



Raising the Bar



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Serving the Judicial District of Fairfield at Bridgeport

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Bridgeport Pilot Program (BPP) Update



A Message from Judge Julia DiCocco Dewey

I just wanted to make everyone aware of some updates regarding Trial Management Orders for both Jury and Courtside matters. After a considerable review of both, a revised Trial Management Order has been created. This new order encompasses both Courtside and Jury cases, so please make a note of it. As always, I appreciate the cooperation that you have shown both to my staff and myself.

Civil Court and Jury Trial Management Order for Bridgeport Superior Court

This order is intended to expedite the proceedings and promote efficiency in the conduct of the trial. Prior to the commencement of jury selection, all counsel and pro se parties shall file with the court a joint memorandum containing the following:

- 1) A copy of the operative pleadings including complaint, answer, special defenses, if any, counterclaims, if any, and disclosure of expert witnesses, if any.
- 2) A brief, non-argumentative, factual description of the case suitable to be read during voir dire. It should contain the issues in dispute (to be resolved by the fact finder) and a statement of the legal theories on which relief is based and/or defense with respect to each issue.
- 3) A list of the issues not in dispute.
- 4) A listing of exhibits to be offered, indexed by number (for plaintiff) and by letter (for defendant). This list shall contain a brief description of each exhibit. Indicate whether each exhibit shall be marked as full (there is no objection) or for i.d. only (because there is an

objection). All exhibits as to which there is no objection shall be pre-marked as full exhibits. All other exhibits shall be pre-marked for identification. Agreements to mark documents as full exhibits must be stated on the record in order to be preserved. Items to which there are objections, the legal grounds for the objection shall be concisely stated per the rules of evidence.

- 5) The parties shall endeavor to agree on all redaction prior to trial.
- 6) Counsel shall provide one another with copies of all documentary exhibits prior to trial.
- 7) A list of all witnesses in the order in which they are planned to be called, including the name and relationship of each witness to the case and a brief summary of their contribution to the case.
- 8) Requested jury instructions.
- 9) A description of all pending or impending motions that could dispose of part of all of the issues in the case, including all Motions in Limine.
- 10) A stipulation of facts not genuinely in dispute.
- 11) A description of pending or impending motions to seal, if any.
- 12) Draft of interrogatories and/or special verdict forms if appropriate.
- 13) A brief description of all anticipated evidentiary disputes.
- 14) A good faith estimate of days needed for jury selection and for presentation of evidence. Counsel should expect to be held to those estimates.
- 15) A statement of the law of damages that applies with citations.

Failure to comply with this **ORDER** may result in the imposition of monetary sanctions, restrictions or exclusions of evidence, or the entry of non-suit, default, or dismissal. ANY variation from this **ORDER** may be made only with the approval of presiding judge.

For questions or suggestions regarding Raising the Bar, please contact John Connaughton via email at John.Connaughton@jud.state.ct.us.

Civil Court Advocate Aids Victims of Family and Domestic Violence

Since August 2002 a representative from the Center for Women and Families (CWF) has worked as the Civil Court Advocate (CCA) in the Superior Court on 1061 Main Street. For several years the CWF has employed and trained the Family Violence Victim Advocates stationed at 172 Golden Hill Street. These advocates work to ensure that victims of family violence receive specialized support during criminal proceedings. The CWF assigned one of their workers to the courthouse on Main Street in an effort to address the need for the coordination of services for domestic violence victims in the civil court.

Because the legal system can be intimidating and overwhelming under normal circumstances, it is easy to imagine how much more so it can be for victims of domestic violence. The CCA works to provide services to help make the client more comfortable during court proceedings. The advocate provides many services to victims of domestic and family violence including helping victims deal with the civil side of the legal system, specifically when they seek a restraining order against their abusers. The advocate is also a certified domestic violence and sexual assault advocate.

The Civil Court Advocate works closely with the victims during the entire process. Once the CCA meets with a client and has the client's consent, the CCA becomes the client's advocate for as long as needed. Throughout the TRO process the CCA acts as advocate on behalf of the victim either to obtain or offer information regarding the civil court process and court rulings in family violence cases. The CCA also provides information about other system processes and remedies where necessary.

The CCA is responsible for assessing the client's immediate and long-term needs in relation to the violence to which they have been exposed. As part of this assessment process, the advocate helps clients develop ways to increase their safety. The advocate also may refer clients to appropriate community resources and aid providers. Many of the CCA's clients also come from community

referrals like the police, DCF, and other court personnel.

The CCA's supportive role has become essential for increasing the coordination and services to victims of domestic and family violence in the civil court. This program has also increased the flow of information and coordinated response between the civil and criminal courts. The victims of domestic and family violence entering the legal system now have access to advocates in the criminal court and civil court who can help guide them through this complex and often confusing process.

For more information about the Civil Court Advocate and the Family Violence Victim Advocates, please contact the Center for Women and Families at 334-6154.

Meet the Temporary Assistant Clerk (TAC)



Ron Ferraro has worked in the courthouse on 1061 Main St. since November 2002. A recent member of the Connecticut Bar, Ron spent most of his professional career in the business world.

After earning a B.S. in Business Administration and Accounting from Creighton University in Omaha, Ron worked for several years as a sales manager for the Best Buy Company in their Omaha, Atlanta, Charlotte and Miami locations.

Ron also worked as an accountant in the Chief State's Attorney's office in Rocky Hill where he made the decision to pursue a law degree. A 2001 graduate of Quinnipiac School of Law, Ron hopes to return to the employ of the State's Attorney as a prosecutor.

In his spare time Ron enjoys cycling and hiking. An avid weight lifter, Ron presently holds the title of "courthouse strongman." Let's just say you wouldn't like him when he's angry.

Congratulations to Civil Caseflow Coordinator Jim Quinn who won a role as a stormtrooper in the major motion picture "The Stepford Wives," currently being filmed in Fairfield County. Ok, there won't be any stormtroopers in the movie, but there will be Jim Quinn. Break a leg Jim!