

## **JUDGES' ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON E-FILING Minutes**

On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010, the Judges' Advisory Committee on E-filing met at Juvenile Matters in Bridgeport, 1st floor conference room at 60 Housatonic Avenue, Bridgeport 06604.

Committee members in attendance: Hon. Barbara N. Bellis, Hon. Marshall K. Berger Jr., Hon. Patrick L. Carroll III, Attorney Joseph D. D'Alesio, Hon. Arthur A. Hiller, Hon. Barbara Bailey Jongbloed and Hon. Joseph H. Pellegrino.

Staff in attendance: Elizabeth Bickley, Nancy Kierstead, Daniel B. Horwitch, Lucio DeLuca, Tais Ericson, Alice H. Mastrony and Janice R. Calvi

The Honorable Patrick L. Carroll III welcomed the members of the committee and called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

Janice Calvi provided the committee with a project update highlighting the tremendous increase of e-filing from the inception of the project up and through the mandatory e-filing requirement in December 2009. Attorneys D'Alesio and Calvi described the proposal for further development of the project to include family matters and self-represented parties (SRPs) access to e-filing. A discussion ensued regarding the need for a user friendly interface designed to implement the form pleading criteria in most family casetypes. Attorney D'Alesio recommended and the committee agreed to have a workgroup design a proposal for the SRP interface.

Joseph D'Alesio briefly described the emergency protocol set-up for system failures and the need to equip the staff on call for nights and weekends with cell phones and/or beepers.

Attorney Horwitch presented a summary of rule changes presented to the Rules Committee impacting or affecting e-filing / EServices. The Hon. Barbara N. Bellis added to the discussion the fact that the proposed rule changes must be drafted clearly to encompass the changing practice of law in light of the electronic file. The committee encouraged Judge Bellis to work with legal services to create rule change proposals addressing all the changes the electronic file may effectuate.

Judge Bellis went on to describe the ongoing efforts in place to continue to training Judges currently sitting civil, coming back to sit civil or changing assignments and will be sitting civil. Additionally, Judge Bellis demonstrated the new features of the Judges interface and described for the Judges the concept of a workflow queue for Presiding Judges scheduled to be released in April.

Next, Attorney Alice Mastrony updated the committee on the efforts made by the Training and Support workgroup for staff and external training and support. Attorney Kierstead added some statistics with regard to the additional staff allocated to answer support calls. The committee agreed that impact of the additional staff has lessened the impact of the two support personal assigned prior to the mandatory requirement.

Judge Bellis described for the committee the issues judges face without files on short calendar and the increasing need for a time standard to prep the calendar and provide the judges working in a paperless environment with the necessary information associated with the calendared item. Additionally, Judges Bellis, Carroll and attorney D'Alesio addressed concerns over the fact that judges can rule on matters electronically and the timing of such. The committee agreed that Judge Bellis and Judge Carroll would notify the judges as to the issues discussed regarding ruling on matters prior to the scheduled calendar date for the matter. Attorney D'Alesio opened a discussion by informing the committee that 80% of contract files surveyed contained personally identifiable information in violation of the revised PB § 4-7. In light of this information, the committee concluded that opening up access to electronic records would be tabled until further analysis can be done and the impact of PB § 4-7 is realized.

Attorney Nancy Kierstead reported out to the committee about the progress made by the additional committees added to the project and the newly resurrected Steering Committee. Attorney Kierstead presented an overview of each committee's tasks and progression. The committee unanimously agreed that the addition of additional committees to the project was needed and is confident that their progress will have a huge benefit on the overall project.

Judges Carroll and Berger reported on the progress of the workgroup assigned to analyze Administrative Appeals and indicated that said group would be proposing rule changes accordingly.

Lastly, Judge Berger presented two new issues to the committee.

1. The issue of plaintiffs attaching to e-filed documents the defendant's appearance. The committee discussed the legal implications of said process and the technical infeasibility of the process and concluded that this practice can not be done electronically. The defendants would have to file their own appearance.
2. The issue of an e-filed document on a non-paperless file (i.e. with a return date before 1/1/10) which was 26,000 pages. Judge Berger advised the committee of the impact of said document on the court staff and equipment as that pleading requires printing to be placed in the court file which is paper. And the committee agreed with Judge Berger's recommendation that said document need not be printed at this time. And will revisit the issue of system impact and appellate printing at the next meeting.

Judge Carroll adjourned the meeting at 4:07 PM