



National Association for Presiding Judges and Court Executive Officers

Resolution 7

In Support of Improving the Justice System Response to Mental Illness

WHEREAS, the Conference of State Court Administrators adopted, and the Conference of Chief Justices endorsed, the 2017 COSCA policy paper, *“Decriminalization of Mental Illness: Fixing a Broken System”*; and

WHEREAS, court leaders are urged to convene stakeholders to examine all strategies to achieve better outcomes for those with mental illness, at less cost; and

WHEREAS, the Court Management Committee of the Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators convened a working group to implement recommendations stated in the policy paper and to prioritize the development of resources that would best assist state court leaders in these efforts; and

WHEREAS, the working group has identified four areas for further action:

- Developing resources, best practices, and recommended standards in the areas of:
 - assisted outpatient treatment;
 - competency evaluations and restoration treatment protocols;
 - civil commitment proceedings, including standards for involuntary commitment and release protocols;
 - civil interventions such as guardianships, advanced directives, and collaborative decision making to provide alternatives to civil commitments;
 - diversion opportunities at every Sequential Intercept Mapping point;
 - criminal justice sentencing assessments and evidence-based sentencing and treatment alternatives, including, but not limited to problem-solving courts; and
 - the wide array of other court proceedings that intersect with individuals with a mental illness;
- Improving caseload management by examining civil commitment and criminal cases involving persons with mental illness to identify barriers to and opportunities for timely and effective case processing;
- Promoting education through national, regional and statewide training and education opportunities to equip state and local court leaders with knowledge, data and resources to improve the court and community response to those with mental illness; and

- Building capacity of state and national court leaders to implement reforms by documenting the problems experienced in the vast majority of states and developing research-based and politically feasible solutions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association for Presiding Judges and Court Executive Officers support the efforts of the working group to develop best practices and resources, improve caseload management, promote education, and build the capacity of state courts to improve the justice system response to mental illness.

Adopted by the Board of Directors at their October 17, 2018 meeting in St. Louis, Missouri.