

Interest on Lawyer Account Fund of the State of New York

Funding civil legal assistance for low-income New Yorkers since 1984

Justice Infrastructure Project Report on Phase 2 Activities (September – December 2024)

Provided below is a description of Phase 2 activities and key themes from the feedback received about the preliminary vision of the JIP.

Vision Presentation and Feedback

After completing Phase 1, IOLA shared on its [website](#) a summary of Phase 1 activities, a preliminary vision for the JIP, and preliminary plan for Phase 2. These materials were also emailed directly to all participants in Phase 1 listening sessions. Phase 2 was intentionally designed to reflect back to the community IOLA's observations, findings and vision for JIP and to seek feedback from the community to ensure IOLA was listening to community and engaging with the community as it considered its vision for the JIP.

The Phase 2 feedback activities IOLA has completed to date include:

- NYSBA Partnership Conference Presentations – 2 sessions – approximately 50 participants (One presentation was recorded and shared on IOLA's website)
- Virtual Feedback Sessions – 3 sessions (1 with ASL) – approximately 122 participants
- Stakeholder Meetings – 10 meetings with organizations involved in the New York civil justice ecosystem

In addition, IOLA continued to maintain a website where stakeholders could share feedback and questions or request a follow-up meeting.

IOLA also supported, and participated in, a one-day convening in NYC for legal services intake staff, initiated and organized by Legal Services NYC. IOLA supported this convening financially and assisted in developing the agenda, distributing invitations to grantees, and participating in a presentation of relevant findings from Phase 1 of the JIP. IOLA is hopeful the ideas generated from this convening can be incorporated in the development of elements of the JIP vision. Approximately 140 people attended, about 80 in person and 60 virtually, from over 60 IOLA grantee organizations.

Stakeholder Engagement

From these activities, IOLA received valuable feedback from community organizations, grantees and justice stakeholders from across the state. In many instances, the feedback received offered points of emphasis for topics discussed in the Phase 1 activities.

Provided below is a summary of key elements of stakeholder feedback:

- Overwhelming support for Phase 1 observations and preliminary JIP Vision
 - Cautious excitement about the potential of Statewide Function B of the JIP Vision: Legal Information and Referral for the Public
- Encouragement for collaborative design techniques, with substantial and substantive input from residents, community organizations, grantees and other stakeholders
- Local inter-organization collaboration and trust is critical
- Support for coordinated statewide call center operations, but calls should be routed to people with local expertise
- Leverage existing platforms, technology and content
- Data privacy and security will need to be a focus of any program, platform or integration
- Coordinated and consistent outreach will be essential
 - Outreach strategies can facilitate access to justice by leveraging the trust and credibility established with local stakeholders and community organizations
 - Social media may be a particularly impactful form of outreach
- Work toward models of holistic triage and intake with the assistance of human support enhanced with technology
 - Empower local community organizations with effective tools to assist members of the community in efficiently accessing information and referral
- Intentionally incorporate feedback loops using qualitative and quantitative information
- Incorporate feedback from IOLA grantees – including both leadership and staff
- Continue to seek connection with additional stakeholders across New York

During the course of the Phase 2 feedback sessions (and throughout Phase 1) stakeholders across New York expressed how the elements of the JIP (particularly Statewide Function B: Legal Information and Referral for the Public) could impact their communities, if collaboratively developed and sustainably and effectively implemented. Provided below are examples of ways in which these stakeholders envisioned the JIP would improve access to justice in their communities:

- Improved language and disability access
- Reduced number of attempts to identify and schedule assistance for people seeking help
- Greater connection rates and reduced time seeking to connect with people requesting help
- Reduced need for referral across legal services organizations
- More efficient and accurate triage of legal and social care issues
- More equitable deployment of limited resources
- Greater efficiency for delivery of civil legal services
- Greater dignity and empowerment for individuals seeking assistance
- Improved transparency regarding the availability of legal assistance
- Greater access to effective information when legal assistance is not available
- Improved trust in civil legal and social systems
- Comprehensive data that can inform strategic advocacy, collaboration and resource allocation