



NEWS RELEASE

Arizona Supreme Court - Administrative Office of the Courts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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April is Access to Justice Month

PHOENIX – Governor Doug Ducey signed a proclamation making April 2019 Access to Justice Month in Arizona. Governor Ducey’s proclamation recognizes the importance of access to justice for all, including the value and goodwill generated in the public when all individuals have meaningful access to the judicial branch.

The Arizona Supreme Court established a [Commission on Access to Justice](#) in 2014 in part to carry out the goal of access to justice that was part of Chief Justice Scott Bales’ five-year strategic agenda. The Commission has remained a standing workgroup to develop and promote opportunities for individuals to ensure their voices are heard in Arizona’s courts. Access to justice is a longstanding goal of Arizona’s Supreme Court and Administrative Office of the Courts.

Arizona Court of Appeals, Division One Judge Lawrence Winthrop has chaired the Supreme Court’s Commission on Access to Justice since its creation in 2014.

Judge Winthrop stated, “We appreciate Governor Ducey’s recognition of and commitment to increasing every Arizonan’s opportunity to have meaningful access to our courts. In that regard, the Commission on Access to Justice is working with the Governor’s office to provide civil legal assistance for victims of crime, including domestic violence and elder abuse, and victims of the opioid crisis, and to help remove legal barriers for those seeking to reenter society. These goals line up with the Judiciary’s commitment to providing access to legal resources for vulnerable members of our community, and for those individuals who, by circumstance or choice, are representing themselves in court. Success in achieving these goals benefits our entire community, and Access to Justice Month is a welcome reminder to not only thank those who are working to promote access to justice, but also to recommit ourselves to this important cause.”

The Court has several working groups dedicated to promoting access to justice. Examples include the [State, Tribal, and Federal Court Forum](#) to improve the quality of justice delivered in overlapping jurisdictions; the [Commission on Minorities in the Judiciary](#), intended to remove barriers to achieving racial equality and equal justice and to increase the number of qualified minority applicants available to serve as judicial officers and as court professionals; and the [Committee on Limited Jurisdiction Courts](#) and the [Committee on Superior Court](#) help develop and implement policies designed to improve the quality of justice and access to the courts. Most recently, the Court established a [Legal Services Task Force](#) to review the regulations of the practice of law with the goal of improving the delivery of legal services to consumers.

Access to Justice Month is an opportunity to recognize and thank the attorneys, legal support staff, nonprofit agencies, judges, court staff, volunteers, institutions, and others that support justice for all. All individuals are encouraged to learn more about Arizona's courts this month, to offer support or volunteer where possible, and to direct those in need to the many resources available throughout Arizona. While special recognition is made this month, the work and innovations supporting access to justice for all continue.

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