

**Bench-Bar
Centralized Small Claims Subcommittee
Access & Quality of Service**

**Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2008 – 2:00 p.m.**

Members in Attendance:

Honorable Clarence Jones, Honorable James Abrams, Attorney Nancy Kierstead, Attorney Stacey Manware, Attorney Adam Olshan, Attorney Raphael Podolsky, Attorney Sarah Poriss

Welcome & Opening Remarks

Judge James Abrams welcomed the subcommittee. This is the last meeting of the subcommittee before recommendations are made to the steering committee on January 9, 2009.

Discussed:

Subcommittee reviewed every item on the Issues report in preparation for submission to the steering committee. All issues were closed and either approved, rejected or tabled. Some highlights of issues discussed are below.

Answer form revisions were discussed and additional changes were made to include more plain language. Other suggestions were made with regards to the forms set up and making it more user friendly. The Judicial Branch has a committee in place whose goal is to ensure that forms are more user friendly. Subcommittee voted on recommended changes and all members who were present voted yes.

Suggestions were made to have two magistrates hearing cases at the same court location. Magistrates would split the docket based on case type. This process would allow for a speedier docket and less time waiting. Suggestion was voted on and all members who were present agreed to a pilot program in one court location.

Suggested opening remarks for Magistrates were discussed regarding C.G.S. 19a-673d (hospital collection cases). Subcommittee voted:

Judge James Abrams- no
Judge Clarence Jones- yes
Attorney Elaine Braffman- no
Attorney Nancy Kierstead- no
Attorney Adam Olshan- no

Attorney Raphael Podolsky- yes
Attorney Sarah Poriss- yes
Attorney Robert Peat- not present

There was a consensus vote to include the remarks in the Suggested Canvassing Guidelines when the parties have reached a stipulated agreement.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Recorder: Janet-Marie Harris, Court Planner I, Court Operations