

MINUTES
Connecticut Judicial Branch
Access to Justice Commission
Tuesday February 26, 2019
2:00
Quinnipiac University School of Law
370 Bassett Road, North Haven, CT

The Access to Justice Commission met on Tuesday February 26, 2019, at Quinnipiac University School of Law in North Haven CT.

Members in attendance: Justice Maria A. Kahn, Judge Ingrid L. Moll, Judge Leo Diana, Judge Gerald Harmon, Dean Jennifer Gerarda Brown, Atty. Janice J. Chiaretto, Atty. Edwin Colon, Atty. Joseph D'Alesio, Assistant Dean Karen DeMeola, Atty. Tais Ericson, Atty. Jennifer Ferrante, Attorney Patricia Cruz Fragoso, Ms. Krista Hess, Ms. Dawn LaValle, Atty. Chris R. Nelson, Atty. Moy N. Ogilvie, and Atty. James P. Sexton.

- I. **Welcome from Co-Chairs:** Justice Kahn and Judge Moll welcomed the Commission members and thanked Dean Brown for hosting the meeting at the Law School. Justice Kahn provided the Commission with a review of its mission and discussed how Connecticut's Access to Justice Commission (ATJC) compares to other states' ATJCs in terms of composition of commission; hosting entities, funding and key initiatives as described in the [American Bar Association's Access to Justice Commission Report](#). Judge Moll provided an overview of the current Working Groups and their charges. All attendees and new support staff of the Commission introduced themselves.
- II. **Review/Approval of the Draft Minutes of September 27, 2018:** The draft minutes were approved.
- III. **Update from the Workgroup on Libraries and ATJ:** Ms. Hess reported that the Working Group met and discussed the collaborative effort to raise awareness between public libraries, law libraries, and the court. Highlighting the Justice Fair, a past Access to Justice Commission initiative, Ms. Hess indicated that education about and connectivity to the court system are most important to public libraries. In an effort to address these needs, both for librarians and the general public, the Working Group is pursuing a media campaign including written materials and a Public Service Announcement which solves a problem from a patron's perspective by accessing available court-based resources (Law Libraries, Court Service Centers, web-based resources). Ms. LaValle also provided interesting information about public libraries from a macro-level; discussing the future of libraries and the strategies and tactics needed to remain relevant in the future.
- IV. **Update from the Workgroup on Modest and Moderate Means Programs:** Atty. Nelson reported that the Working Group met and had a very productive discussion on the prioritization

of their charge. In an effort to determine, first, what the Working Group and the Commission at large can do to help current modest/moderate means programs, and second, how to encourage other programs to begin and grow, the Group discussed the two legal incubators in Connecticut and plan to visit both for future meetings. Atty. Nelson indicated that the current incubators could use help increasing both their client base and the number of attorneys interested joining the incubator programs. Historically, recent law graduates have been most interested, but due to barriers, both financial and professional, limit their ability to join incubators. Atty. Nelson also suggested that the latter may be a place for the Working Group or Commission at large to direct efforts.

- V. **Update from the Workgroup on Law Schools:** Dean Brown reported that the Working Group met and reviewed their charge over two productive meetings, expressing a willingness to expand it in new and different ways. Dean Brown explained that the Working Group discussed the review of the unauthorized practice of law as it relates to students and determined that Connecticut already has one of the most expansively written rules. Additionally, she distributed lists of relevant clinics and externships available at Quinnipiac and Uconn Law. The Commission members discussed the wide range of opportunities already available to law students and a potential area of growth might be in the expansion of pro bono externships. This would involve law firms agreeing to take on pro bono matters if law students were willing to volunteer to work on those matters with attorneys at the firm as part of a volunteer externship. Dean Brown indicated that the current charge of the Working Group covers efforts that have or are being undertaken and the charge should be changed to include other activities, Justice Kahn suggested that a proposal to expand the charge of this Working Group should be submitted to the Commission Co-Chairs.
- VI. **Update from the Workgroup on General Pro Bono:** Judge Harmon reported on the important steps taken by the Working Group to improve pro bono in Connecticut. The Working Group is compiling lists of statewide organizations that participate in pro bono activities, lists of information available about pro bono services, and information about law firms' various pro bono requirements. With this information, the Group will set up a plan to encourage participation in pro bono activities in Connecticut. The Commission also discussed limited scope representation and determined it may be helpful to include information about limited scope representation in the CT Legal Conference materials or potentially as part of a seminar.
- VII. **Update from the Workgroup on Video-Conferencing:** Ms. Hess provided an update on the important conversations that occurred within the Working Group. The Group, in accordance with the Access to Justice Commission charge, will focus its efforts on improving access to and use of video-conferencing within the Civil and Family divisions of Superior Court. Practice Book Section 23-68 was previously amended to allow for dispositive court hearings by video-conference. Ms. Hess explained that it may be amended further because, as written, the Rule is silent as to witnesses and other non-parties. The Group will work toward making video-conferencing widely available and regularly used. Justice Kahn also described the video remote

interpreting program being piloted in within the Court Support Services Division, as part of the Limited English Proficiency Committee.

- VIII. **Update from the Workgroup on Appellate Pro Bono:** Judge Moll reported on the productive meeting of the Working Group, which discussed models of Appellate pro bono in other states as well as current practice in Connecticut. The Group reached a consensus that there need to be rule changes in Connecticut to allow the Appellate and Supreme Court to identify cases where a lawyer should be involved. This would improve overall access and assist the Courts with caseloads. The Group also discussed the possibility of a rule change with respect to limited scope representation which, as written, only addressed Superior Court cases. The Commission also discussed the current practice as it relates to limited scope work.
- IX. **Discuss Proposed Suggested Initiatives:** Justice Kahn provided an overview of the proposed initiatives that members of the Commission have submitted to date. Justice Kahn encouraged those who have not submitted proposals to consider submitting proposals to Alex Gillett. Justice Kahn also asked Working Group chairs to discuss possible proposed initiatives or projects.
- X. **Commission Meeting Schedule for 2019:** The Commission will meet again on Wednesday, May 15th at 2pm in the Conference Room of the Hartford Community Court. The Commission agreed to the goal of quarterly meetings.
- XI. **Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 4:10pm.