

OREGON STATE BAR MARCH 15, 2021

Chief Justice Update

COVID and Moving
Forward





Current Status

- Scheduling and conducting all types of proceedings
- Continuing to rely on remote means
- Expanding capacity for jury trials
- Resolving cases to reduce pending caseload

New CJO for Current Conditions

CJO 21-009:

In Effect While Social Distancing Required

Requires Remote Proceedings, Unless PJO Permits In-Person

Permits In-Person or Remote Jury Trials

www.courts.oregon.gov



Impact of the Pandemic on Caseload



CASE FILINGS
DECREASED

-37%



CASE PROCESSING
TOOK LONGER

+41%



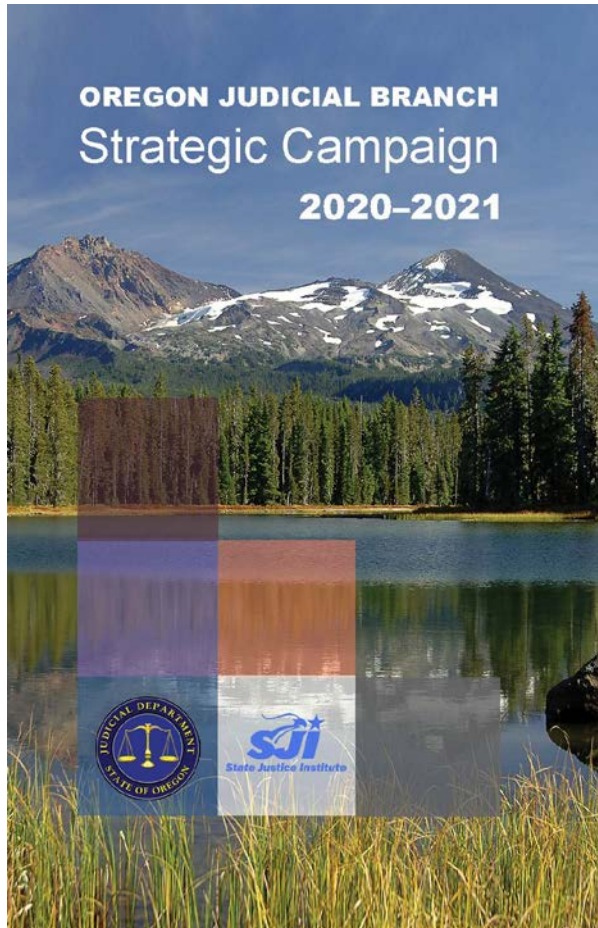
PENDING CASELOAD
GREW FASTER THAN
IN NON-COVID YEARS

+45%



WORKLOAD & COST
PER CASE INCREASED

+25%



Our Four Commitments

Improve services and outcomes for people who are underserved, vulnerable, or marginalized

Improve access to justice

Enhance the public's trust and confidence in Oregon's state government

Create a workplace and courthouse culture that is supportive, inclusive, welcoming, and affirming; that embraces diversity

https://www.courts.oregon.gov/about/Documents/2020-21-Strategic-Campaign_WebCopy.pdf

Commitment 1



Improve Services for Underserved, Vulnerable, and Marginalized Oregonians

- Obtained a \$1.75 million federal grant to expand family treatment courts
- Limited garnishments and other collections during the pandemic
- Developed legislation to improve equity and fairness in imposing and collecting court-ordered financial obligations
- Developed legislation and funding requests: behavioral health, pretrial release, access to justice for self-represented litigants, juvenile delinquency improvement program, courthouse replacements
- Employed a Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED) tool for specialty court use.

Commitment 2



Reduce Barriers to Access to Justice

- Developed remote hearing user guides and videos (English/Spanish)
- Offered remote facilitation services and increased interview-based forms to assist self-represented litigants
- Integrated remote interpretation services for remote proceedings
- Provided technology equipment at some public defender offices to ensure access to remote hearings
- Provided Eviction Protection forms in multiple languages

Commitment 3



Enhance public trust and confidence in Oregon's government

- Engaged lawyers and other stakeholders in our response to the COVID pandemic
- Developed technology tools for public convenience: expand online payment ability and text reminders for jury service, payment due dates, and hearing dates
- Provided technology assistance to OPDS in acquiring case/financial management system
- Added data dashboards and other tools to improve management, transparency, and reporting

Commitment 4



Create a supportive, inclusive and welcoming courthouse and workplace environment

- Launched the OJD Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Working/Action Plan
- Made the Unconscious Bias Juror video available, with training
- Provided training, resources, and facilitated conversations for judges and staff on EDI, racial justice, and racial equity
- Engaged Oregon sheriffs to identify current and needed training related to EDI and bias

My Message to the Legislature

Access to justice depends on

- **Current Service Level (CSL) funding**
 - Maintain staffing and support to sustain essential services
- **Policy Option Packages and Legislation**
 - To fulfill our Strategic Campaign commitments
 - In equity, mental health, eCourt, technology, data, other investments

Reducing court budgets impacts Oregonians in all aspects of their lives

- Workplaces, Businesses
- Debtor/Creditor and Small Claims
- Treatment Courts & Mental Health
- Family Law, Protective Orders & Child Welfare
- Juvenile Dependency and Delinquency
- Criminal Justice
- Housing
- Public Benefits
- Tax Disputes
- Election and Ballot Measure Disputes
- Claims of Wrongful Injury
- Objections to Government Action

Justice Delayed



Treatment Court Graduates



Serving Families in Crisis



Thank You



Thoughts or Questions?



CJOFeedback@ojd.state.or.us

