



A COMMENDATION AND PROCLAMATION
OF THE ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION
OF THE SUPREME COURT OF VIRGINIA

JANUARY 12, 2021

WHEREAS Access to Justice is a fundamental and essential right in a democratic society, in our Commonwealth and in our Nation;

WHEREAS Access to Justice is entirely dependent on a functioning Court System;

WHEREAS a functioning Court System requires the presence, dedication and professionalism of a multitude of Civil Servants, including Clerks, Deputy Clerks and other Clerks' Office Staff; Judges; Judicial Assistants; Guardians Ad Litem; Court Reporters; Foreign Language Interpreters; Magistrates; Sheriffs, Sheriffs' Deputies and other Sheriffs' Office Staff;

WHEREAS these Civil Servants provide courthouse and courtroom security, operate the Clerks' Offices, conduct hearings, trials, appeals and all other judicial proceedings, and provide critical support for all such proceedings;

WHEREAS maintaining a functioning Court System and providing Access to Justice in the Commonwealth during the COVID-19 pandemic has required these Civil Servants to interact on a daily basis with lawyers, litigants, witnesses, members of the public, incarcerated individuals and others involved in the judicial process;

WHEREAS the personal interactions required of these Civil Servants to maintain a functioning Court System and provide Access to Justice during the pandemic have exposed them to greater risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus;

WHEREAS notwithstanding the increased risk they faced, these Civil Servants have made, and continue to make, substantial personal sacrifices necessary to keep the Commonwealth's Court System open and functioning, thus ensuring that Access to Justice has been maintained and preserved during the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS these Civil Servants have been the front-line, first responders for the Commonwealth's Court System so that Access to Justice has been maintained and preserved for citizens of the Commonwealth during the COVID-19 pandemic;

ACCORDINGLY, the Access to Justice Commission hereby recognizes and honors all Civil Servants working in support of Virginia's judicial system for their diligent presence, dedication, professionalism and sacrifice during this pandemic to ensure that Access to Justice has been preserved in the Commonwealth; and



ACCORDINGLY, the Access to Justice Commission hereby COMMENDS these Civil Servants throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia, PROCLAIMS its deep gratitude for their service and ENCOURAGES all, including specifically lawyers and litigants, who have benefitted and all who will benefit from the diligent presence, dedication, professionalism and sacrifice of these Civil Servants during this pandemic to take the opportunity to express their admiration and gratitude for the work these Civil Servants have done to maintain a functioning Court System and thereby to preserve Access to Justice for all Virginians.

S. Bernard Goodwyn
The Honorable S. Bernard Goodwyn, Justice
Supreme Court of Virginia

John E. Whitfield
John Whitfield, Executive Director
Blue Ridge Legal Services, Inc.

Co-Chairs, Virginia Access to Justice Commission

Virginia Access to Justice Commission Members

Andrea L. Bridgeman, Esq.

The Honorable Mary B. Malveaux, Judge
Court of Appeals of Virginia

The Honorable Deborah V. Bryan, Judge
Virginia Beach Juvenile and Domestic Relations
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The Honorable Daniel E. Ortiz, Judge
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