



NEWS RELEASE

The National Center for State Courts
300 Newport Avenue • Williamsburg, Virginia 23185
www.ncsconline.org

Contact: Lorri Montgomery
Communications Manager
The National Center for State Courts
757.259.1525 or lmontgomery@ncsc.dni.us

James T. Glessner
State Court Administrator
Maine State Courts
207.822.0792 or james.glessner@state.me.us

Nation's Chief Justices and State Court Administrators To Consider Public Access to Court Records

July 30 – August 1, 2002
Rockport, Maine
The Samoset Resort

Williamsburg, VA (July 15 2002) – Public access to court records tops the agenda at this year's annual meeting of the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA), July 30 to Aug. 1 in Rockport, Maine. As part of the conferences' education sessions, the chief justices and court administrators are expected to discuss and endorse guidelines for states courts to use when revising their policies on public access to court records. This issue has moved to the forefront for courts, the media, and domestic violence and privacy advocates in recent years because of technological advances that allow electronic access to court records. **The media is invited to attend.**

CCJ brings together the highest judicial officers and COSCA brings together the state court administrators from the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands. The National Center for State Courts, headquartered in Williamsburg, Va., serves as the secretariat for CCJ and COSCA and coordinates their meetings, which address court policy, budget and other issues.

For the past year, The National Center has worked with the Justice Management Institute (JMI) to develop "Public Access to Court Records: Guidelines for Policy Development by State Courts." Public comment was a significant part of the process. Other key conference topics include how states are addressing unequal treatment in the courts, and what courts are doing to help the growing number of people who want to represent themselves. *An agenda is attached.* A draft copy of the "Public Access to Court Records: Guidelines for Policy Development by State Courts" will be available online before the conference at www.courtaccess.org/modelpolicy/.

Robert E. Hirshon, president of the American Bar Association and Angus S. King Jr, governor of Maine, will speak at opening ceremonies July 30. Also during the conference, Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye of the New York Court of Appeals will be named president of CCJ, at which time she also becomes chairperson of The National Center's Board of Directors. Patricia Tobias, administrative director of the courts in Idaho, becomes COSCA's president.

Media interested in attending must register by calling Lorri Montgomery, NCSC's communications manager, at 757.259.1525, or Ted Glessner, Maine state court administrator, at 207.822.0792.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Warren E. Burger, along with CCJ, founded The National Center for State Courts in 1971. The National Center is a non-profit, court-reform organization that provides education, training, and technology, management, and research services to the nation's state courts.

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