

Draft Minutes  
Connecticut Judicial Branch  
Commission on Access to Justice  
[Workgroup on Modest/Moderate Means Programs](#)

August 14, 2014 at 2PM

The Connecticut Judicial Branch Workgroup on Modest / Moderate Means Programs met on Thursday August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 2:00PM in Conference Room 204, 225 Spring St., Wethersfield, CT .

Those attending: Atty. Patricia Kaplan and Atty. Chris R. Nelson (Co-Chairs), Atty. Alice H. Mastrony and Atty. Deborah R. Witkin

Members Absent: Atty. Jan Chiarretto, Atty. Barbara S. McGrath, Atty. Jamey Bell, Atty. William H. Clendenen, Jr. and Atty. Mark Dubois

Guests: Atty. Joseph D. D'Alesio

I. Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 2:15 p.m., and the co-chairs welcomed the members.

II. Approval of Draft Minutes of April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014 meeting: Meeting minutes were reviewed and a motion to approve the minutes was made by Atty. Nelson, seconded by Atty. Witkin and unanimously approved.

III. Update on Survey of other Modest Means Programs: Atty. Kaplan updated the work group on the responses from some of the local bar association in Connecticut to the CBA proposal on Modest/Moderate Means. Their responses were based upon a preliminary draft of the proposal, according to Atty. Nelson. The Young Lawyers' Section is continuing to work on a Modest/Moderate Means program, with the knowledge of the CBA. Atty. Witkin provided an update on the survey, which was begun by an intern, who was unable to complete the survey. Atty. Witkin proposed that the work group identify five or six specific items about the existing modest/moderate means programs in the country that would be interesting and helpful, and she will work on developing a chart with the cooperation of the intern. The members agreed to email Atty. Witkin with their suggestions.

IV. Recommendations for a Modest Means Program: The group agrees that working with other bar associations and law schools will be helpful to spread the Modest Means initiative throughout the state. Atty. Nelson reports that the initiative will likely begin in New Britain at the CBA offices. The group also agreed that going forward, since there are already two groups working on the modest/moderate means programs (CBA and the Young Lawyers' Section of the CBA), the work group should try to complete the information gathering process from the surveys and provide that information to the Young Lawyers' Section. Any efforts by this work group would essentially be duplicative at this time.

Discussion ensued on what Judicial could do to assist in the work of the other groups in developing a modest/moderate means program. Atty. D'Alesio briefly discussed some of the proposals that are going to be discussed as part of the civil re-engineering process that is currently in progress, including discovery reforms and a simplified/expedited litigation docket. These proposals were made by focus groups and will be further evaluated and analyzed by a new committee. Atty. Kaplan also

mentioned the existing pilot program on limited scope representation and how that may assist attorneys representing clients through the MMP.

V. Other potential Judicial programs to work in conjunction with Modest Means practice: Atty. Mastrony and Atty. Kaplan both mentioned that the information gathered so far seems to indicate that modest/moderate means programs operated through the law schools are the most successful ones. Programs are not run by judicial branches in other states. The work group discussed the importance of getting the law schools and the local bar associations involved in this kind of a program.

Atty. Mastrony returned to Atty. Witkin's suggestion that the work group come up with the five or six specific items about the existing modest/moderate means programs to include in a summary chart (such as incentives, practice areas, etc.) and revised goals of the program to present at the next Access to Justice Commission Meeting in September. The group agreed that a chart will be formulated by email through the work group and that some combination of tapping into the law schools and the local bar associations will be recommended as the best means of creating a viable modest/moderate means proposal.

VI. Coordinate next meeting of the Work Group: The chairs of the task force will talk with Judge Solomon, one of the Access to Justice Committee Chairs discuss how the work group envisions this program moving forward.

VII. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 3:37 p.m.