

**Judicial Performance Evaluation Program Subcommittee:
Evaluating Judges Assigned to High Volume Courts and as Presiding Judges**

Agenda and Minutes

Thursday, April 30, 2009 at 2:15 p.m.

Middlesex Judicial District

One Court Street

Middletown, CT

Attendees: Hon. A. DiPentima, Attorney A. Dranginis(Co-Chair), Hon. F. Iannotti (Co-Chair), Hon. W. Bright, Hon. W. Cremins, Attorney R. Hassett, Hon. K. Hutchinson, Attorney H. Woodard, K. Chorney (Staff)
Absent: Hon. J. Alexander, Hon. P. Clifford, Representative G. Fox, Hon. T. O'Keefe, Attorney M. Libbin (Counsel)

1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes from March 31, 2009

Hon. F. Iannotti welcomed the subcommittee members. The members reviewed the minutes of the meeting held on March 31, 2009. Attorney A. Dranginis moved to approve the minutes of March 31, 2009; the motion was seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Before the meeting continued, the members paused to address a recent memorandum, drafted by Margery Wilber, regarding certain logistics of an evaluation program for high volume courts. The memo discusses the unique challenges of identifying and distributing surveys only to those attorneys eligible to complete them, given the prevalence of using firm juris numbers as opposed to individual juris numbers. The members agreed that asking court staff to track individual attorney appearances is not feasible given the volume of cases in the high volume courts. The members discussed relying on the attorneys to complete the form honestly and relying on firms that receive the forms to get the survey to the individual who actually appeared. Further, the subcommittee members agreed that distribution and collection of the surveys by email will minimize any mishandling issues.

2. Discussion of Questions Specific to Presiding Judges

There were no additional questions added specific to Presiding Judges.

3. Finalize recommendations

♦ One member suggested that Item #2 be amended to include Family Support Magistrates and Family Support Referees. There was unanimous agreement to this suggestion.

♦ Hon. F. Iannotti suggested Recommendation #4 be amended to state that "...questionnaires be sent out the first week of January every year". This was agreed to unanimously.

♦ The members agreed to recommend that surveys be distributed once per year with a return date of February 28 of each year.

♦ After a brief discussion of recent surveys received, it was suggested Recommendation #6 be amended to state that the number of answer options would be no more than 5, with the descriptions as follows: excellent, very good, good, fair, and poor. This was agreeable to the attendees. One member commented that a statistician might suggest reframing the questions as statements to be responded to as “strongly agree”, “somewhat agree”, etc.; the members concluded that the experience of a survey expert could best determine how questions should be formatted and phrased to elicit a response. There was discussion on whether the response of Not Applicable should be included on some, none, or all of the questions. The members unanimously agreed that for the sake of a consistent document, “NA” should be an answer option for all of the questions, and if attorneys chose to use this to avoid answering certain questions, it is their prerogative.

♦ The members agreed that the determination of which attorneys get surveys would be established by the number of appearances generated by firms.

4. Discuss Subcommittee Report

The subcommittee members discussed the rationale for each of the recommendations being submitted to the JPEP Committee Co-Chairpersons.

5. Next Steps

No further meetings are planned for the subcommittee at this time. The minutes will be distributed and voted on by email.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.