



## Access to Justice Foundation

Founded in 2005 by an order of the D.C. Court of Appeals, the **District of Columbia Access to Justice Commission** is charged with improving the ability of low- and moderate-income residents to access the civil justice system and for raising the community profile of the need for equal access to justice. The Commission, an independent body, has twenty-three Commissioners, including judges and court administrators; prominent members of the D.C. Bar; legal services leaders; corporate counsel; legal academics; and community leaders. It is chaired by Georgetown University Law Professor Peter Edelman and vice-chaired by LSC President Emeritus Jim Sandman. The Commission's current staff includes an Executive Director and Staff Attorney. The Commission meets in full session every eight weeks, with a substantial amount of work done through the Commission's committees, which include Commission members and external stakeholders. These committees are currently moving forward the Commission's Justice for All priorities, adopted in January 2022.

The Commission plays an essential role in bringing together the District's legal services community, courts and tribunals, government, the private bar, law schools, and other community stakeholders, to build, improve, and support innovations that promote equal access to justice for District residents. In a complicated landscape such as ours, the Commission's efforts to foster coordination, collaboration, and to promote efficiency is especially needed.

Financial support for the Commission's operations is secured through the **District of Columbia Access to Justice Foundation**, a non-profit entity that funds the work and operations of the D.C. Access to Justice Commission. The Foundation has a separate Board of Directors that is responsible for securing donations to ensure there are sufficient resources to advance the Commission's important work addressing civil justice barriers experienced by District residents. The Board also provides governance oversight over the Foundation's financial and other operations. Neither the Foundation nor the Commission receives any public or court funds and is instead reliant on local institutional and individual donors, in addition to in-kind support.

In response to increased community need, the Commission's projects, scope, and impact have recently expanded while its funding has remained static. To support our increasing work, the Foundation has set a goal to increase our annual support by \$100,000 to bring on greater staff capacity to meet our ambitious reform agenda.

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