

Minutes
Public Service and Trust Commission
Self-represented Parties Workgroup
October 13, 2009

The Self-represented Parties Workgroup met on Tuesday, October 13, 2009 at 225 Spring Street in Wethersfield, CT.

Those in attendance: Hon. Raymond R. Norko (Chair), Hon. Henry S. Cohn, Atty. Leo Diana, Atty. Keith Fuller, Atty. Johanna Greenfield, Ms. Krista Hess, and Atty. Bruce Loudon.

The meeting was called to order at 3:18 p.m.

1. Judge Norko welcomed invited guests Attorney Leo Diana and Attorney Keith Fuller.
2. The Workgroup approved the minutes from the September 10, 2009 meeting.
3. A discussion ensued regarding the pilot program for Advice Days. The Workgroup considered what day(s) and time(s) the program should be in place as well as what topics will be addressed. Atty. Diana will draft an email to the Family Law Section of the Hartford County Bar Association to schedule a small focus group in order to address questions and concerns from the Hartford family bar. Prior to sending the email to the Family Law Section he will forward it to the Workgroup for their review.
4. The Workgroup discussed how to structure the pilot program for unbundling legal services in foreclosure cases. The foreclosure pilot would provide a forum where self-represented parties could retain counsel for specified, limited portions of a foreclosure case. The unbundling pilot would afford attorneys the opportunity to represent clients pre-court which may include mediation and/or a specific way to defend court motions being filed during the entire case without being obligated to participate in the entire case.
5. Ms. Roberta Palmer, Program Manager for the Foreclosure Mediation Program was called into the meeting to offer her expertise regarding the stages during which it may be helpful for a defendant to be represented by counsel. Ms. Palmer explained that she doesn't think it's necessary for homeowners to have counsel assist them with filling out financial paperwork. She expressed that oftentimes homeowners are confused about how to proceed when they are presented with prejudgment motions. Also, predatory lenders pose a challenge for homeowners facing foreclosure. Currently the clients participating in foreclosure mediation attend approximately 5-7 mediation sessions. The Workgroup agreed to invite Attorney Keith Fuller, Attorney Gary Sklaver, Foreclosure Mediation Program Manager Roberta Palmer and

Foreclosure Mediation Specialist Kevin Williams to attend the next meeting to discuss several outstanding issues regarding the foreclosure process. .

6. Judge Norko asked Ms. Hess to contact the Foreclosure Mediators in the Hartford Judicial District at 95 Washington Street to see if it possible for some members of the Workgroup to observe a foreclosure mediation session.
7. The Workgroup will meet on October 20th in Waterbury to finalize their recommendations regarding the grouping of court forms for family matters. .
8. The Workgroup next discussed the implementation of a pilot program for courthouse greeters. Ms. Hess will contact New Haven Judicial District Chief Clerk Bill Sadek to follow up on the conversation he had with Judge Cohn regarding availability of staff to serve as courthouse greeters.
9. The Self-represented Parties Workgroup will meet on Tuesday, October 20, 2009 at 3:30pm in Waterbury and on Tuesday, November 3, 2009 at 3:00 p.m. in Wethersfield.
10. The meeting was adjourned at 4:49 p.m.