



SOUTH DAKOTA

UNIFIED JUDICIAL SYSTEM

2025–2028

STRATEGIC PLAN



MISSION

The Unified Judicial System (UJS) is dedicated to providing a fair, impartial, and accessible court system that upholds the rule of law and is worthy of the public's trust and confidence.

VISION

Justice for All.



Welcome to the South Dakota Unified Judicial System (UJS) strategic plan—a roadmap to guide our courts in serving the people of South Dakota with fairness, integrity, and excellence.

This plan reflects our ongoing commitment to providing a judicial system that not only upholds the rule of law but also earns the trust and confidence of every person who walks through our courthouse doors. It reaffirms our mission to deliver justice that is impartial, accessible, and grounded in the highest ethical standards.

Our vision—Justice for All—speaks to the very heart of our work. It is a reminder that the courts exist for everyone, and our efforts must meet the needs of the people we serve, no matter their background, circumstance, or walk of life. To fulfill this vision, we have identified six strategic pillars that will shape our priorities in the years ahead, addressing the evolving challenges and opportunities within the justice system.

This strategic plan has been developed through a collaborative process involving input from justices, judges, and court staff that make up the UJS. It represents our collective commitment to excellence and

innovation in fulfilling our mandate to administer justice impartially, respectfully, and effectively.

In the sections that follow, you will find an outline of our vision, mission, goals, and strategic priorities. These components form the backbone of our strategic plan and will steer our choices and resource distribution as we work toward our long-term goals. We understand that bringing this plan to fruition demands commitment, teamwork, and continuous review to stay attuned to the needs of those we serve.

This strategic plan is both a promise and a call to action. It is a promise that we, as stewards of justice, will continue striving to meet the highest standards of service and integrity. And it is a call to action for every member of the UJS to work together to bring this vision to life. I am confident that, with this plan as our guide, we will meet the challenges ahead and build an even stronger judicial system for the people of South Dakota.

Chief Justice Steven R. Jensen