

Job Description

Chair of the Maryland Access to Justice Commission

About the Maryland Access to Justice Commission (A2JC)

The Maryland Access to Justice Commission (A2JC) unites leaders from the legal, nonprofit, government, and private sectors to make the civil justice system fair, equitable, and accessible for all Marylanders. A2JC is composed of the Attorney General, Deans of both Maryland law schools, civil legal aid leaders and funders, legislators, law firm partners and corporate general counsel, academics, and members of the judiciary and state bar. A2JC works to close the civil justice gap by pursuing four priorities: coalition-building, advocacy, reform and equity. A2JC was originally created by the Supreme Court of Maryland and is now an independent entity that is powered by the Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA). Learn more at <https://www.mdaccesstojustice.org/>.

Position Summary

The Chair of the Maryland Access to Justice Commission provides visionary leadership and serves as the chief ambassador of A2JC's mission. This individual will champion access to justice as a moral and civic imperative—advocating effectively across the legal community, public sector, and broader Maryland community.

The Chair will guide A2JC's strategic direction, ensure strong governance, cultivate partnerships, and help the organization grow in visibility, influence, and sustainability. The ideal candidate belongs to the legal profession, has a history of championing access to justice, advances racial equity and brings the credibility, energy, and integrity to inspire collective action—without any real or perceived conflicts of interest.

The Chair exercises governance and policy leadership and does not manage A2JC's day-to-day operations, which are the responsibility of the Executive Director.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership and Governance

- Provide strong, principled leadership that centers on A2JC's mission to make the civil justice system accessible, equitable, and fair.
- Chair A2J Commission and Executive Committee meetings, foster inclusive, forward-looking dialogue; and oversee the governance and business of the Board.
- Support and advise the Executive Director and serve as a thought-partner and strategist.
- Ensure appropriate delineation between A2JC's governance and operational responsibilities.

Mission Champion and Communicator

- Serve as A2JC's most visible spokesperson and champion—articulating the urgency and importance of access to justice for all Marylanders.
- Communicate A2JC's mission and impact effectively to diverse audiences, including policymakers, bar leaders, funders, community organizations, and the public.
- Inspire others to engage, support, and amplify A2JC's mission through partnership and advocacy.

Strategic Growth and Resource Development

- Help position A2JC for growth—expanding its reach, funding base, and partnerships across the state.

- Support fundraising and resource development by engaging donors, sponsors, and institutional partners.
- Leverage professional networks to strengthen A2JC's credibility and influence across Maryland's legal, civic, and philanthropic communities.

Community Connection and Advocacy

- Bridge relationships between the legal profession, the judiciary, policymakers, and community advocates.
- Advance A2JC's advocacy priorities, including civil legal aid funding, right to counsel, court access, self-represented litigant support, and legal system reform and innovation.
- Promote inclusive and equitable engagement with all Maryland communities, particularly those most affected by barriers to justice.

Culture and Motivation

- Model open-mindedness, strong listening skills, and collaborative decision-making.
- Encourage, motivate, and empower Commissioners and stakeholders to contribute their time, treasure or talent toward collective goals.
- Demonstrate perseverance and bandwidth to lead through challenges and change.

Desired Qualifications

- Champion of Access to Justice: Demonstrated commitment to civil justice reform, race equity and equitable access to justice for all Marylanders.
- Effective Communicator: Skilled in articulating mission, vision, and strategy to varied audiences with authenticity and influence.
- Member of the Legal Profession: Licensed attorney with demonstrated engagement and leadership in Maryland's legal community.

- Strategic Growth-Minded: Brings insight, energy, and networks to help A2JC fundraise effectively and grow in reach and sustainability.
- Independent and Ethical: Demonstrates independence and ethical judgement, with no material conflicts of interests that cannot be disclosed and appropriately managed consistent with A2JC policy.
- Effective Leadership Style: open-minded and collaborative; resilient when pursuing systemic change; adequate band-width to lead a high-profile state-wide initiative; strong listening skills and respect for diverse perspectives; ability to motivate, encourage and inspire others.

Term and Commitment

Term: 3 years, with an ability to renew for at least one more term.

Commitment: Approximately 5-15 hours per month, including bimonthly A2J Commission meetings, committee participation, and public engagements. The Chair is expected to remain responsive between meetings and available for time-sensitive leadership and public-facing responsibilities as needed.

Compensation: Volunteer (unpaid) position.

To Apply

Interested candidates should submit a letter of interest and résumé outlining relevant leadership, advocacy, and access-to-justice experience to Reena Shah (reena@msba.org) by March 1, 2026.

The Maryland Access to Justice Commission values diversity and encourages applications from individuals of all backgrounds and lived experiences who are committed to fairness, equity and justice.