



1290 Broadway, Ste. 1700

• Denver, CO 80203 •

720.306.1022

PRESS RELEASE

Statewide listening tour seeks feedback from community members, organizations, and providers about barriers faced by people navigating Colorado courts

Information collected will inform work of Colorado legal aid and access to justice organizations

May 30, 2025 (DENVER)—The Colorado Access to Justice Commission and Colorado Legal Services are collecting feedback from community members statewide about barriers people face when navigating Colorado’s civil courts to identify solutions.

Colorado Supreme Court Justice Melissa Hart will lead listening sessions in each of Colorado’s 23 judicial districts to learn about the barriers people face to resolving their civil legal issues in a several months-long listening tour. Through the listening tour, the Commission seeks to understand current challenges and identify working solutions for people seeking to access the civil justice system.

Colorado Legal Services will use feedback shared during the tour as one of the data sources for its updated Legal Needs Assessment. Colorado Legal Services is also administering surveys and conducting a series of focus groups with low-income Coloradans to learn more about the civil legal needs of the communities the nonprofit legal aid organization serves.

The listening tour began on March 24, 2025, in the Northeast region, which includes Morgan, Logan, Sedgwick, Phelps, Washington, Yuma, and Kit Carson counties. Thus far, the Commission has held listening sessions as far as Las Animas county in the Southeast to Rio Blanco county in the Northwest and has covered the cities of Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, Glenwood Springs, Salida, and Pueblo. The tour will conclude in late June 2025.

The sessions bring together healthcare providers, domestic violence shelter staff, and librarians, among other community leaders. In addition to educating the judiciary, the Commission, and the public, the Tour is helping groups and leaders connect with each other. Organizations are able to share information about their services with other community partners. Many have not previously connected despite being in the same community and sharing clients. The tour provides an opportunity to learn about one another’s services and make key connections, within communities and across the state.

Colorado Legal Services is the largest statewide legal aid organization in Colorado, providing free civil legal services to low-income and senior residents. Colorado Legal Services has previously engaged in several legal needs assessments to ensure its services are aligned with



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community needs. To do so, the organization has used focus groups, former client surveys, and community surveys. By partnering with the Colorado Legal Services as it conducts its latest Legal Needs Assessment, the Commission will gain access to direct feedback on most pressing civil legal needs of low-income Coloradans.

This is the second iteration of the Commission's listening tour. In the earlier listening tour held in 2021, the Commission met with 519 community stakeholders across all of Colorado and authored a report with specific recommendations for improvement. The Tours build on the Commission's goals to create solutions and support the development of resources so that all Coloradans have the information, tools, and services necessary to solve their civil legal problems fairly, quickly, and economically. To see the 2021 report and learn more about the Commission, visit <https://www.coloradoaccesstojustice.org/>.