



Justice for All in Michigan

"Our courthouse doors must be open wide to help all residents get the information and assistance they need when they need it."

-Chief Justice Bridget M. McCormack



Chief Justice Bridget Mary McCormack and Justice Brian Zahra speaking in June 2019 to Mikenzie Frost of WWMT about the goals of the Justice for All Task Force.

Did you know?

The right to a lawyer applies in criminal cases only — there is no right to a lawyer in civil cases, which include the following types of legal problems, and more:

- Family matters
- Child custody
- Personal protection orders
- Eviction
- Guardianship
- Small claims
- Drivers' license issues
- Credit card lawsuits

7 out of 10 low-income households had at least one civil (non-criminal) legal problem in the last year.

In **75%** of civil cases, at least one side represents themselves in court because they can't afford to pay an attorney.

Only 10% of people with civil legal problems recognize that their issue has a legal component that may be solved by the civil justice system.

People who have done nothing wrong can lose their case in court because they do not have the legal information or help they need. **This is called the "Civil Justice Gap."**

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What is Michigan doing to address this challenge?

The Michigan Supreme Court created the Justice for All Task Force to achieve 100% access to our civil justice system. Michigan Supreme Court Justice Brian K. Zahra and key stakeholders are collecting an inventory of the civil justice landscape, identifying gaps and barriers to access, and developing and implementing a plan to fill gaps and eliminate barriers.

What will 100% Access to Justice in Michigan look like?

- Everyone will have access to meaningful help navigating the court system to resolve issues.
- Everyone will have access to information that is easy to understand.
- There will be more access to free or low-cost lawyers to assist people with all or part of their legal issues.
- There will be more access to alternative dispute resolution options, such as mediation, instead of going through the traditional court system.

Contact Information

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