

## **CONFERENCE OF CHIEF JUSTICES**

### **CONFERENCE OF STATE COURT ADMINISTRATORS**

#### **Resolution 1-2025**

##### **In Support of Exploring Access to Justice Through Authorized Justice Practitioner Programs**

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA) have repeatedly acknowledged that the promise of equal access to justice is not realized for the vast majority of Americans, and the supply of free and affordable legal services is insufficient to meet the demand; and

WHEREAS, most low-income and middle-income individuals cannot afford legal services; and

WHEREAS, in many jurisdictions, individuals residing in rural or underserved urban areas face significant barriers to accessing legal services, leading to the emergence of legal deserts where the availability of qualified legal practitioners is critically low; and

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators have long championed the importance of fair access to justice for all in civil matters, and in 2015, adopted Resolution 5 setting an aspirational goal of 100 percent access to effective legal assistance for essential legal needs through a continuum of meaningful and appropriate services; and

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators adopted Resolution 2 in 2020, urging its members to consider regulatory innovations to improve the accessibility, affordability, and quality of legal services while ensuring necessary and appropriate protections for the public; and

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators adopted Resolution 2 in 2022, endorsing standards for regulatory reform assessment metrics; and

WHEREAS, state supreme courts are responsible for the regulation of legal service providers in their respective jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, approximately half of the states are exploring, implementing, or administering at least one regulatory reform initiative wherein individuals without law licenses are authorized to practice law in limited or community settings (“authorized justice practitioners”); and

WHEREAS, there are two primary categories of new authorized justice practitioner programs:  
(1) Allied Legal Professional (ALP) Programs and (2) Community-Based Justice Worker (CBJW) Programs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators encourage their members to examine whether authorized justice practitioners could be beneficial to expand access to legal representation and to take appropriate steps to explore and discuss such possibilities, including periodically re-evaluating whether new and/or different authorized justice practitioner models may be appropriate to address current needs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators urge their members who decide to develop an authorized justice practitioner model to ensure wide representation in putting together design and implementation committees to oversee the development of new authorized justice practitioner programs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators urge their members who decide to develop an authorized justice practitioner model to establish clear guidelines and regulations that define the scope of practice for additional classifications of authorized justice practitioners;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators urge their members who decide to develop an authorized justice practitioner model to develop certification programs and training opportunities for additional classifications of authorized justice practitioners that simplify and reduce barriers to entry while maintaining the necessary legal knowledge and ethical standards;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators urge their members who decide to develop an authorized justice practitioner model to monitor and evaluate the impact of new authorized justice practitioner programs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators urge their members who decide to develop an authorized justice practitioner model to promote public awareness of the roles and capabilities of new authorized justice practitioner programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators urge the National Center for State Courts and other justice partners to showcase effective and scalable models, develop best practices, engage in rigorous evaluation, and share resources pertaining to authorized justice practitioner programs.

Proposed by the CCJ/COSCA Joint Committee on Civil Justice at the CCJ/COSCA 2025 Annual Meeting on July 30, 2025.