

**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**Connecticut Judicial Branch**  
**Commission on Access to Justice**  
**Workgroup on Modest / Moderate Means Programs**

**April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 10 AM**  
**Meeting by Teleconference**

The Connecticut Judicial Branch Workgroup on Modest / Moderate Means Programs met on Wednesday April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 10 AM by telephonic conference.

Those in attendance: Atty. Chris Nelson (co-chair), Atty. Deborah Witkin, Atty. Alice Mastrony, and Atty. Barbara McGrath.

- I.      Introductions: The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m., and co-chair Chris Nelson welcomed the members.
  - II.     Approval of Draft Minutes of the February 21, 2014 meeting: Upon motion by Atty. Nelson and second by Atty. Witkin, the minutes were unanimously approved.
  - III.    Update from Access to Justice Task Force Meeting from February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014: Atty. Nelson reports that the task force looked at the draft survey and liked the thought of sending it out but debated over the form of disseminating the information. The task force also discussed potential grants for setting up the modest / moderate means programs (i.e. American Bar Assoc. grant) (MMP) but noted that this will be discussed further once a formal program is put into place.
  - IV.    CBA Modest Means Update: Connecticut Bar Association (CBA) is proposing to develop a resource center which relies on statewide legal services for referrals. The hope is that Statewide Legal Services will screen people and clients that exceed statewide legal services income guidelines will then be referred to the modest / moderate means programs (MMP). A staff person from the CBA may also be hired to coordinate the program. A committee of four young attorneys and three experienced attorneys has been formed and is working on setting up guidelines on income and charges as well as identifying the type of training and resources that will be provided as part of this program. The CBA plans to have the program in place by the end of the summer.
- A brief discussion about the separate groups involved in the analysis and development of modest means programs ensued. The Access to Justice Commission (ATJ) workgroup is a judicial branch initiative, entirely separate from the CBA MMP, which will likely involve only members of the bar association. The discussion included possible incentives, the differing goals and the probability of the two programs running on parallel tracks.
- V.      Modest Means Survey: The workgroup discussed the survey, and how to ensure that people respond. It was suggested that the survey be re-drafted to shorten it and make

it more “user-friendly” without sacrificing the information that would be helpful to us in evaluating these other programs. Atty. Witkin suggested that interns that will be working with her over the summer might be able to assist the workgroup in administering the survey and in following up with the contact people to obtain additional information. The survey could be re-designed so that it could be sent and completed electronically.

Preliminary phone calls or some basic research on the Internet could help to narrow the number of questions and programs to which the survey would be sent so that the survey would be sent to contacts who were willing to respond and whose program location and client base are similar to Connecticut. The group notes that the intern(s) should be used to compare similar programs, with the same demographics, to understand any flaws in the way the program works. Atty. Witkin notes that she will work with the intern(s) to narrow down the intern(s) duties.

VI. Timeline and future meetings (dates and locations): Atty. Witkin notes that she can email the workgroup as to whether and when she can get the intern(s) to begin working on the survey and the workgroup would then be able to develop a timeline and schedule future meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 10:57 a.m.