



PRESS RELEASE

New York State
Unified Court System

Hon. Andrew A. Crecca
District Administrative Judge

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Suffolk Courts Announce *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* *Day of Service* Program

Central Islip, New York: District Administrative Judge **Hon. Andrew Crecca** is proud to announce the launch of the Suffolk County Courts' *Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service* program, a one-day community initiative offering free legal services in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy of civic engagement and public service. For the first time in Suffolk County, the New York Unified Court System's Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission has partnered with the Touro University Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center to promote access to justice and volunteerism in the community by providing public free legal assistance in certain cases.

On **Friday, January 23, 2026**, members of the public will be given free access to law students and volunteer attorneys in the Central Jury Room of the **John P. Cohalan Jr. Court Complex** in Central Islip to receive assistance with the following legal matters:

- **Uncontested divorce cases** (only marriage cases without children or property in common);
- **Child or spousal support matters;**
- **Initial custody and visitation filings;** and
- **Name change applications.**

The *Day of Service* program aims to support court users who may otherwise face significant barriers in navigating the legal system, while also giving law students invaluable training and mentorship from local attorneys. Participants will receive hands-on assistance from law students and supervising attorneys in filling out court forms, describing court procedures, and providing references to other services.

“This new program not only empowers those seeking legal help, but it also inspires the next generation of lawyers to carry forward the important tradition of service,” said District Administrative Judge Crecca. “In special tribute to Dr. King, we reaffirm the court’s commitment to ensuring that justice is both accessible and inclusive to all. I am very proud of the dedicated work of the court staff, attorneys, and law students who volunteered their time to make this program happen. I also want to thank two highly distinguished members of the court who together spearheaded this new initiative: Acting Supreme Court Justice **Hon. Cheryl Joseph**, Supervising Judge of Suffolk County’s Matrimonial Parts and Chair to the Equal Justice in the Courts Committee for Suffolk County, and **Zenith Taylor, Esq.**, the Statewide Civic Engagement Coordinator for the New York Unified Court System.”

Judge Joseph, who will oversee the *Day of Service* program operations, emphasized the initiative’s broader community impact. “By bringing together the public, law students, and members of the bar, we are fostering a culture of service and civic responsibility,” she said. “This program not only supports individuals seeking legal assistance, but it also strengthens the relationship between the legal community and the people it serves.”

Appointments and pre-registration for the event are required to ensure that participants receive the proper level of support. Participants are required to present photo ID and pedigree information for all parties involved. To commence a divorce case or name change proceeding, a \$210 filing fee is required and may be paid by check or money order, though fee waivers are possible.

For an appointment at the *Day of Service* program, people may click on the **QR Code** below or call the court clerk at **(631) 852-2421**. Spaces may become limited and those interested are encouraged to sign up as soon as possible—appointments will be made on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The Suffolk Courts’ *Day of Service* program will honor Dr. King’s enduring legacy by expanding access to legal resources and empowering the community through service. “This program will bring together service, education, and community partnership in a new way that will help advance the court’s pledge to providing equal access to justice for all,” Judge Crecca added.

To Register for Free Legal Services, Scan the QR Code:

