

# Court Equity & Access Program Strategic Plan (2024 – 2029)

WASHINGTON STATE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS OFFICE OF COURT INNOVATION

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## COURT EQUITY & ACCESS PROGRAM DEFINITIONS<sup>1</sup>

**Access & Accessibility:** Creating and supporting barrier-free and usable facilities, environments, systems, communications, and processes, so that all individuals, regardless of disability, language, background, identity, or situation, can participate in, use, and enjoy the full benefits and privileges of the courts.

**Access to Justice:** All people, regardless of background, identity, or situation have an equitable opportunity to use the legal system to secure their rights under the law, effectively advocate for themselves and their interests, and be treated fairly, impartially, and with dignity.

**Anti-Racism:** The process and practice of actively identifying and opposing racism by changing policies, beliefs, and behaviors that promote and continue racist ideas, behaviors, and actions. Anti-racism requires action at the individual, institutional, and structural levels to eliminate racism.

**Belonging:** The feeling of being accepted, embraced, and valued as an integral part of a group or organization. When there is belonging, individuals feel they can be their authentic selves without fear of discrimination or exclusion. Belonging goes beyond inclusion – included groups have the power to redesign institutions with those in the existing group.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Some definitions were adopted or adapted from the <u>Washington State Pro-Equity Anti-Racism</u> (PEAR) Plan & Playbook 2022-2027 and the AOC Inclusion Team.

**Diversity:** The range of differences and unique attributes that individuals bring to a group, place, or organization.

**Equity:** Ensuring everyone has full access to the opportunities, power, and resources they need to flourish and achieve their full potential. Equity requires developing, strengthening, and supporting policies and procedures that distribute and prioritize resources to those who have been historically and currently marginalized, including tribes, and the elimination of systemic barriers that have been deeply entrenched in systems of inequality and oppression. Equity achieves procedural and outcome fairness, promoting dignity, honor, and respect for all people.

**Experience-based practices:** Practices that utilize the knowledge that individuals have gained from lived experiences.

**Inclusion:** Engaging everyone, regardless of ethnicity, race, gender, sex, religion, disability, background, etc., in an intentional way to provide opportunities to participate in all aspects of the group, organization, or community, including decision-making processes. Inclusion requires creating an environment where all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds, feel valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their perspectives.

**Self-Represented Persons:** A plain talk term for any individual who represents themselves in a legal matter in court (i.e., without an attorney) including those who are not parties to a lawsuit. The Court Equity & Access Program may also use the terms "unrepresented litigants/persons" or "pro se litigants."

## **ACRONYMS GUIDE**

- ADA Americans with Disabilities Act
- AOC Administrative Office of the Courts
- ATJ Access to Justice
- AWSCA Association of Washington Superior Court Administrators
- BJA Board for Judicial Administration
- CF Courthouse Facilitator
- CLJ Courts of Limited Jurisdiction
- CMS Case Management System
- Court E&A Program Court Equity & Access Program
- DEI Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- DJTF Disability Justice Task Force
- DMCJA District and Municipal Court Judges' Association
- DMCMA District and Municipal Court Management Association
- ILAC Interpreter and Language Access Commission
- LEE Lived Experience Expert
- LGBTQ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning
- NCSC National Center for State Courts
- OCI Office of Court Innovation
- OCLA Office of Civil Legal Aid
- PEAR Pro-Equity Anti-Racism
- PEEC Public Engagement and Education Committee
- RCW The Revised Code of Washington
- SCJA Superior Court Judges' Association
- SRPs Self-Represented Persons

- SWOT Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
- TSCC Tribal-State Court Consortium
- UL Unrepresented Litigant
- WSCCR AOC Washington State Center for Court Research

## **OUR HISTORY AND PURPOSE**

In 2021, the Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) established the Court Equity & Access (E&A) Program within the Office of Court Innovation (OCI) through a successfully funded budget decision package. The intended purpose of the program is to help courts serve the growing needs of self-represented persons in Washington, particularly in civil law cases where there is often no right to an attorney.<sup>2</sup>

Our program focuses on addressing the needs of self-represented persons (SRPs) and court users from communities that have been historically marginalized and oppressed in the United States with the least access to justice, including but not limited to:

- Persons experiencing poverty and persons with lower incomes
- Persons experiencing homelessness or unstable housing
- Persons who are incarcerated, in custody, or detained and those who were formerly incarcerated
- Persons with legal financial obligations

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA) found in their <u>2015 Civil Legal Needs Study Update</u> that more than seven in ten low-income persons in Washington State experienced an important civil legal problem each year, yet, 76% of those people had no professional legal help to solve their problems. These legal problems affected individuals' access to basic health and human services, family safety, affordable housing, economic security, employment, and a range of other issues that affect basic liberties. <u>In 2016, Washington ranked 37th out of 52 states, districts, and territories in access to justice for people who do not have an attorney (Self-Representation Index)</u> by the National Center for Access to Justice at Fordham Law School (*Justice Index*). <u>Currently, Washington ranks 19th in the Self-Representation Index</u>, but there is more work to be done.

- Persons who do not speak English as their primary language and have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English
- Persons with disabilities
- Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native
   Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, other Indigenous Peoples, Hispanic or
   Latino, Asian, and multiracial people of color
- LGBTQ+ persons
- Immigrants, migrants, and refugees
- Youths
- Older adults
- Persons living in rural communities
- Victims of domestic violence and sexual assault
- Persons with limited or no access to the internet
- Persons with low or no digital skills
- · Persons with low or no literacy skills

Our program is responsible for leading statewide coordinated efforts at the AOC and providing centralized technical assistance to Washington state courts to improve access to justice, which includes, but is not limited to:

- Providing court system leaders with statewide policy and planning support;
- Developing and implementing statewide programs, initiatives, education, and resources;
- Supporting court services that provide access to justice for SRPs and other court users with access to justice needs;

- Assisting with data development and evaluation of court programs and services; and
- Partnering with courts, impacted communities, and interested groups to develop a statewide action plan to address the needs of SRPs in Washington state courts.

We take a holistic approach to increasing access to justice by using an equity, diversity, access & accessibility, anti-racism, inclusion, and belonging framework. This approach helps ensure that those with lived experience and those who experience the greatest barriers to access to justice drive our efforts.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN AND IDENTIFIED PARTNERS**

In 2022 – 2023, our program conducted a preliminary Environmental Scan of equity and access to justice work in Washington State as a first step to building a framework and program strategic plan.

Identified partners who work to create systemic change that advances equity and access to justice include the following:

- Washington State Superior Court Judges' Association (SCJA)
- Washington State District and Municipal Court Judges' Association (DMCJA)
- Association of Washington Superior Court Administrators (AWSCA)
- District and Municipal Court Management Association (DMCMA)
- Washington State Association of County Clerks
- Board for Judicial Administration (BJA)
- Access to Justice (ATJ) Board
- Civil Legal Aid Oversight Committee
- Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA)
- SCJA Unrepresented Litigants Ad-Hoc Workgroup
- Civil Legal Aid Attorneys
- Public Defenders
- Victim Advocates
- Courthouse Facilitators and Navigators
- Law Libraries
- Self-Help Center Pilot Sites
- Washington State Supreme Court Commissions
- Washington State Supreme Court Disability Justice Task Force

- Washington State Racial Justice Consortium
- Columbia Legal Services
- Legal Voice
- Family Violence Appellate Project
- Legal Foundation of Washington
- Northwest Justice Project
- Northwest Immigrant Rights Project

While these partners are among the first identified, **this list is not exhaustive** and does not indicate the limit of our program's intended outreach.

Other sections of the Environmental Scan identify and discuss how equity and access to justice work is funded in Washington State, how direct services are provided to self-represented court users, how equity and access are evaluated, the <u>Justice Index</u>, equity and access work in other states, language and disability access, landing pages and portals, and resources for courts. Four potential areas of focus emerged from the Environmental Scan:

- Promoting greater online access to information for court users;
- Improving in-person and online access to the courts for people with disabilities;
- · Collecting more robust data related to civil cases to enable evaluation; and
- Developing and providing support, training, resources, and opportunities for collaboration with courts.

For any questions regarding the Environmental Scan, you may contact EquityAndAcccess@courts.wa.gov.

## **OUR MISSION**

To make "justice for all" a reality in Washington state courts by:

- Listening to courts and the communities they serve;
- · Helping courts embed equity and access in everything they do; and
- Collaboratively creating change through policies & programming, education, and experience-based practices.

Short-hand version: To make "justice for all" a reality in Washington state courts.

### **OUR VISION**

Every person has an equitable opportunity to access the courts. Fairness, justice, inclusion, and belonging are experienced in the courts and through the work of the AOC.

## **OUR CORE VALUES**

- Access & Accessibility: We create opportunities for barrier-free, effective participation for all.
- Anti-oppression: We foster belonging and practice actively opposing all forms of unjust treatment and exclusion.
- Collaboration: We build partnerships with those who are directly impacted to co-create positive change and embrace differences in everything we do.
- Equitable Justice: We enable courts to create fair outcomes and opportunities that honor the uniqueness of each person and reduce harm to all.

- **Innovation:** We create and integrate forward-thinking possibilities and sustainable solutions that transform the trajectory of justice.
- Compassion: We always strive to be kind, empathetic, and respectful.
- **Trust:** We value and commit to honesty and transparency in our work by practicing accountability and authentic communication.

## **OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES**<sup>3</sup>

#### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Increasing access to justice for all, with a specific focus on self-represented persons (SRPs) statewide.

**Goal 1:** Develop and facilitate the adoption of a coordinated statewide action plan by AOC by April 1, 2026, to address the needs of SRPs in Washington civil courts.

- ➤ **Objective 1:** Establish an inclusive cross-sector workgroup of all state court levels, partners identified in our Environmental Scan, other states (e.g., Self-Represented Litigation Network), tribal courts, and a lived experience expert (LEE) advisory team by September 30, 2024.
- ➤ **Objective 2:** Take steps to partner with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) by September 30, 2024, to explore the creation of a potential <u>Legal Desert Map</u> of Washington State.
- ➤ **Objective 3:** Collaborate with courts, impacted communities, and interested groups to complete a statewide baseline equity needs

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Note: Goal dates are subject to change. Court E&A Program staff plan to regularly update this strategic plan starting March 2025 and every two years thereafter.

assessment of SRPs in civil courts utilizing existing data sources by June 30, 2025.

- ➤ **Objective 4:** Using the results of the SRP equity needs assessment, collaborate with courts, impacted communities, and interested groups to develop a statewide action plan for AOC by January 31, 2026, that includes goals, objectives, success measures, and action steps.
- ➤ Objective 5: Collaborate with courts, impacted communities, and interested groups to present the statewide action plan to AOC leadership for adoption by April 1, 2026.

## **Goal 2:** Successfully implement 100% of the statewide action plan by December 31, 2029.

- ➤ Objective 1: Develop and submit any proposed RCW changes and decision package requests for the 2027 Legislative Session outlined in the statewide action plan by May 1, 2026, or in accordance with the AOC's legislative timeline.
- Objective 2: Begin statewide action plan implementation by June 30, 2026.
- ➤ **Objective 3:** Secure funding in the 2027-2029 Biennium Budget to support statewide action plan implementation.

➤ Objective 4: Provide statewide action plan implementation quarterly updates and annual reports to courts, impacted communities, and interested groups.

**Goal 3:** Launch an accessible Self-Help Portal Version 1.0 on the Washington Courts webpage by October 31, 2026, that includes the top 20 high-priority resources that SRPs need.

- ➤ **Objective 1:** Help AOC Web Services hire and onboard a dedicated Senior Web Developer by May 31, 2024.
- ➤ **Objective 2:** Collect feedback from the SCJA Unrepresented Litigant (UL) Portal Subgroup and lived experience experts (LEEs) by June 30, 2024, to identify the top 20 high-priority resources that SRPs need to be able to access on the Self-Help Portal.
- ➤ **Objective 3:** Collaborate with the AOC Senior Web Developer, AOC Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Access Coordinator, SCJA UL Portal Subgroup, AOC Language Access Team, court stakeholders, and WSCCR to create a project plan by October 31, 2024, for the development, user testing, launch, and monitoring of the Self-Help Portal.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> This strategic plan will be updated to include objectives outlined in the Self-Help Portal project plan after it is developed.

**Goal 4:** Support the ongoing needs of courts and their Courthouse Facilitator (CF) Programs to assist 100% of eligible SRPs seeking assistance.

- ➤ **Objective 1:** Identify the needs and best practices of CF programs across the state by August 31, 2024.
- ➤ **Objective 2:** Collaborate with the CF Advisory Committee to update and submit proposed GR 27 revisions to the Washington Supreme Court by October 15, 2024.
- ➤ Objective 3: Reestablish the survey utilized in the AOC's 2008 study and collect ongoing feedback from clients after their appointments. Distribute a QR code to the CFs and other impacted groups to complete the survey by December 31, 2024.
- ➤ Objective 4: Collaborate with courts, impacted communities, and other interested groups to conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis of statewide CF programs by January 31, 2025.
- ➤ Objective 5: Ensure the CF Advisory Committee includes at least six (6) CFs and five (5) lived experience experts (LEEs) by July 31, 2025, for the 2025 – 2026 term.

- ➤ **Objective 6:** Complete a Concept Paper that outlines the needs of the CF Program, based on the results from the SWOT analysis and survey results from Objective 3, by April 1, 2026.
- ➤ **Objective 7:** Collaborate with the 2025-2026 CF Advisory Committee to create a CF Policy Manual that includes model policies, procedures, and best practices by December 31, 2026.

## **Goal 5:** Provide courts with training and other educational materials on how to appropriately serve SRPs by December 31, 2029.

- ➤ **Objective 1:** Develop a **minimum** of two (2) training session materials for judges and court staff on access to justice topics annually.
- ➤ **Objective 2:** Develop a bench guide/resource for trial court and appellate court judicial officers on practical tools for working with SRPs by June 30, 2025.
- ➤ **Objective 3:** Develop at least one educational material for each of the top five (5) education topics identified in the baseline SRP equity needs assessment (see Goal 1) and make them accessible to courts by December 31, 2025.

**Goal 6:** Support court-based self-help center pilots in Washington State through December 31, 2029.

- ➤ **Objective 1:** Establish a Self-Help Center Advisory Committee by August 31, 2024, to provide ongoing technical assistance on best and promising practices and support to self-help center staff.
- ➤ **Objective 2:** Research other state models and collaborate with the Grays Harbor and Spokane self-help center pilot programs, superior courts, WSCCR, impacted communities, and interested groups to develop a report on best practices by December 31, 2024.
- ➤ **Objective 3:** Collaborate with WSCCR to develop a self-help center pilot program evaluation framework by June 30, 2025.
- Objective 4: Share information on an ongoing basis about funding opportunities and support exploration of sustainable funding solutions in order to help courts create self-help center programs statewide that serve 100% of eligible SRPs seeking assistance.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Supporting the creation of a Washington Supreme Court Disability and Justice Commission and identifying areas of action for AOC's disability justice work.

**Goal 1:** Support the Washington Supreme Court Disability Justice Task Force (DJTF) to complete its Disability Justice Study by May 1, 2025.

- ➤ **Objective 1:** Hire and onboard an AOC Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Access Coordinator per RCW 2.56.210 by February 29, 2024.
- ➤ **Objective 2:** Help DJTF develop and post a Research Coordinator and Research Team competitive solicitation by May 31, 2024.
- ➤ **Objective 3:** Help DJTF select and execute a contract for the Research Coordinator and Research Team by August 31, 2024.
- ➤ Objective 4: Help the DJTF Steering Committee hold periodic meetings, increase DJTF member representation, and establish a formal Task Force structure by November 30, 2024.
- Objective 5: The AOC ADA Access Coordinator, Research Coordinator, Research Team, and AOC Senior Court Program Analyst will submit preliminary ADA compliance findings of a representative sample of courthouses to DJTF members by December 31, 2024.
- ➤ **Objective 6:** Collaborate with the Research Coordinator, Research Team, and DJTF members to submit a Disability Justice Study Final Report draft with recommendations for DJTF member approval by May 1, 2025.

**Goal 2:** Using the Disability Justice Study results, help DJTF present recommendations by June 1, 2025, for the creation of a Washington Supreme Court Disability and Justice Commission and AOC's continued work around disability justice.

➤ **Objective 1:** Help organize a Disability Justice Symposium to share the Final Report and recommendations with the Washington Supreme Court, AOC leadership, partners, and the public by June 1, 2025.

**Goal 3:** Help courts provide equal access to persons with disabilities by fulfilling AOC's obligations under RCW 2.56.210, through the work of the AOC's ADA Access Coordinator.<sup>5</sup>

- ➤ **Objective 1:** AOC ADA Access Coordinator works with courts to create a directory of Court ADA Coordinators by July 31, 2024.
- ➤ **Objective 2:** AOC ADA Access Coordinator develops a preliminary ADA Toolkit for courts and works with the Senior Web Developer to add it to the <u>current AOC Court Program Accessibility page</u> by December 31, 2024.
- ➤ **Objective 3:** AOC ADA Access Coordinator creates and regularly convenes a WA Courts ADA Coordinator Community of Practice to build relationships, provide education, and share best practices.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> This strategic plan will be expanded to incorporate applicable recommendations from the Disability Justice Study Final Report when available.

- Objective 4: AOC ADA Access Coordinator collaborates with the ATJ Board to update <u>Ensuring Equal Access for People with Disabilities: A Guide for Washington Courts</u> by December 31, 2027.
- ➤ **Objective 5:** AOC ADA Access Coordinator completes ongoing ADA court site visits and provides ADA consultation to judges, court administrators, and other court staff.

#### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Building strong partnerships, trust, and communication<sup>6</sup> with state courts, tribal courts, judicial branch agencies, legal aid organizations, other justice system partners, and communities.

**Goal 1:** Develop and implement communication and engagement strategies through December 31, 2029, to build strong partnerships, and trust, and raise awareness about AOC's Court Equity and Access Program.

➤ **Objective 1:** Collaborate with the AOC Communications Team to create and publish a Courthouse Facilitator Public Outreach Video by July 31,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> We are committed to developing communications that are accessible to persons with disabilities, persons with limited English proficiency, persons without access to the internet, persons who have low or no literacy skills, and persons with low or no digital skills.

- 2024, to increase courts' and communities' awareness about what CFs do, who they are, and how to access their services.
- ➤ **Objective 2:** Collaborate with the AOC Communications Team to develop a Five-Year Court E&A Program Communication and Engagement Strategic Action Plan by August 30, 2024.
- ➤ **Objective 3:** Establish a Court E&A Program Community Advisory Group by August 30, 2026, to provide an opportunity for impacted communities to inform our program strategic planning priorities, policies, initiatives, and implementation.
- Objective 4: Successfully implement 100% of the Five-Year Communication and Engagement Strategic Action Plan by December 31, 2029.

**Goal 2:** Share Court E&A Program information and resources through an accessible webpage on the Washington Courts webpage by December 31, 2025.

➤ **Objective 1:** Collaborate with the AOC Senior Web Developer to create an initial Court E&A Program external webpage with basic program information, contact information, and resources by August 31, 2024.

➤ **Objective 2:** Collaborate with the AOC Senior Web Developer to build out the Court E&A Program external webpage (version 2.0) with more comprehensive information and resources by December 31, 2025.

#### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

Building Court Equity & Access Program capacity, policies, processes, and procedures.

**Goal 1:** Take steps to increase program capacity by June 30, 2025, to support the full implementation of this Five-Year Strategic Plan.

- ➤ **Objective 1:** Submit a decision package request, in accordance with BJA's decision package request timeline, to support Court E&A Program Five-Year Strategic Plan implementation that includes additional positions and resources needed.
- ➤ **Objective 2:** Program staff will attend professional development training on creating accessible documents, meetings, and other communications by December 31, 2024.
- ➤ **Objective 3:** Develop Court E&A Program New Team Member Orientation materials by December 31, 2024.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

Building robust technical assistance, education, research, data development, and evaluation processes to advance equity and access in the courts.

**Goal 1:** Identify the equity and access needs of tribal community court users in state courts (including a focus on SRPs) and develop recommendations by December 31, 2024, for AOC technical assistance action.

- ➤ **Objective 1:** The Tribal Relations Court Program Analyst will collaborate with WSCCR, the Tribal-State Court Consortium (TSCC), impacted communities, and interested groups to design and distribute a tribal community court user survey by July 31, 2024.
- ➤ **Objective 2:** The Tribal Relations Court Program Analyst will collaborate with WSCCR to develop a written report of survey results with recommendations by December 31, 2024.

**Goal 2:** Collaborate with the AOC Court Education Services Team, the BJA, and other interested groups to develop educational materials and training for judicial officers and court staff on court equity and access topics, through December 31, 2029.

- ➤ **Objective 1:** Collaborate with courts and interested groups to identify a list of the top fifteen (15) court equity and access topics that court staff require more education on by December 31, 2025.
- ➤ **Objective 2:** Using the list, develop educational materials (at least one per topic) by December 31, 2026.
- ➤ **Objective 3:** Collaborate with AOC's Court Education Services Team to include the educational resources for the top 15 court equity and access education topics on the AOC Education Portal by December 31, 2028.
- **Goal 3:** Collaborate with the AOC Washington State Center for Court Research (WSCCR), courts, impacted communities, and interested groups to develop a strategic action plan by June 30, 2026, for measuring and improving equity and access in courts through court-led data collection, analysis, and performance trackers that are accessible to court staff and the public.
  - ➤ Objective 1: Collaborate with WSCCR, courts, and interested groups to conduct a statewide environmental scan of general court data practices and availability by examining: 1) what case management systems (CMS) courts use; 2) what court equity and access data tracking information is available in those systems; 3) what is available in the new CLJ CMS rollout; 4) and current efforts in this area in Washington and other states by July 31, 2025.

- ➤ **Objective 2**: Use information from the environmental scan, court feedback, and national benchmarks (e.g., the *Justice Index*) to collaborate with WSCCR to develop equity and access goals (including access to justice for SRPs) by October 31, 2025, that courts can adopt.
- ➤ **Objective 3:** Collaborate with WSCCR, courts, and interested groups to create an initial strategic action plan by July 31, 2026, to help courts implement data-tracking practices in their CMS and reach the court equity and access goals.

**Goal 4:** Create a standard, yet flexible, method of providing technical assistance to courts for ADA compliance, access to justice for SRPs, and all other Court E&A Program areas by February 1, 2027.

- ➤ **Objective 1:** Develop and distribute a Court E&A Program technical assistance needs survey to courts by July 30, 2025.
- ➤ **Objective 2:** Analyze the results of the survey and publish a report by December 31, 2025.

➤ **Objective 3:** Using the report, develop and integrate a formal Court E&A Program Technical Assistance Life-Cycle<sup>7</sup> by January 31, 2027, to support court-initiated and team-initiated solicitations for technical assistance for ADA compliance, access to justice for SRPs, and all other Court E&A Program areas.

**Goal 5:** Conduct literature reviews on topics of court equity, access to justice in civil proceedings for SRPs, disability access and accessibility, and other related topics, and make recommendations for future research opportunities by December 31, 2028.

- ➤ **Objective 1:** Conduct and write literature reviews focusing on the 5-15 key bodies of existing research with supplemental non-peer-reviewed resources as needed for each and make them available to courts by July 31, 2027.
- ➤ **Objective 2:** Use the literature reviews to identify and pursue a court equity and access research opportunity (e.g., study, pilot program, survey data collection) within Washington courts by July 31, 2028.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The Technical Assistance Life-Cycle will include but not be limited to the following: a system for tracking communications with courts; system for creating and tracking recommendations to courts; customizable template for court improvement plans, including metrics to be measured; system for keeping court data secure or confidential as requested by the courts; and general policies and procedures for providing technical assistance.

**Goal 6:** Develop a Court Equity and Access Best Practices Toolkit based on data collected, literature reviews, and technical assistance by December 31, 2029.

- ➤ **Objective 1:** Create a template based on other best practice toolkits (e.g., National Association for Drug Court Professionals and National Center for State Courts) by December 31, 2026.
- ➤ **Objective 2:** Complete a first draft of the Best Practices Toolkit by December 31, 2028.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6

Establishing ourselves as courageous champions of equity and access in the courts.

**Goal 1:** Take steps to establish a statewide Access to Justice Court Community of Practice for courts with DEI programming by December 31, 2027.

➤ **Objective 1:** Identify all courts with DEI programming and collect contact information as part of the baseline SRP equity needs assessment (see Strategic Priority 1, Goal 1) by June 30, 2025.

➤ **Objective 2:** Collaborate with courts to develop an Access to Justice Court Community of Practice project plan as part of the statewide action plan (see Strategic Priority 1, Goal 1) by January 31, 2026.8

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> This strategic plan will be updated to include objectives outlined in the Access to Justice Court Community of Practice project plan after it is developed.