

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

THE CHIEF JUDGE'S 2025 HEARING ON CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES IN NEW YORK



Thursday, September 18, 2025
1:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Court of Appeals, 20 Eagle St., Albany, NY



Live Stream:
<http://nycourts.gov/ctapps/civil.html>

The Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals and the State of New York, Hon. Rowan D. Wilson, announces a statewide public hearing to evaluate the continuing unmet civil legal services needs in New York and to assess the level of resources necessary to meet those needs. The Chief Judge will report to the Legislature, as requested in its June 2010 Joint Resolution, on the information obtained at the hearing and on the ongoing work of the New York State Permanent Commission on Access to Justice. The Chief Judge will be joined on the hearing panel by the four Presiding Justices of the Appellate Division: Hon. Dianne T. Renwick (First Department), Hon. Hector D. LaSalle (Second Department), Hon. Elizabeth A. Garry (Third Department), and Hon. Gerald J. Whalen (Fourth Department), as well as the Chief Administrative Judge, Hon. Joseph A. Zayas, and the President of the New York State Bar Association, Kathleen Sweet.

About this Hearing:

Low-income New Yorkers and other vulnerable communities continue to face serious barriers accessing the civil justice system. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive information and data from interested individuals, organizations, and other entities on the following issues:

- The impact of federal funding cuts and programmatic restrictions on civil legal services and the access to justice gap in New York.
- The effect of Judiciary Civil Legal Services (JCLS) funding on the delivery of civil legal services, the fair and efficient administration of justice in the State courts, and the need for additional funding.
- The current scope of unmet civil legal services needs of low-income and other vulnerable New Yorkers, including:
 - Economic and social consequences of insufficient civil legal services for courts, communities, and individuals, including those with disabilities, the elderly, veterans, and children;
 - Challenges affecting the availability of civil legal services in rural communities;
 - Barriers facing litigants in housing proceedings;
 - Economic benefits to individuals, communities, the courts, and the State from the provision of civil legal services where essentials of life are at stake.
- Strategies to address the unmet civil legal needs of low-income and other vulnerable New Yorkers, including:
 - Expanding the roles of allied legal professionals and non-lawyer assistance;
 - Enhanced use of technology, including generative AI, to increase the range, delivery, and efficacy of civil legal services.

The Chief Judge's Hearing Panel will consider both oral statements (by invitation only) and written submissions.

If you are interested in being invited to present, please send an email no later than Monday, July 21, 2025: (1) identifying yourself and your affiliation; and (2) attaching a prepared statement or detailed outline of the proposed statement, specifying which of the topics described above will be addressed. Proposed oral statements should be no longer than ten minutes in length. Those interested in providing only a written submission may email their remarks no later than Friday, September 5, 2025. For persons not invited to present oral remarks, your proposed statement will be deemed a written submission.

The New York State Permanent Commission on Access to Justice, co-chaired by Hon. Christina L. Ryba, Hon. Seth M. Marnin, and Janet Sabel, Esq., is assisting the Chief Judge in preparing for the hearing and by reporting on its results. Please note that the Hearing Panel will not accept any comments, written or spoken, addressing details of individual litigation or comments about individual judges or attorneys.

Email: accesstojusticecommission@nycourts.gov

Web: www.nycourts.gov/accesstojusticecommission/index.shtml