

## **DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER**

### **ORDER**

(FILED – June 25, 2026)

#### **Community Justice Worker Committee of the District of Columbia Courts**

WHEREAS, a strategic goal of the District of Columbia Courts is to promote access to justice by reducing barriers to full participation in the judicial process and enhancing access to legal assistance for persons who cannot afford counsel;

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia Courts have a longstanding commitment to improving access to justice through innovations such as Self-Help Centers, a Court Navigator Program, onsite legal resource centers, partnerships with legal services providers, facilitation of pro bono assistance, plain language initiatives, remote services, and other programs designed to assist self-represented litigants;

WHEREAS, despite these efforts, many District of Columbia residents continue to face significant unmet civil legal needs and frequently appear in court without legal representation;

WHEREAS, expanding the availability of qualified legal assistance through innovative service-delivery models is an important strategy for narrowing the justice gap;

WHEREAS, in July 2023, the District of Columbia Courts established the Civil Legal Regulatory Reform Task Force and directed it to explore ways that nonlawyers could help close the access-to-justice gap for low- and middle-income District of Columbia residents by providing civil legal services;

WHEREAS, in July 2025, the Task Force completed its work and issued a report recommending that the Courts establish a framework for Community Justice Worker ("CJW") programs, further study the possibility of a Licensed Legal Practitioner program, and encourage innovative approaches to expanding access to legal services;

WHEREAS, on August 4, 2025, the District of Columbia Courts issued an Order publishing the Task Force's report for public comment to give interested parties an opportunity to submit written comments concerning the report;

WHEREAS, on February 5, 2026, District of Columbia Court of Appeals, after considering the public comments received in response to the Task Force's report and consulting with the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, issued Order No. M293-26 adopting the recommendations of the Civil Legal Regulatory Reform Task Force;

WHEREAS, through Order No. M293-26, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals promulgated D.C. App. R. 49(c)(14), establishing a framework for Community Justice Worker programs and authorizing approved organizations to provide limited legal assistance through trained Community Justice Workers operating under attorney supervision;

WHEREAS, successful implementation of Community Justice Worker programs requires collaboration among the judiciary, legal services providers, the private bar, community organizations, and other stakeholders; it is

ORDERED the Community Justice Worker Committee is hereby established and designated as the entity responsible for facilitating, monitoring, and assessing Community Justice Worker programs authorized by the Courts. The Committee shall carry out such duties and responsibilities as are necessary to support the implementation, oversight, and evaluation of CJW programs, including:

- Reviewing applications submitted by organizations seeking approval to operate Community Justice Worker programs;
- Evaluating applications for compliance with D.C. App. R. 49(c)(14) and any requirements established by the Courts;
- Making recommendations to the Chief Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals regarding approval, denial, modification, renewal, suspension, or revocation of Community Justice Worker program approvals;
- Monitoring implementation of approved Community Justice Worker programs;
- Identifying opportunities to improve the effectiveness of Community Justice Worker programs and expand access to justice; and

- Performing other duties related to implementation of D.C. App. R. 49(c)(14). It is

FURTHER ORDERED that Erin Larkin, Director of the Access to Justice Unit of the District of Columbia Courts, is hereby appointed Chair of the Community Justice Worker Committee for a term of two years, effective July 1, 2026. It is

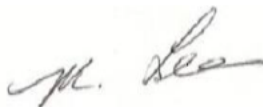
FURTHER ORDERED that the following individuals are appointed as members of the Community Justice Worker Committee for a term of two years, effective July 1, 2026:

1. The Honorable Roy W. McLeese III, Associate Judge, District of Columbia Court of Appeals;
2. The Honorable Todd E. Edelman, Associate Judge, Superior Court of the District of Columbia;
3. The Honorable Sherry Trafford, Magistrate Judge, Superior Court of the District of Columbia;
4. Jodi Feldman, Pro Bono Manager, District of Columbia Courts;
5. Nancy E. Drane, Executive Director, D.C. Access to Justice Commission;
6. Carla J. Freudenburg, Director, Office of Disciplinary Counsel;
7. Nikole Nelson, Chief Executive Officer, Frontline Justice; and
8. Dr. Indira Henard, President and Chief Executive Officer, D.C. Rape Crisis Center.

BY THE D.C. COURTS:



Anna Blackburne-Rigsby  
Chief Judge  
D.C. Court of Appeals



Milton C. Lee, Jr.  
Chief Judge  
D.C. Superior Court



Herbert Rouson, Jr., JD  
Executive Officer  
D.C. Courts