

Problem Solving in Family Matters Committee Work Group 3: Funnel

MINUTES

**Conference Room 4B at 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield
Monday, June 08, 2009
9:30AM to 11:00AM**

In attendance: Magistrate Sosnoff Baird (Facilitator), Patrick Deak, Joseph Del Ciampo, John Dillon, Michelle Hayward, Barbara Geller, David Iaccarino, Debra Kulak, David Mulligan, Dalia Panke

The meeting of the Funnel Work Group was called to order by Magistrate Sosnoff Baird at 9:35 a.m.

I. Welcome and Meeting Overview

Magistrate Sosnoff Baird welcomed the group and reviewed the purpose of the Problem Solving in Family Matters Committee to help guide the work of the "Funnel Group."

II. Review of Committee Charge

The purpose of the Committee to assess the applicability of a problem solving model or methods to Family Support Magistrate court and not to set up a Problem Solving Court was reviewed with this Work Group.

III. Discussion of Committee's Planning Process

The work of the two other Work Groups was reviewed starting with Work Group 2.

Work Group 2 – Report out primarily by David Iaccarino, Facilitator

It was discussed that there were four main aspects that came about as a result of Work Group 2's efforts. The data elements to connect systems, the data elements that would help a judicial authority, who currently has access and what agreements regarding access currently exist for those databases.

There was some discussion regarding the barriers to accessing information, including that there may be legal barriers to getting at the DSS and DMHAS data. DMHAS can use a disclosure form to possibly get at their information. David Mulligan indicated that C.G.S. §17b-90 governs DSS disclosure. He indicated that obligors are “participants” for purposes of this statute. So far info-sharing has been on more of a case-by-case basis.

Next there was discussion regarding increasing access to the information. Patrick Deak talked about the results of some information gathering he did. He reported that custody cases seem to be the biggest overlap he found in his case sample. Some individuals he found had up to 5 overlapping cases. To pursue this way of information gathering, there would need to be the software along with someone to be the manager of the information. This particular method would involve the unit he is in along with the clerk’s office and caseload offices. It was suggested that perhaps there could be a pilot site. He indicated that some courts do this sort of information gathering already. The “linking” of cases and the complexities involved was mentioned and it was asked if there was any stimulus funding available. Joseph Del Ciampo asked about how this information would be brought to the Family Support Magistrate. It was envisioned that there is a third party at Support Enforcement looking at the information and presenting it in a neutral format to the Family Support Magistrate.

Next was a discussion about utilizing resources. The pilot possibility was raised again and the question becomes if we cannot provide services directly, how can we tap into other possible resources that may be out there?

And finally it was noted that there is some outstanding information gathering that must be accomplished in order for decisions to be made. Some further comments were made regarding scheduling information and what is currently in our systems that could be made readily available for coordination of overlapping court hearing dates.

Work Group 1 – Report out primarily by Dalia Panke, Facilitator

Magistrate Sosnoff Baird asked that the focus remain on DOC and Probation in the discussion.

There would be a big impact by getting better information to inmates. If there is a way of getting priority placement in DOC programs for IV-D parents, it would be helpful. The next focus would be on re-entry. A parole, adult probation and Support Enforcement link would be of great assistance.

Agreements would need to be formalized. The Work Group would be interested in getting more custody and visitation arrangements figured out as these things have been proven to aid in child support collection. Housing linkages are sought. The Court Service Center has provided a list of their housing authority contacts. It was noted that this sort of linkage would be easier accomplished in a pilot. Employment was discussed – regular wage earning and a reliable source of income are key components to success. It was noted that the Department of Labor may have resource issues due to the economy in general, so community organizations may need to be where the focus is for not. And regarding “Fatherhood” it was noted that it might be helpful if there was a bigger “gateway” of what a certified program is.

It was emphasized to the entire Funnel Group that we are talking about problem solving models and problem solving methods to assist the court and **not** a Problem Solving Court.

IV. Any background work required

Comments are to be sent to David Iaccarino regarding Work Group 2's draft recommendations by the end of the week.

Dalia Panke will categorize the Work Group 1 recommendations into those with barriers and those without similar to the approach taken by Work Group 2.

Patrick Deak will draft the possibility of a pilot project for coordinating overlapping dockets as a recommendation and pass it along to David Iaccarino and Dalia Panke for review.

IV. Timeline and Future Meetings

The next meeting will be June 25th at 2:00 p.m. at 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield, Room 133.