



March 9, 2023

Hon. Andrew J. McDonald
Chair, Rules Committee of the Superior Court
RulesCommittee@jud.ct.gov

Re: Proposal 2023-008—Judicial Branch proposal to amend various Practice Book sections regarding the Pathways process in Family Matters.

Dear Justice McDonald & Members of the Rules Committee:

The undersigned legal services organizations join the Family Law Section of the Connecticut Bar Association (CBA) and the CT American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers in objecting to the various Practice Book amendments proposed to implement the Pathways program.

As it is presently structured, the Pathways program fails to secure the right to a timely hearing on motions filed in family matters, and leaves all hearings on motions in family matters to the discretion of the judiciary.

While to some extent the scheduling of lengthy hearings is always a matter of judicial discretion, denying all litigants across the board the right to appear before a judge in a timely matter on motions critical to their support, safety, and parenting is in our view a denial of due process.

Motions on matters such as child support, alimony, exclusive use of a family home, use of a motor vehicle, return of property, and other such equitable motions should be heard within two weeks of their filing. If it is impossible to secure a timely hearing on such motions, the judicial process is rendered of limited utility, and litigants are more likely to resort to self-help.

Surely the Judicial Branch can find a way to both manage the Family docket and provide for timely hearings on motions. The two are not mutually exclusive. We thank the Rules Committee for its attention.

Respectfully,

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