

# Implementation Sites Project



*Improving court practice in  
child abuse and neglect cases*

“ The Juvenile Court of Douglas County benefits from hearing what works and what has not worked in other jurisdictions. I encourage all judges who hear dependency and delinquency cases to engage with other courts in their jurisdiction as well as throughout the country to learn how to better serve children and families.

**Hon. Peggy Walker | DOUGLAS COUNTY, GEORGIA**

# Project Overview



Through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) funding, the Implementation Sites Project was developed to replicate the infrastructure pioneered by the **National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges** (NCJFCJ) Model Courts Project. Designated sites have committed to develop and implement a judicially-led collaborative seeking to implement system change efforts to improve the child abuse and neglect case process with the goal of improving safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children. These sites strive to adhere to and implement all aspects of the best practices outlined in the *Enhanced Resource Guidelines* while adopting the *Key Principles of Permanency Planning for Children*. Each designated site leads local systems reform through the selection of short-term improvement goals based on the *Enhanced Resource Guidelines* practices, measures implementation of its goals, partners with statewide court improvement efforts, and informs national dependency system improvement. Led by a designated lead judge, sites are dedicated to assessing their child abuse and neglect case processing, continually focusing on barriers to timely permanency and developing and instituting plans for court improvement while working collaboratively with system stakeholders to effect systems change.

## Improving Practice

Implementation Sites learn from one another and apply best practices in ways that fit the particular jurisdiction. Depending on priorities, resources, and stakeholder support, sites take on a number of initiatives to improve the experience of the children and families they serve. These sites are committed not only to reforming systems within their own jurisdictions, but they also commit to modeling change at the state, regional, and national levels. Like their predecessors, these selected jurisdictions accept the challenge of taking on and testing new approaches. Each of these jurisdictions has committed to engage in developing new policies, practices, and programs not only to speed cases to achieve timely permanency, but also to provide high quality and effective oversight and service to children and families with the goal of improving child well-being.

“ Implementation Sites use the *Enhanced Resource Guidelines* to provide us with a structured and innovative framework that will enable us to better meet the needs of those children and families that we serve.

**Hon. Dan Michael | MEMPHIS AND SHELBY COUNTY, TENNESSEE**



Under the leadership of the designated Lead Judge, Implementation Sites strive to prioritize and adhere to the *Key Principles of Permanency Planning*. These principles serve as the foundation to ensure that each courtroom is a place where all who appear are treated with respect, patience, dignity, courtesy and are involved in the problem solving process.



Keep Families Together



Ensure Access to Justice



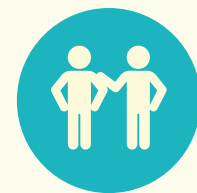
Cultivate Cultural Responsiveness



Ensure Adequate and Appropriate Family Time



Provide Judicial Oversight



Ensure Competent and Adequate Representation



Engage Families through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Techniques

# Lead Judges and Demographics

## 1 Kankakee, Illinois

**Lead Judge:** Hon. J. Imani Drew

**Type of Court:** Rural

## 2 Humboldt County in Eureka, California

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Joyce Hinrichs

**Type of Court:** Urban/Suburban/Rural

## 3 Chesterfield, Virginia

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Scott Landry

**Type of Court:** Suburban

## 4 Clackamas County in Oregon City, Oregon

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Colleen Gilmartin

**Type of Court:** Urban/Suburban/Rural

## 5 Daviess County in Owensboro, Kentucky

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Julia Gordon

**Type of Court:** Urban/Suburban/Rural

## 6 Spokane County, Washington

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Michelle Ressa

**Type of Court:** Urban

## 7 State of Delaware Family Court in Wilmington

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Michael Newell

**Type of Court:** Urban

## 8 Montgomery, Alabama in Montgomery County

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Calvin Williams

**Type of Court:** Urban

## 9 Hot Springs, Arkansas in Garland County

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Wade Naramore

**Type of Court:** Rural/Suburban

## 10 Little Rock, Arkansas in Perry & Pulaski Counties

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Joyce Williams Warren

**Type of Court:** Urban

## 11 St. Paul, Minnesota in Ramsey County

**Lead Judge(s):** Hon. Lezlie Ott Marek

**Type of Court:** Urban



**12** **Tulsa, Oklahoma in Tulsa County**

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Martha Rupp Carter  
**Type of Court:** Urban

**13** **Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in Allegheny County**

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Dwayne Woodruff  
**Type of Court:** Urban

**16** **Saginaw, Michigan**

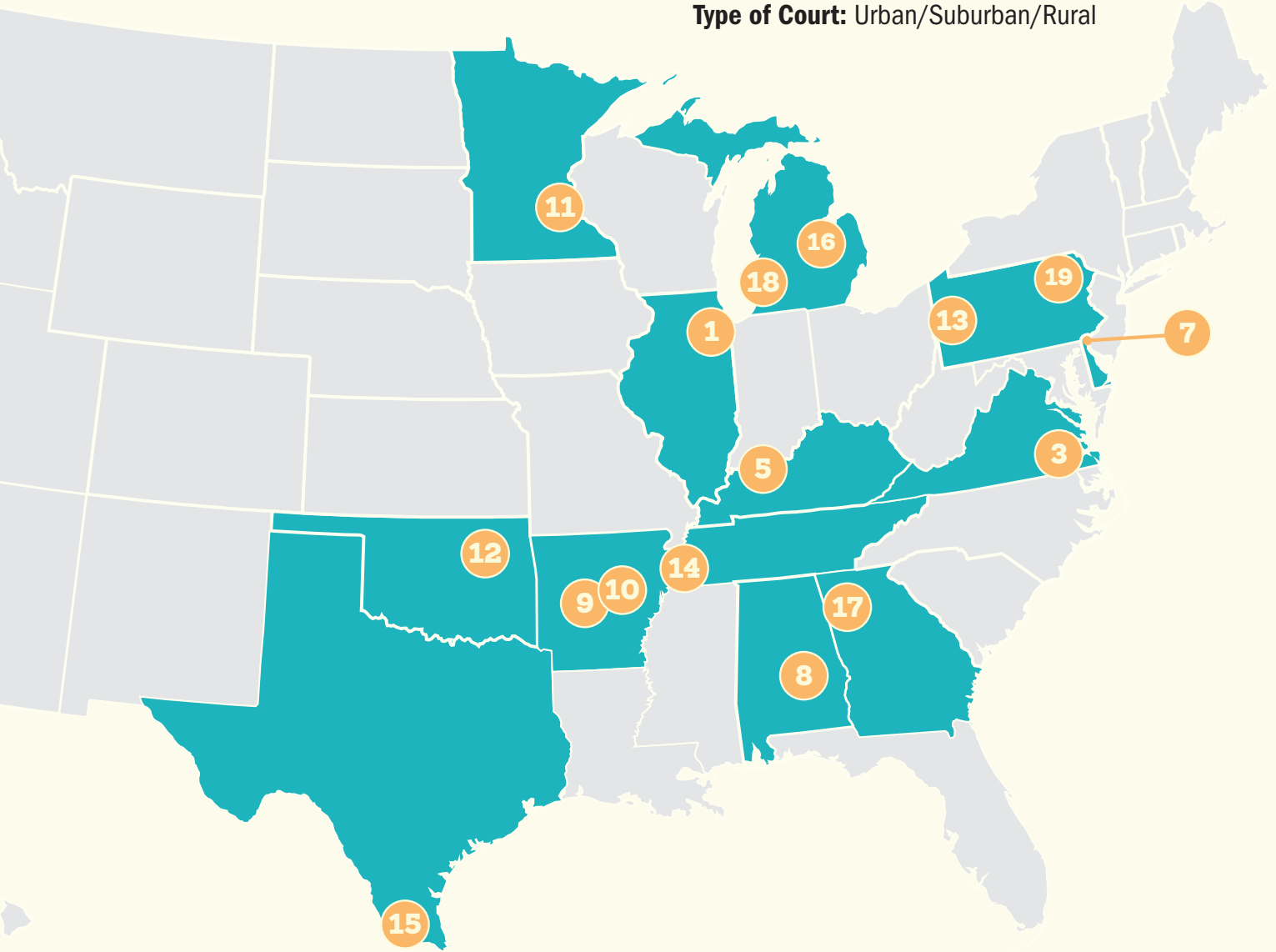
**Lead Judge:** Hon. Barbara Meter  
**Type of Court:** Urban/Suburban/Rural

**17** **Douglasville, Georgia**

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Peggy Walker  
**Type of Court:** Suburban/Rural

**18** **St. Joseph, Michigan**

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Brian Berger  
**Type of Court:** Urban/Suburban/Rural



**14** **Memphis, Tennessee in Shelby County**

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Dan Michael  
**Type of Court:** Urban/Suburban

**15** **Edinburg, Texas in Hidalgo and Starr Counties**

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Carlos Villalon, Jr.  
**Type of Court:** Rural/Suburban

**19** **Scranton, Pennsylvania**

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Andrew Jarbola  
**Type of Court:** Urban/Suburban/Rural

**20** **Tumwater, Washington**

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Anne Hirsch  
**Type of Court:** Urban/Suburban/Rural



# NCJFCJ's Commitment

The NCJFCJ designates a site manager to work with and advocate for each participating site in the project. Part of the site manager's function is to serve as a direct service provider and work closely with individual sites to develop, prioritize, and achieve court improvement goals to help facilitate system change efforts. Site managers guide lead judges and collaborative team members in assessing current practices, gathering data, measuring performance, and participating in ongoing training opportunities.

# Technical Assistance

The NCJFCJ is committed to providing each site with tailored training and technical assistance recognizing that each designated site is in a different stage in the evolution of its system reform efforts.

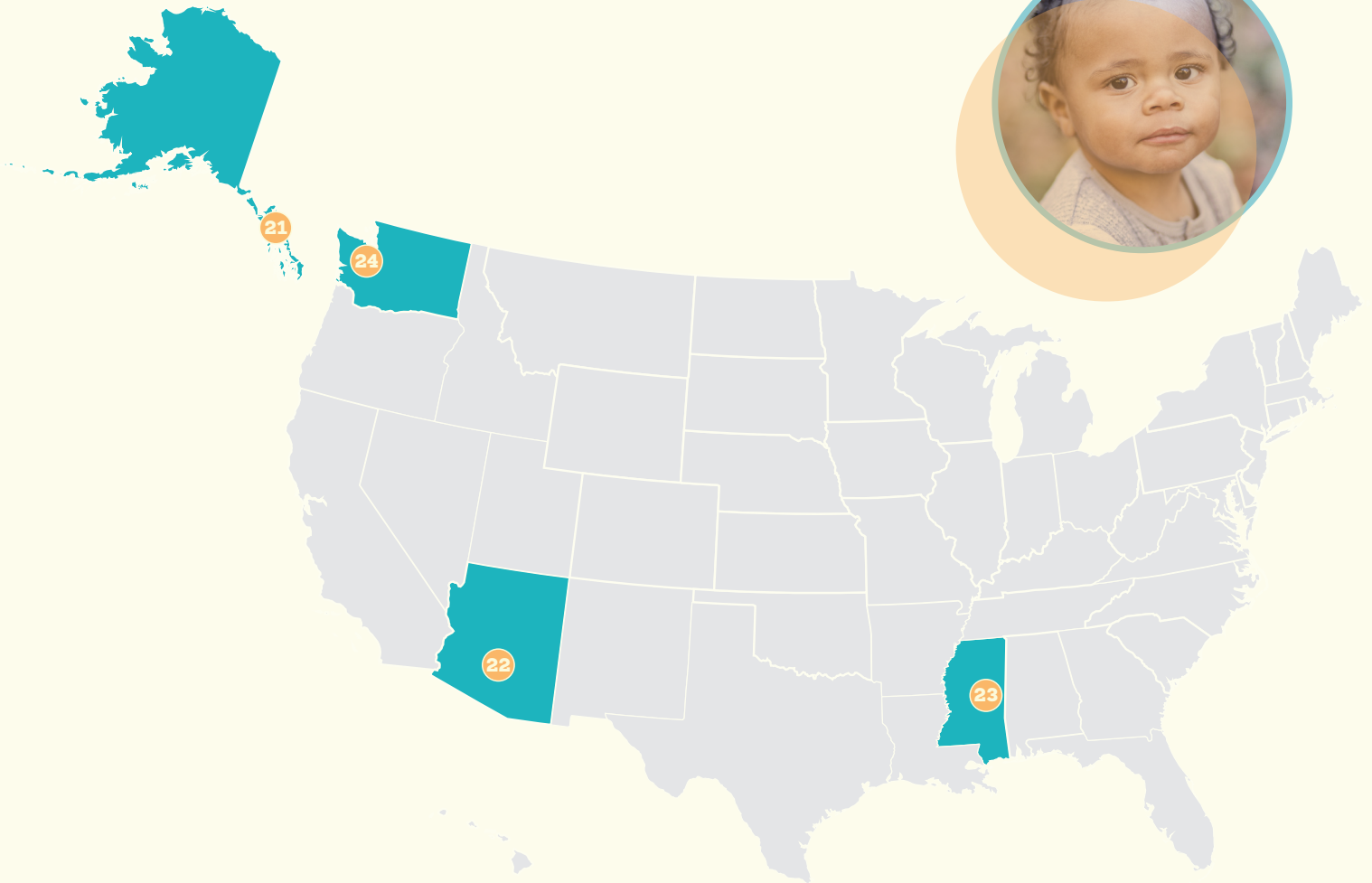


“ Being selected to participate as an Implementation Sites Court has been a great gift to our court and community. The NCJFCJ has given our court the opportunity to learn from mentor courts and receive cutting edge training and personalized assistance and support in transforming all of our dependency work to better serve the families and youth in our system. Over the course of our participation in the project, our entire dependency team has worked together collaboratively and accomplished many goals. The biggest and most challenging piece of our work has been a redesign of our court calendars—something we did with the active engagement of all of our court and community partners—so the court experience will be both more efficient for families and stakeholders (including the court) and also more trauma-informed. When the new calendars are released, families and involved professionals will no longer have such long wait times for hearings. We are also making trauma-informed improvements to our courthouse in partnership with local agencies to create better spaces for families and youth while they are at court. Without the guidance, expertise and support of the NCJFCJ we could not have made these major systemic improvements to our practice.

**Hon. Anne Hirsch | THURSTON COUNTY, TUMWATER, WASHINGTON**

# Tribal Courts

Tribal courts are unique and parallel systems of justice serving sovereign nations. Supported by the best practices outlined in the *Enhanced Resource Guidelines*, the NCJFCJ has made a commitment to meaningful and ongoing collaboration with tribes, approaching its work from a place of honor, respect, and mutual learning while achieving their desired court improvement goals.



**21** **Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska**

**Lead Judge:** Chief Justice Michelle Demmert  
**Type of Court:** Rural

**22** **Gila River Indian Community**

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Kami Hart  
**Type of Court:** Urban/Suburban/Rural

**23** **Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians**

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Holly Denson  
**Type of Court:** Suburban

**24** **Suquamish Tribal Court**

**Lead Judge:** Hon. Cindy Smith  
**Type of Court:** Urban/Suburban/Rural



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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES

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