

**Resolution 7  
In Support of the Guiding Principles on Using Risk and Needs Assessment  
Information in the Sentencing Process**

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators adopted a resolution in 2007 in support of sentencing practices that promote public safety and reduce recidivism; and

WHEREAS, research has demonstrated that the use of validated and reliable offender risk and needs assessment information to inform supervision and treatment decisions is a critical component of effective strategies to reduce recidivism; and

WHEREAS, the National Center for State Courts, with funding from the Pew Public Safety Performance Project and the State Justice Institute, established a National Working Group to develop guidance for courts in using risk and needs assessment information to inform the sentencing process; and

WHEREAS, the National Working Group was led by the Honorable Sue Bell Cobb, Chief Justice of Alabama and the Honorable Gerald A. Marroney, State Court Administrator of Colorado, and included representatives from the criminal justice system involved in the sentencing process; and

WHEREAS, the National Working Group has produced a report, *Using Offender Risk and Needs Assessment Information at Sentencing: Guidance for Courts from a National Working Group*, describing a set of guiding principles, informed by research and practice, to help courts incorporate risk and needs assessment information into the sentencing process;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators:

- Support the National Working Group's recommendation that offender risk and needs assessment information be available to inform judicial decisions regarding effective management and reduction of the risk of offender recidivism; and
- Endorse the guiding principles described in the National Working Group's report as a valuable tool for state courts in crafting policies and practices to incorporate offender risk and needs assessment information in the sentencing process; and
- Encourage state and local courts to review the guiding principles and work with their justice system partners to incorporate risk and needs assessment information into the sentencing process.

*Adopted as proposed by CCJ/COSCA Criminal Justice Committee at the 2011 Annual Meeting on August 3, 2011.*