

Conference of Chief Justices Tribal Relations Committee

The following is the Committee's mission statement:

Consistent with the Conference of Chief Justices mission, the Tribal Relations Committee aims to educate the members of CCJ on issues related to tribal courts. The Committee seeks to do this by creating, sustaining, and promoting projects that enhance our collaboration and communication with tribal courts. The Committee further seeks to establish long-term professional relationships with tribal judicial counterparts and engage in dialogue with them on issues of mutual interest.

-Adopted by the Tribal Relations Committee at its 2003 Midyear Meeting in Williamsburg, VA (January 27, 2003).

Areas of Activity:

The Tribal Relations Committee supported the Walking on Common Ground (2005) National Leadership meeting. This was a national leadership meeting held in Green Bay, WI. It brought together tribal, federal and state judges to share equally on tribal relations challenges and mutually agreeable solutions. This meeting led to a report, Walking on Common Ground: Pathways to Equal Justice.

The Tribal Relations Committee and the National Center for State Courts is a repository of key publications, agreements, and documents on successful state tribal relations. In particular, the Committee has been interested in successful state/tribal consortiums formed throughout the country.

The Tribal Relations Committee supported NCSC's "Project Passport" which would enhance tribal-state cooperation by increasing the effectiveness of protection orders across jurisdictions (2010). At the time, NCSC was seeking funding from various sources esp. the U.S. Department of Justice.

The Tribal Relations Committee has invited tribal representatives to meet with our members at our annual and midyear meetings. We have been more successful in this when we meet in a location near or contiguous to tribal lands.

The Tribal Relations Committee encourage State Chief Justices to attend National/Regional Tribal judges conferences or symposia and serve as panelists or make presentations. In the past our members have attended meeting of the National Indian Child Welfare Association, American Indian Law Center, National American Indian Judges Association, the Four Corners Summit, the Oklahoma Sovereignty Symposium and the Indian Law Division of the Federal Bar.

The Tribal Relations Committee has been discussing with the Uniform Law Commission on the elements for a successful Model Tribal Probate Code as well as other successful Model laws/acts that could replicated throughout the states and with tribal counterparts.