



CHICAGO

APPLESEED
FUND FOR JUSTICE

2019-2020
ANNUAL REPORT

Our mission is to systematically advance court functioning so that all people – regardless of socioeconomic status, race, ability, gender, or citizenship – have an equal opportunity for accessible justice.

By leveraging the unique insights and best practices of court system actors, community members, advocates, local experts, and the public at large, we have helped interrupt cycles of poverty, mass incarceration, and racial injustice perpetuated by all aspects of the court system.

**WE IMPROVE LIVES BY
IMPROVING COURTS.**

**CHICAGO APPLESEED, A
CENTER FOR FAIR COURTS IS A
NONPARTISAN, INDEPENDENT
RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY
ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO
MAKING COOK COUNTY AND
ILLINOIS COURTS FAIRER, MORE
EFFICIENT, AND EFFECTIVE -
IMPROVING LIVES BY
IMPROVING COURTS.**

We fight for racial and economic justice by identifying injustices within our court systems, proposing effective, anti-racist solutions and advocating for their implementation. Our unique connections to the local justice system make it possible for us to more effectively develop and advocate for solutions to systemic injustice.

Chicago Appleseed is also a member of the Appleseed Network, an international network of 16 social justice centers across North America.

As part of the Appleseed Network, we draw upon the expertise of and collaborate with these Appleseed justice centers, which make us a more effective organization. Likewise, our 25-year-long collaboration with the Chicago Council of Lawyers - as well as other legal and community organizations - helps us expand our reach and remain community-informed.

We operate with a small but dedicated group of paid staff, interns and law student fellows, and a corps of over 100 pro bono professionals - including lawyers, paralegals, judges, academics, social workers, community activists, and more - who conduct national best practices research and collect local front-line data to inform our work as we develop solutions and implementation strategies. Our endless list of community collaborations and coalitions continually inform and fundamentally guide our work, which is focused on criminal justice, access to justice, and economic justice for all.

VISION

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

WE CREATED A SERIES OF INFORMATIONAL FACT SHEETS—RELATED TO CHILD SUPPORT, DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT, AND CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT—WHICH SERVE A COMMUNITY EDUCATION PURPOSE BOTH FOR FAMILIES WHO NEED TO ACCESS CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES AND FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE ACTIVISTS FOR USE IN INFORMING CONTINUED ADVOCACY.

- ACCESSIBLE HERE:
WWW.CHICAGOAPPLESEED.ORG/COMMUNITY-RESOURCES

WE HAVE LED THE RESEARCH INTO HOW ELECTRONIC MONITORING IS USED—HOW OFTEN, DECISION-MAKING AROUND WHETHER IT IS USED, HOW IT IS MANAGED, TECHNOLOGY INVOLVED, AND HOW THIS TECHNOLOGY HAS AN IMPACT ON PEOPLE’S RIGHTS, PRE- AND POST-TRIAL.

WITH THE HELP OF LATHAM & WATKINS, WE CONDUCTED AN ANALYSIS OF CRIMINAL COURT OPERATIONS DURING THE PANDEMIC.

- ACCESS THE REPORT HERE:
WWW.CHICAGOAPPLESEED.ORG/OUR-BLOG/081920-COOK-COUNTY-E-COURT/

CONDUCTED A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE FREQUENCY OF REPRESENTATION IN COOK COUNTY STATIONHOUSES AND ARE SUPPORTING LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE A ONE-HOUR WINDOW FOR AN ARRESTED PERSON TO BE GIVEN ACCESS TO A PHONE AND THE NUMBER TO CALL THE PUBLIC DEFENDER.

- MORE: WWW.CHICAGOAPPLESEED.ORG/OUR-BLOG/ONE-HOUR-ACCESS-TO-COUNSEL-COST-SAVING-NECESSITY

WITH THE PEOPLE’S LOBBY, WE CONCLUDED OUR QUARTERLY EVALUATIONS OF COOK COUNTY STATE’S ATTORNEY KIM FOXX.

- ACCESS THE REPORT HERE:
WWW.CHICAGOAPPLESEED.ORG/PUBLICATION-LIBRARY/#CRIMINALJUSTICE

PROVIDED THE BACKBONE WORK FOR THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ADVOCATES DEALING WITH THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM.

PRO BONO COUNSEL AT DLA PIPER DRAFTED AN AMICUS FOR THE THIRD DISTRICT APPELLATE COURT IN OTTAWA, ILLINOIS, ASSERTING ERROR IN ALLOWING THE STATE’S ATTORNEY TO CLAIM A RIGHT TO SEARCH A CRIME VICTIM’S HEALTH RECORD. WE FILED THE BRIEF IN OUR ROLE IN MONITORING STATE’S ATTORNEYS’ OFFICES AND REPORTING THE STATUS OF PROSECUTION IN ILLINOIS.

- ACCESS THE BRIEF HERE:
WWW.CHICAGOAPPLESEED.ORG/071320-AMICUS-BRIEF-PEOPLE-V-GOMEZ-RAMIREZ/

WE LED THE COALITION WHICH SAW LEGISLATION ENACTED TO CREATE A COURT COSTS AND FEES WAIVER FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE DEFENDANTS - THE CRIMINAL AND TRAFFIC ASSESSMENT ACT (CTAA) - AND PUBLISHED A REPORT ABOUT THE STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION IN ILLINOIS.

- READ THE FULL REPORT:
WWW.CHICAGOAPPLESEED.ORG/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2020/07/FINAL-COURT-COSTS-FINES-FEES-IN-IL-CHICAGO-APPLESEED-07212020-1.PDF

WE ARE CONSULTING WITH CHICAGO VOTES AS THEY LAUNCH A COMMUNITY COURT-WATCHING PROGRAM TO EVALUATE JUDICIAL QUALITY AND CONDUCT.

WE CALLED UPON THE ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL AND THE CHIEF JUDGE TO PROTECT PEOPLE AGAINST GARNISHMENT OF CARES ACT PAYMENTS.

- ACCESS THE LETTERS:
WWW.CHICAGOAPPLESEED.ORG/OUR-BLOG/CARES-ACT-GARNISHMENT-PROTECTIONS/

WE ISSUED A MAJOR RESEARCH REPORT ON THE USE OF CENTRALIZED ADMINISTRATIVE PANELS DESIGNED TO INCREASE THE INDEPENDENCE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING OFFICERS.

- FIND THE REPORT HERE:
WWW.CHICAGOAPPLESEED.ORG/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2019/03/CENTRAL-PANEL-REPORT-2.17.PDF

WE OFFERED INPUT ON A PROPOSED RE-DRAFT OF THE CITY'S VEHICLE IMPOUNDMENT ORDINANCE WITH A GOAL OF REDUCING DISPARATE IMPACT ON LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES.

HELPED PERSUADE THE COURT TO REQUIRE INDIGENCE HEARINGS BEFORE RULING ON WHETHER TO APPOINT THE PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE TO REPRESENT SOMEONE.

WE CONTINUE TO MONITOR IMPLEMENTATION AND EDUCATE COMMUNITIES ABOUT THE IMPACT AND WAYS TO ENSURE REINSTATEMENT OF DRIVER'S LICENSES.

- READ MORE:
WWW.CHICAGOAPPLESEED.ORG/OUR-BLOG/THE-LICENSE-TO-WORK-ACT-GOES-INTO-EFFECT-TODAY/

WE ENGAGED IN LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY WITH THE TRANSIT TABLE COALITION TO ENACT THE LICENSE TO WORK ACT (ENDING DEBT-BASED DRIVER'S LICENSE SUSPENSION IN ILLINOIS).

WE ARE A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE COALITION TO END MONEY BOND, WHICH HELPED PERSUADE THE CHIEF JUDGE TO ISSUE AN ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER LIMITING THE PRACTICE OF JAILING PEOPLE BECAUSE THEY ARE POOR.

WE HOSTED A CANDIDATES FORUM FOR BOTH THE PRIMARY AND GENERAL RACES FOR CLERK OF THE COURT OF COOK COUNTY. ALONG WITH THE CIVIC FEDERATION, WE RELEASED A TRANSITION REPORT FOR THE NEW CLERK, INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FIRST 30 DAYS, FIRST 180 DAYS AND THE FIRST YEAR.

- ACCESS THE REPORT:
WWW.CHICAGOAPPLESEED.ORG/09-22-2020-NEW-DIRECTIONS-FOR-THE-OFFICE-OF-THE-CLERK-OF-THE-COOK-COUNTY-CIRCUIT-COURT/

AS A MEMBER OF THE FREE TO DRIVE COALITION, WE ARE PART OF A NATIONWIDE MOVEMENT LOOKING TO END DEBT-BASED DRIVER'S LICENSE SUSPENSION IN A VARIETY OF CONTEXTS, INCLUDING COURT DEBT, CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT, AND FINES COLLECTION.

WE LED A COALITION THAT ADVOCATED FOR COURT RECORDING IN FIVE COOK COUNTY EVICTION COURTROOMS. NOW, WE ARE PREPARING A REPORT ON HOW TO BRING ABOUT LOW-COST COURT RECORDING AND ENSURING THAT A RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS IS MADE SO TENANTS CAN APPEAL EVEN VIRTUAL EVICTION PROCEEDINGS.

- MORE INFORMATION:
WWW.CHICAGOAPPLESEED.ORG/AFTER-YEARS-OF-ADVOCACY-THE-RECORDING-SYSTEMS-IN-CHICAGO'S-EVICTION-COURTROOMS-ARE-OFFICIALLY-OPERATIONAL-AS-OF-OCTOBER-25-2019/

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO JOIN OUR PRESIDENTS' CIRCLE AND BECOME A SUSTAINING MEMBER OF CHICAGO APPLESEED.

WITH YOUR DONATION, WE WILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT:

- To stop the imposition of unfair court debt on indigent defendants and the unfair imposition of money bond.
- To expand litigant-centered courts using administrative hearing officers who help that meet the needs of unrepresented parents and children.
- For the preservation of appellate (and other) rights in eviction courts through court recording.
- To monitor court compliance with the general order regarding public defender appointment.
- For other collaborative initiatives to improve the quality of justice for all communities in Cook County.

SUPPORT

PLEASE USE OUR ONLINE FORM AT
WWW.CHICAGOAPPLESEED.ORG/DONATE
TO CONTRIBUTE TO CHICAGO APPLESEED.

YOU CAN ALSO SEND A DONATION TO US AT 750 NORTH
LAKE SHORE DRIVE, 4TH FLOOR, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60611.



750 NORTH LAKE SHORE DRIVE, FOURTH FLOOR | CHICAGO, IL 60611 | 312-988-6565 | CHICAGOAPPLESEED.ORG

The Fund for Justice is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. Our Federal tax exempt employer identification number is 23-7059214.