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 18th Judicial District

Abby Hansen
Director of Counseling & Advocacy Services | Safehouse Denver

Valerie Harper
Family Court Facilitator | 18th Judicial District
Alec Harris
Partner | Armstrong Teasdale LLC
Sterling Harris Chief Deputy Director | Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance

Michelle Haynes
Magistrate | 2nd Judicial District

Nikki Hernández
Outreach Coordinator | Colorado Address Confidentiality Program

Leslie Herod
State Representative | Colorado General Assembly

Kazi Houston
Legal Director | Rocky Mountain Victim Law Center

Byron Howell
County Judge | 17th Judicial District

Karen Hubler
District Court Magistrate | 2nd Judicial District

Kristine Johnson
Mediator | Castle Rock Mediation

Maha Kamal
Principal Attorney | Colorado Family Law Project

Colleen Kent
Managing Court Interpreter | Adams County Combined Court

Leroy Kirby
County Court Judge | Adams County

Shana Kloek
Clerk of Court | 18th Judicial District

Patricia Kmitta
Court Executive | 17th Judicial District

Olivia Kohrs
Attorney | Colorado Poverty Law Project

Kip Kolkmeier
Volunteer Mediator | Jefferson County

Tammy Kuennen
Professor of Law | University of Denver Sturm College of Law

Heather Lang
Family Court Facilitator | 18th Judicial District

Janet Lee
Family Court Facilitator | 17th Judicial District

Emy López
Engagement Program Manager | Colorado Bar Association

Andrew Lorenzen
Director | Lincoln County Department of Human Services

Lois Lupica
Director, Law + Innovation Lab | University of Denver Sturm College of Law

Timothy Macdonald
Partner | Arnold & Porter

Michael Maday
Member, Board of Directors | Mediation Association of Colorado

Michael Martínez
Chief Judge | 2nd Judicial District

Andy McCallin
Judge | 2nd Judicial District

Virginia McClerkin
Administrative Coordinator | Colorado Bar Association

Terri Meredith
Clerk of Court - Gilpin County | 1st Judicial District

Gale Miller
Judge (retired) | Member, Access to Justice Commission Delivery Committee

Josefina Milliner
Executive Director | Advocates for Children CASA

Simon Mole
Owner | Simon Mediation LLC

David Monroe
Legal Services Supervisor | Disability Law Colorado

Ric Morgan
Coordinator | Virtual Pro Se Clinic (VPC)

Kacie Mulhern
Staff Attorney | Children’s Law Center

Toni-Anne Nuñez
Director | Metro Volunteer Lawyers

Terry Nyberg
Family Court Facilitator | 18th Judicial District

Steve O’Dorisio
Commissioner | Adams County

Vivian Pereda
Family Support/Enforcement Supervisor | Adams County Child Support Services

Rebekah Pfahler
Supervising Attorney of Family & Children’s Unit | Colorado Legal Services

Jeffrey Pilkington
Chief Judge | 1st Judicial District

Amy Reece
Chief Operating Officer | Advocates for Children (CASA)

Julie Reiskin
Executive Director | Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition

Anaya Robinson
Associate Director | Atlantis Community Inc.

Michael Roche
County Judge | Arapahoe County

Jennifer Runyan
Owner | Oval Options for Conflict Resolution
Bonnie Saltzman  
Attorney | Law Offices of Bonnie E. Saltzman LLC

Jenny Santos  
Victim Advocate | Servicios de La Raza

Maria Scardina  
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Marta Skovrinski  
Mediator | Community Mediation Concepts

Thomas Snyder  
President | Colorado Poverty Law Project

Paolo Solorzano  
Program Services Navigator | The Action Center

Kelley Southerland  
Magistrate | 18th Judicial District

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Attorney Mediator | Squires Mediation & Office of Dispute Resolution

Carolena Steen  
Mediator | Mediation Association of Colorado

Tammy Story  
Senator | Colorado General Assembly

Dan Taubman  
Senior Judge | Colorado Court of Appeals

Reenie Terjak  
Director of Advocacy | Colorado Legal Services

Melissa Thate  
Housing Stability Director | Denver Department of Housing Stability

Steve Thompson  
Attorney | Justice and Mercy Legal Aid Center

Marianne Tims  
Magistrate | 1st Judicial District

John Tull  
Owner | John A. Tull & Associates

Lizzy Ullman  
Attorney | Colorado Legal Services

Sophie Updike  
Program Associate | CobbleStreets

José Vásquez  
Supervising Attorney, Consumer Unit | Colorado Legal Services

Melissa Walter  
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 1st Judicial District

Mike Weissman  
State Representative | Colorado General Assembly

Traci Worthan  
Deputy Court Executive | 1st Judicial District

James Zobel  
County Court Judge | City and County of Denver

Anne Zogg  
Power of Attorney Program Coordinator | Metro Volunteer Lawyers

Southern Colorado  
(3rd Judicial District)

Michael Aragon  
Executive Director | Las Animas County Human Services

Gerald Cisneros  
County Commissioner | Huerfano County

Lorraine Cisneros  
Clerk of the Court | Huerfano Combined Courts

Anita Cordova  
Child Welfare Supervisor | Las Animas County Department of Human Services

Phil Dorenkamp  
Administrator | Las Animas County

Dr. Rhonda Epper  
President | Trinidad State Junior College

Leslie Gerbracht  
Chief Judge | 3rd Judicial District

Sheila Hudson-Macchietto  
Director | Huerfano County Department of Human Services

Kate Johnson  
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator / Investigator | 3rd Judicial District

Teresa Keller  
Director of Rural Services | Health Solutions

Michelle Kendall  
Child Welfare Supervisor | Las Animas County Department of Human Services

Robert Kreiman  
Court Executive | 3rd Judicial District

Felix López  
Commissioner | Las Animas County Council of Governments

Veronica Maes  
Director | Area Agency on Aging, Region 14, South Central Council of Governments

Bob Major  
Family Court Facilitator | 3rd Judicial District

Dawn Mann  
Magistrate | 3rd Judicial District County Court

Clay Mckisson  
District Court Judge | 3rd Judicial District

John Mochel  
County Court Judge | Las Animas County

Joann A. Montero  
Clerk of Court | Las Animas County Combined Courts

Pamela Nelson  
Municipal Court Judge | Trinidad Municipal Court

Susanne van der Meer  
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | Las Animas County
Jennifer Yates  
Early Childhood Council Coordinator, Parents as Teachers Supervisor | Huerfano-Las Animas Counties Early Childhood Council

Carl Young  
County Administrator | Huerfano County

Colorado Springs Area  
(4th Judicial District)

Cindy Aubrey  
CEO | Pikes Peak United Way

Will Bain  
Chief Judge | 4th Judicial District

Nayda Benitez  
South Regional Organizer | Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition

Jill Brady  
District Court Judge | 4th Judicial District

Andrew Bunn  
Program Director | Aging & Adult Services  
El Paso County Department of Human Services

Eric Burton  
Family Court Facilitator | 4th Judicial District

Jason DeaBueno  
President & CEO | Silver Key

Catherine Duarte  
Senior Analyst | City of Colorado Springs, Community Development Division

Laura Findorff  
District Court Judge | 4th Judicial District

Darryl Glenn  
Chief Legal Services Officer | TESSA of Colorado Springs

Claudia Goldin  
Family Immigration Services Director | Catholic Charities

Lucía Guillén  
Executive Director | Centro de la Familia

Deb Hamilton  
Law Librarian | Pikes Peak Library District

Kristiana Huitron  
Executive Director | Voces Unidas for Justice

Lori Jarvis-Steinwert  
Executive Director | National Alliance on Mental Illness

Shawna Kemppainen  
Executive Director | The Place

Dr. Pamela Knothe  
Quality Enhancement Supervisor | The Resource Exchange

Britt Kwan  
Executive Director | The Justice Center

Sarah Lipka  
Managing Attorney | Colorado Legal Services

Anne Markley  
CEO | TESSA of Colorado Springs

Hannah Martin  
Director | Accompaniment and Sanctuary Coalition

Andrea Paprzycki  
Magistrate | 4th Judicial District

Cliff Potter  
Member, Board of Directors | Westside CARES

Angela Rose  
Executive Director | Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) of the Pikes Peak Region

DeAnna Rumsey  
Community Organizing Specialist | The Independence Center

Tim Schutz  
District Court Judge | 4th Judicial District

Monycka Snowbird  
Program Director | Haseya Advocate Program

Mary Stegner  
Executive Director | Partners in Housing

Lisa Younger Anderson  
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 4th Judicial District

Eagle, Summit, & Clear Creek Counties  
(5th Judicial District)

Jenny Abbott  
Executive Director | Advocates of Lake County

Joni Albers  
Executive Director | Clear Creek County Advocates

Rick Backlund  
President and Founder | AIM for the Summit

Peter Bakken  
Executive Director | Mountain Dreamers

Brent Basham  
Director of Case Management | Mountain Valley Developmental Services

Kala Bettis  
Outreach Operations Manager | Eagle Valley Behavioral Health

Josh Blanchard  
Commissioner | Summit County Government

Kristi Bloodworth  
Staff Attorney | Bright Future Foundation

Eudelia Contreras  
Community Organizer | Lake County Build a Generation

Stacy Contreras  
Family Resource Center Navigator | Full Circle of Lake County

Alexander Cutler  
Violence Prevention Manager | Advocates of Lake County

Patricia Craig  
Administrator, Northwest Colorado Legal Services Project | Colorado Legal Services

Mary Christina Floyd  
Municipal Judge | Leadville Municipal Court
Rachel Fresquez  
Eagle County Court Judge | 5th Judicial District

Becky Gray  
Problem Solving Court Coordinator/Protective Proceedings Monitor | 5th Judicial District

MaLinda Hollis  
Clerk of Court | Eagle Combined Courts, 5th Judicial District

Courtney Holm  
Attorney and Mediator | Courtney Holm & Associates, AAL PC

Claudia P. Hurtado-Myers  
Attorney | Hurtado Law, PLLC

Cynthia Jones  
County Judge | Georgetown County Court

Rebecca Kanaly  
CEO | United Way of Eagle River Valley

Maggie Larson  
Legislative Aide | Colorado House of Representatives

Carime Lee  
Member, Board of Directors | Mountain Dreamers

Becki Leitman  
Board Member, Homeward Bound of the Grand Valley | Criminal Defense Investigator

Christian Luna-Leal  
Evaluation and Advocate Specialist | Full Circle of Lake County

Laurie Mactavish  
Family Court Facilitator | 5th Judicial District

Ana Martin-Childers  
Managing Court Interpreter | 5th Judicial District

Karen McCarthy  
Attorney | Elevation Law LLC

Marion McDonough  
Regional Director | Catholic Charities

Danielle McQueen  
Grant & Evaluation Manager | Family & Intercultural Resource Center

Michael Pisciotta  
Court Executive | 5th Judicial District

Sally Rush  
Housing Coordinator | Clear Creek County Government

Jessie Sack  
Legal Program Coordinator | Summit Advocates

Jonathan Shamis  
Judge | 5th Judicial District

Brianne Snow  
Executive Director | Family & Intercultural Resource Center

Tina Strang  
Long Term Care Ombudsman | Vintage

Mark Thompson  
Chief Judge | 5th Judicial District

Marie Toyama  
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 5th Judicial District

Angie VanSchoick  
Court Administrator | Town of Breckenridge

Carrie Mae Wack  
Reference and Adult Programming | Eagle Valley Library District

Tsu Wolin-Brown  
Center Coordinator | The Salvation Army, Vail Service Extension

Southwestern Colorado  
(6th & 22nd Judicial Districts)

Tracy Blagg  
Executive Director | Renew, Inc.

Jim Denvir  
County Court Judge, District Court Magistrate, Retired | Colorado Judicial Branch

Richard Gallegos  
Family Court Facilitator | 22nd Judicial District

Beatriz Garcia  
Program Manager | Compañeros: Four Corners Immigrant Resource Center

Lee Hallberg  
Executive Director | Mancos Public Library

Kacie Henderson  
Problem Solving Court Coordinator | 22nd Judicial District

Eric Hogue  
Court Executive | 6th & 22nd Judicial Districts

Bryn Joyner  
CASA Program Director | 4 The Children

Brigid Korce  
Director | Housing Solutions for Southwest Colorado

Kate Lockemann  
Staff Attorney | Colorado Legal Services

Lynne Sholler  
Attorney | Sholler Edwards, LLC

Doug Walker  
Chief Judge | 22nd Judicial District

Gaye Weiss  
Program Manager | Rainbow Youth Center

Jeff Wilson  
Chief Judge | 6th Judicial District

West Central Colorado  
(7th Judicial District)

Abby Bares  
Caseworker I | San Miguel County Social Services
Desiree Bartelli  
Clerk of Court | 7th Judicial District

Jill Betz  
Caseworker | San Miguel County Social Services

Mary Burt  
Regional Health Connector | Tri-County Health Network

Patricia Craig  
Administrator, Northwest Colorado Legal Services Project | Colorado Legal Services

Patrick Crane  
Attorney | Public Defender’s Office

Claudia García Curzio  
Community Engagement Manager | San Miguel Resource Center

Leslie German  
Court Executive | 7th Judicial District

Brittany Hildebrandt  
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 7th Judicial District

Francesca Hovagimian  
Deputy State Public Defender | Office of the Colorado State Public Defender

Sarah Landeryou  
Library Director | Wilkinson Public Library

Lindsay Marshall  
Managing Attorney | Colorado Legal Services

Zachary Martin  
County Court Judge | Ouray County

Duber Mayer  
Managing Court Interpreter | Trial Courts

Ricardo Perez  
Executive Director | Hispanic Affairs Project

Ximena Rebolledo León  
Nurse Care Manager | Telluride Regional Medical Center

Daniella Shively  
Managing Attorney | Colorado Legal Services

Ross Valdez  
Community Engagement Specialist | City of Montrose

Larimer & Jackson Counties (8th Judicial District)

Rebekah Berry-Chaney  
Managing Attorney, Bringing Justice Home | Vice President, Larimer County Bar Association

Susan Blanco  
Chief Judge | 8th Judicial District

Lee Cooper  
Officer | Larimer County Veteran’s Services

Kristin Draper  
Member, Board of Directors | Poudre School District

Gail Engel  
Founder Executive Director | Grand Family Coalition

África García Fariña  
Library Assistant | Poudre River Public Library District

Micah Foster  
Regional Veteran’s Employment Representative | Larimer & Weld County

Lisa Gibson  
Veteran’s Justice Outreach Coordinator | Veteran’s Affairs, Cheyenne and Northern Colorado VA Medical Center

Lisa Graham  
Supervisor II | Larimer County Court

Patrick Hatchett  
Nurturing Parenting Coordinator | Catholic Charities

Ian Holmes  
Adult Services Librarian | Poudre River Public Library District

Adriana Borja Jovel  
Bilingual Early Childhood Navigator | The Matthews House

Gloria Kat  
Executive Director | The Family Center/La Familia

Laurie Klieth  
Executive Director | Center for Family Outreach

Gene Klivansky  
Treatment Services Court Liaison | Criminal Justice Services Division

Greg Lammons  
District Court Judge | 8th Judicial District

Rikke M. Liska  
Attorney, Court Visitor & Respondent Counsel for Protective Proceedings | Kaufman, Findley, & Smith (Larimer County Public Administrator’s Office)

Christa Menning  
Team Supervisor & Lead Counselor | Larimer County Economic & Workforce Development Department

Arpi Miller  
Interfaith Sanctuary and Accompaniment Coalition | Emergency Immigration Fund

Trisha Reynolds  
Office Supervisor and Accredited Veteran Service Officer | Larimer County Veterans Service Office

Benn Rocha  
Managing Court Interpreter | 8th Judicial District

Andrea Shahmardian  
Family Court Facilitator | 8th Judicial

Katie Stieber  
Program Manager | Larimer County Office on Aging
Sabrina Stoker  
Executive Director | CASA of Larimer County

Jillene Stoner  
Family to Family Transition Facilitator | The Matthews House

Reenie Terjak  
Director of Advocacy | Colorado Legal Services

Cali Thole  
Director of Forensic Services | SummitStone Health Partners

Christy Utley  
Clerk of Court | Jackson County Combined Courts

Margaret Watson  
Family to Family Transition Facilitator | The Matthews House

Joan Woodbury  
Managing Attorney | Colorado Legal Services

Garfield, Pitkin, & Rio Blanco Counties  
(9th Judicial District)

Kayla Bailey  
Program Director | Mind Springs Health

Jim Boyd  
Chief Judge | 9th Judicial District

Steven Brown  
Attorney | Brown Chase and Shulman, LLC

Heather Cramer  
President, Pitkin County Bar Association | Attorney, Heather Cramer, PC

Kimberly Gent  
Attorney | Harris Family Law

Joe Gerber  
CPO | 9th Judicial District, Probation

Joanie Gibson  
Clerk of Court | Rio Blanco County Court

Tom Jankovsky  
Commissioner | Garfield County

Olivia Kohrs  
Housing Attorney | Colorado Poverty Law Project

Shannon MacKenzie  
Deputy Executive Director & Managing Attorney | Colorado Poverty Law Project

Tony Mendez  
Staff Attorney | Alpine Legal Services

Angela Mills  
Executive Director | United Way Battlement to the Bells

John Neiley  
Judge | 9th Judicial District

Julie Olson  
Executive Director | Advocate Safehouse Project

Susan Ryan  
District Court Magistrate | 9th Judicial District

Daniella Shively  
Managing Attorney | Colorado Legal Services

Jenny Wherry  
Executive Director | Alpine Legal Services, Inc.

Crystal Young  
Advocacy Director | Advocate Safehouse Project

Pueblo County  
(10th Judicial District)

Kyle Aber  
Assistant City Attorney | City of Pueblo

Yesenia Beascochea  
Lead Organizer | Center for Health Progress

Nayda Benitez  
South Regional Organizer | Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition

Joseph Bowers  
Volunteer Peer Specialist | The Friendly Harbor, NAMI SE CO - Mental Health America, Pueblo

Pamela Bufmack  
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | Pueblo Combined Court

Dale Buterbaugh  
ADA Advocate Non-Attorney | CCDC, SELF

Ashlee Chávez  
Program Coordinator | ACOVA, Pueblo County Sheriff’s Office

Kathy Cline  
Executive Director | Pueblo Rescue Mission

Allison Ernst  
District Court Judge | 10th Judicial District

Cathy Fergerson  
Nutrition on Wheels Program Director | Pueblo Cooperative Care Center

Zane Grant  
Executive Director | CASA of Pueblo

J.R. Hall  
Undersheriff | Pueblo County Sheriff’s Office

Jami Hancock  
Case Management Supervisor | YWCA of Pueblo

Wes Hassler  
Principal | Hassler Law Firm

Patrick Hatchett  
Assistant Coordinator Nurturing Parenting | Catholic Charities

Corry Higbee  
Executive Director | Pueblo Cooperative Care Center

Mary Hobbs  
Supervisor | James F. Dunn VAMC Clinic, Pueblo

Marie Humphrey  
Sr. AVP for Student Affairs & Dean of Students | CSU Pueblo

Florence Hunt  
Victim/Witness Coordinator | District Attorney’s Office
Kim Karn  
District Court Judge | 10th Judicial District

Bob Keating  
Managing Attorney | Colorado Legal Services

Erica Kindred  
Family Court Facilitator | Pueblo Combined Court

Steven Laman  
Magistrate | 10th Judicial District

Michelle McNamara  
Judicial Assistant | 10th Judicial District

Teah Miller  
Director of Crisis Services | Health Solutions

Kaci Mysliwiec  
Family Care Specialist | Pueblo Child Advocacy Center

Chris Noeller  
Interim Chief of Police | Pueblo Police Department

Roxanne Pignanelli  
Government Affairs | District 70

Dorothy Radakovich  
Magistrate | 10th Judicial District

Gail Rodosevich  
Pro Bono Coordinator | Colorado Legal Services

Ben Strand  
Veteran Support Specialist | Rocky Mountain Human Services

Greg Styduhar  
District Court Judge | 10th Judicial District

Tammy Torres  
Deputy Director | Pueblo County Department of Human Services

Andrea Valdez  
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | Pueblo Combined Court

Maureen White  
Executive Director | YWCA Pueblo

LaTanya Yarbrough  
Case Manager | Posada

Central Mountain Region  
(11th Judicial District)

Larry Allen  
Magistrate | 11th Judicial District

Mandy Allen  
Clerk of Court | 11th Judicial District

Jeanna Baitlon  
Staff Attorney | Colorado Legal Services

Mary Bowen  
Director of Victim’s Services | Park County Sheriff’s Office

Yvonne Braden  
CEO/Facility Director | Valley to Valley Senior Care Center

Becky Casey  
Family Court Facilitator/Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 11th Judicial District

Dick Gast  
Chair | Colorado Access to Justice Commission

Theresa Gerstmeyer  
Regional Ombudsman | Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments

Monica Haskell  
Supervisor | Chaffee County Department of Human Services

Rebecca Holmes  
Clerk of Court | 11th Judicial District

Mandy Kaisner  
Chief Operating Officer | Solvista Health

Patty Lucy  
Assistant Director Victim Services | Park County Sheriff’s Office

Veronica Martin  
Program Manager | Volunteers of America

Ric Morgan  
Program Coordinator | Virtual Pro Se Clinic

Molly Ryan  
Director of Administration and Access | Colorado Legal Services

Kayla Schleicher  
Case Manager | Department of Human Services

Tony Sullivan  
Chief Clinical Officer | Solvista Health

Daniel Tom  
Deputy County Attorney | Chaffee County

Bobbie Woods  
Intake/Outreach Coordinator | Volunteers of America Supportive Services for Veteran Families

San Luis Valley  
(12th Judicial District)

Alyson Coombs  
Co-Owner | Rocky Mountain Counseling, LLC

Kristina Daniel  
Chief Behavioral Health Officer | Valley-Wide Health Systems

George Dingfelder  
Chief of Police | Monte Vista Police Department

Chris Friesell  
County Attorney | Alamosa County

Michael González  
Chief Judge | 12th Judicial District

Kaylene Guymon  
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 12th Judicial District

Dr. Emma Martínez  
Superintendent | South Conejos School District
Kimberly Martinez  
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 12th Judicial District

Dawn Melgares  
Executive Director | San Luis Valley Housing Coalition

Ronnie Mondragon  
Legal Research Attorney | 12th Judicial District

Jacob Navare  
Department of Human Services

Theresa Ortega  
Executive Director | Tu Casa, Inc.

Amanda Pearson  
Director of Organizational Capacity | La Puente Home

Victoria Romero  
Executive Director | San Luis Valley Behavioral Health Group

John Stenger  
Family Court Facilitator | 12th Judicial District

Tammy Sullivan  
Managing Attorney | Colorado Legal Services

Angelica Raya Trejo  
Immigrant Advocate | Immigration Resource Center

Dr. Mugabe Walker  
Geriatric Medicine Specialist | SLV Physician Services

Daniel Walzl  
County Court Judge | Alamosa County

Christina Wingert  
Court Executive | 12th Judicial District

Luke Yoder  
Executive Director | Center for Restorative Programs

Northeastern Colorado  
(13th Judicial District)

Paula Bragg  
Executive Director | SARA House

Alicia Fierro  
Outreach Director | Share Inc.

Curt Freed  
President | Morgan Community College

Jacque Frenier  
Director | Morgan County Department of Human Services

Stevie Gagliano  
District Court Judge | 13th Judicial District

Dawn Gerk  
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 13th Judicial District

Sara Harms  
Clerk of Court & Jury Commissioner | 13th Judicial District

Erin Harris  
Managing Attorney | Colorado Legal Services, La Junta Office

Michelle Harris  
Case Manager/Data Entry/Jail Screener | Colorado Youth Detention Continuum

Kevin Hoyer  
District Court Judge | 13th Judicial District

Jason Orvis  
Municipal Court Administrator | City of Fort Morgan

Tiffany Ramos  
Director | Kit Carson County

Douglas Short  
Court Executive | 13th Judicial District

Michael Singer  
Chief Judge | 13th Judicial District

Kelley Sullivan  
Victim Assistance Coordinator | Phillips County Victim Assistance Program

Shaun Wilson  
Executive Director | Hope House serving NE Colorado

Northwestern Colorado  
(14th Judicial District)

Susie Coleman  
CMP Coordinator | Northwest Colorado health

Patricia Craig  
Administrator, Northwest Colorado Legal Services Project | Colorado Legal Services

Yvonne Draxle  
Executive Director | Family Resource Center

Meghan Francone  
Executive Director | Open Heart Advocates

Polly Gallagher  
Executive Director | Grand County Library District

Sandra Gardner  
District Court Judge | 14th Judicial District

James Garrecht  
County Judge | 14th Judicial District

Peggy Gentles  
Court Executive | 14th Judicial District

Carrie Halton  
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 14th Judicial District, Moffat County

Julie Hulslander  
Assistant Director | Routt County Human Services

John Major  
Reference Librarian | Bud Werner Memorial Library

Maria Malatino  
Clerk of Court | 14th Judicial District, Moffat County

Linda Manguso  
CJA/PPM/Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 14th Judicial District, Grand County
Ric Morgan  
Coordinator | Virtual Pro Se Clinic (VPC)

Nelly Navarro  
Executive Director | Comunidad Integrada/Integrated Community (CIIC)

Mick O’Hara  
Chief Judge | 14th Judicial District

Reid Petersen  
Resource & Referral Coordinator | Comunidad Integrada/Integrated Community (CIIC)

Casey Quillen  
Attorney, NWCBA Secretary | Northwest Colorado Bar Association

Lauren Rising  
Routt County Program Coordinator | Colorado Legal Services

Susan Ritschard  
Family Court Facilitator | 14th Judicial District

Brittany Schneider  
Moffat County Court Judge | 14th Judicial District

Cheyenne Somers  
Law Student Volunteer | Virtual Pro Se Legal Clinic

Lynaia South  
Senior Assistant County Attorney | Routt County

Anne Boswell  
News Director and Talk Show Host for Local Legal Conversation | 25-7 Media

David Collins  
Counselor | RESADA

Jim Collins  
Adult Services Manager | Otero County Department of Human Services

Diane Crow  
Court Executive | 15th Judicial District

Mike Davidson  
District Judge | 15th Judicial District

Randa Davis-Tice  
Attorney | Lower Arkansas Valley Area Agency on Aging

Kimberly Gallegos  
Programming & Outreach Coordinator | Woodruff Memorial Library

Erin Harris  
Managing Attorney | Colorado Legal Services, La Junta Office

Kathy Hight  
Client Services Director | Arkansas Valley Pregnancy Center

Michelle Welch  
Probation Supervisor | 14th Judicial District

Jenn Wright  
Magistrate | 14th Judicial District

Southeastern Colorado (15th & 16th Judicial Districts)

Nicole Baylor  
Community Supports Director | InspirationField

Dawn Block  
Senior Center Coordinator | City of La Junta

Richard Chandler  
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 15th Judicial District

Mark MacDonnell  
Chief Judge | 16th Judicial District

Heather Maes  
Director of Library Services | Woodruff Memorial Library

Ray Martinez  
Labor and Employment Specialist | Southeast Workforce Center

Steven Martinez  
Executive Director | RESADA

Vianey Veronica Martinez  
Data Coordinator | RESADA

Caryl Pearce  
Clerk of Court | 16th Judicial District

Lane Porter  
County Court Judge | Prowers County

Daniel Ramirez  
Family Court Facilitator | 16th Judicial District

Juliana Ripperger  
Attorney | Shultz Law Office, LLC

Donna Rohde  
Director | Otero County Department of Human Services

Ted Canfield  
Director | First Presbyterian Church

Judy Rusher  
Council Coordinator | Early Childhood Council Bent, Otero and Crowley Counties

Nathan Shultz  
Attorney | Shultz Law Office, LLC

Jamie Smith  
Clerk of Court | 15th Judicial District

Cynthia Sollenbarger  
Program Director | Arkansas Valley CASA

Katherine Tompkins  
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 16th Judicial District
Lisa Vigil
Tri-County Family Care Center

Tobin Wright
Chief Probation Officer | 16th Judicial District

Weld County (19th Judicial District)

Vanessa Arellando
Legal Coordinator | A Woman’s Place

Allison Esser
Attorney | Colorado Legal Services

Maria Gonzales
Independent Living Specialist | Connections for Independent Living

Mark C. Gonzales
Presiding Judge | Greeley Municipal Court

Kathryn Hall
Managing Attorney | Colorado Legal Services

James F. Hartmann
Chief Judge | 19th Judicial District

Alex Kloehn
Case and Community Coordinator | Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains Refugee & Asylee Programs

Randall Lococo
Magistrate | 19th Judicial District

Amanda Lucas
ReEntry Navigator and Case Manager | The Rock Found

Olivia Milsted
County Housing Navigation Center Coordinator | United Way of Weld

Ric Morgan
Coordinator | Virtual Pro Se Clinic (VPC)

Amanda Peek
Assistant County Attorney | Weld County

Shea Schneider
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 19th Judicial District

Gwen Schooley
Executive Director | Life Stories - Child & Family Advocacy

Lisa Taylor
Executive Director | Immigrant & Refugee Center of Northern Colorado

Vickie Taylor
Executive Director | Weld County Legal Services

Adam Turk
Deputy Chief | Greeley Police Department

Boulder County (20th Judicial District)

Sara Aerne
Neighborhood Resource Officer | Longmont Police Department

Jason Allen
Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance Program Coordinator | City of Boulder

David Archuleta
County Court Judge | Boulder County

Carin Armstrong
Program Manager | Community Mediation and Resolution Center

Elizabeth Brodsky
County Court Judge | Boulder County

Linda Cooke
Presiding Municipal Judge | City of Boulder

Desiree Firle
Community Protection Specialist | Boulder County District Attorney’s Office

Christian Gardner-Wood
Director of Community Protection & Legislative Affairs | Boulder County District Attorney’s Office

Shana Hageman
Legal Advocate | Safe Shelter of St. Vrain Valley

Jacob Harmon
Chief Executive Officer | Boulder Voices for Children

Timothy Johnson
Magistrate | 20th Judicial District

David Kennedy
Master Police Office | City of Longmont

Karen Kreutzberg
MTW and Federal Policy Director | Boulder Housing Partners

Brett Landis
Managing Attorney | Colorado Legal Services, Boulder

Jude Landsman
Executive Board | NAACP Boulder County

Dea Lindsey
District Court Judge | 20th Judicial District

Jackie List
Executive Director | Safe Shelter of St. Vrain Valley

Joni Lynch
Family Resource Director | OUR Center

Zachary Malkinson
County Court Judge | Boulder County

Kristy Martinez
County Court Judge | Boulder County

Carolyn McLean
Magistrate | 20th Judicial District

Katharine Merrell
Librarian | Lafayette Public Library

Zachary Mountin
Associate Clinical Professor | University of Colorado Law School Clinic
Darren O’Connor
Attorney | NAACP

Carlene Okiyama
Contracts and Compliance Coordinator | Boulder County Area Agency on Aging

Shalene Onyango
Executive Director | Longmont Community Justice Partnership

Tania Papp
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | 20th Judicial District

Julie Piller
Community & Family Education Manager | Sister Carmen Community Center

Colene Robinson
Clinical Professor | University of Colorado Law School

Laura Ruth
Executive Director | Boulder County Bar Association

Gina Scioscia
Digital Resources Info. | Boulder Public Library

Cyrus Scott
Client Advocate | HOPE for Longmont

Erin Shannon
Director of Advocacy and Education | Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence

Norma Sierra
District Court Judge | 20th Judicial District

Deborah Smith
Reentry Coordinator | Office of the District Attorney

Susan Spaulding
Community Relations Specialist | City of Longmont

Anne Tapp
Executive Director | Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence

Debbie Taussig
President | Colorado Trial Lawyers Association

Iva Velickovic
Skadden Fellow | Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network

Amy Waddle
Court Executive | 20th Judicial District

Bruce Wiener
Executive Director | Bridge to Justice

Robert Williams
Director | Boulder County Department of Housing and Human Services

Shiquita Yarbrough
Director of Community Engagement & Equity | YWCA Boulder County

Mesa County (21st Judicial District)

Scott Aker
Chief Operating Officer | Grand Junction Housing Authority

Raquel Cisneros
Family Navigator | Homeward Bound

Jeannette Finlayson
Managing Court Interpreter | 21st Judicial District

Brian Flynn
Chief Judge | 21st Judicial District

Daniel Garcia
Magistrate | 21st Judicial District

Richard Gurley
District Court Judge | 21st Judicial District

Lourdes Alvarado Haro
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator/CJA | Mesa Combined Court

Heather Jones
Director | Area Agency on Aging of Northwest Colorado

Beverly Lampley
Director of Development and Communication | Grand Valley Catholic Outreach

Raquel Lane-Arellano
Policy Manager | Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition

Becki Leitman
Board Member/Criminal Defense Investigator | Homeward Bound of the Grand Valley

Mateo Lozano
Hotline Coordinator | Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition

Cyndi McDaniel
Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator | Mesa Combined Court

William McNulty
Magistrate | 21st Judicial District

Zebulon Miracle
Executive Director | United Way of Mesa County

Laura Peniche
Hotline Manager | Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition

Valerie Robison
District Court Judge | 21st Judicial District

Amanda Shepard
Executive Director | Pro Bono Project of Mesa County, Inc.

Daniella Shively
Managing Attorney | Colorado Legal Services

Will Sightler
Court Executive | 21st Judicial District - CO Sandbox

Anna Stout
Mayor Pro Tem; Certified Court Interpreter | City of Grand Junction

Joy Thompson
Executive Director | Court Appointed Special Advocates of Mesa County