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National Justice Worker Program Index Relunched

Updated resource provides real-time data for innovating civil legal services

Denver, CO / Tucson, AZ / Salt Lake City, UT — [IAALS](#), the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System; [Innovation for Justice \(i4j\)](#); and [Community Justice Advocates of Utah \(CJAU\)](#) recently relaunched an expanded version of the [U.S. Justice Worker Program Index](#), a comprehensive national resource mapping how “Community-Based Justice Worker” programs are structured, authorized, and implemented across the country.

As the access to justice crisis in America continues, communities face persistent civil legal needs that far exceed attorney-based services. In response, states and local leaders are developing Justice Worker programs. These models formally authorize trained community advocates—embedded at trusted legal, health, human, and social service providers—to deliver legal assistance in specific areas of law while maintaining clear standards and accountability structures.

“Justice Worker programs expand current systems of support with the goal of creating new opportunities for individuals to access and understand their legal options and tools,” said [Hayley Cousin](#), Executive Director of Community Justice Advocates of Utah. “By reimagining how and by whom legal services are delivered, these programs remove barriers to accessing justice and empower Justice Workers to strengthen their communities.”

As Justice Worker programs gain momentum nationwide, policymakers and regulatory leaders need clear, comparative information on how they are designed and regulated. The updated Program Index provides verified, side-by-side data on Justice Workers’ training requirements, scope of authorized services, service support models, and associated consumer protections—equipping jurisdictions to innovate legal services without starting from scratch.

“We are at an important moment nationally, where collaboration and transparency are critical for jurisdictions in launching effective Justice Worker models,” said [Antonio M. Coronado](#), Professor of Practice and Co-Coordinator of Community Legal Education programs at Innovation for Justice. “By mapping how Justice Worker programs are both administered and regulated, we’re providing a fuller view than ever before of the national movement’s

diversity. This Program Index serves as an open-source toolbox of ideas and a starting point for fellow innovators in realizing justice work.”

The relaunch represents a cross-organizational effort to strengthen this emerging framework at a national level—reducing duplication, supporting evidence-informed policymaking, and prioritizing shared learning. The partners will continue updating the Program Index as programs are authorized and evolve, ensuring it remains responsive to the growing landscape.

“This work is about building access to justice that is both practical and sustainable,” said [Jessica Bednarz](#), Director of Legal Services and the Profession at IAALS. “Community-based justice worker programs demonstrate that expanding access does not require lowering standards, it requires widening pathways. When reform is coordinated and informed by real-world design, innovation becomes infrastructure.”

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About IAALS: [IAALS](#), the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System, is an independent research organization that innovates and advances solutions that make our civil justice system more just. Founded in 2006 at the University of Denver, IAALS believes that justice for all must be a reality for everyone.

About i4J: [Innovation for Justice](#) is a virtual social justice innovation lab that creates new, replicable, and scalable strategies for legal empowerment. Jointly housed at the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law and the University of Utah David Eccles School of Business, i4J’s Community Legal Education Programs train and champion Justice Workers in three civil legal areas across Arizona and Utah.

About CJAU: [Community Justice Advocates of Utah](#) supports and trains Community Justice Advocates to empower them with the tools necessary to effectively assist their clients in accessing and exercising rights afforded them by the law. CJAU supports a statewide network of Community Justice Advocates who deliver local, timely, trusted legal help.

