

Strategic Issue 4 - Judicial Independence: Ensuring Impartiality and Accountability

Issue description: Judicial independence is a cornerstone of our democracy, and ensures that decisions of the courts are impartial and free from influence or control by other branches of government or private or political interests. Within the organizational structure of the judicial branch of government, trial courts must establish their legal and organizational boundaries, monitor and control their operations, and account publicly for their performance. Independence and accountability permit government by law, access to justice, and timely resolution of disputes with equality, fairness and integrity.

Goal 4.1 To improve communications and cooperation with other branches of government.

Strategies:

- 4.1(a) Create opportunities for regular meetings among representatives of all three branches of government to promote improved communication.
- 4.1(b) Promote frequent exchange of information through written reports.

Goal 4.2 To participate in a budget process that provides sufficient resources, ensures accountability in their use, and allows the Court to control its appropriated funds.

Strategies:

- 4.2(a) Continually assess court funding needs, both short and long term.
- 4.2(b) Identify funding sources.
- 4.2(c) Monitor that dedicated court funds are used for court purposes.

Goal 4.3 The Court will be accountable to the public.

Strategies:

- 4.3(a) Annually review adopted court performance standards.
- 4.3(b) Establish a process to measure organizational performance, monitor results, and achieve performance goals.
- 4.3(c) Regularly issue reports of court performance.