

Minutes
Public Service and Trust Commission
Committee on Self-represented Parties
Subcommittee on Forms
February 13, 2009

The Subcommittee on Forms met via teleconference on February 13, 2009 in Room 206 at 225 Spring Street in Wethersfield, CT.

Those in attendance: Hon. Elizabeth A. Bozzuto (Chair), Ms. Krista Hess, Attorney Daniel Horwitch, Hon. John J. Nazzaro and Attorney Mark D. Shea

Judge Bozzuto called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

1. The subcommittee reviewed and approved the minutes of the January 6, 2009 subcommittee meeting.
2. Judge Bozzuto gave a brief overview of the January 29, 2009 Public Service and Trust Commission meeting where each committee gave a short presentation on the work of their committee to date. Judge Norko and Judge Bozzuto presented the preliminary recommendations of the Committee on Self-represented Parties and provided the Commission with an anticipated completion date of June 2009.
3. Attorney Shea offered to prepare a list of forms to be bundled in clerk's offices, Court Service Centers and on the internet, including both family and housing forms. He will prepare examples of bundled forms for all scenarios of cases. The subcommittee agreed that while it probably was not feasible to envision every conceivable scenario in a case, it was best to be over-inclusive and remove any unnecessary forms.

The subcommittee discussed how they might best determine the areas to bundle, as well as which publications would most benefit from a combination of plain language and tri-fold presentation. Krista Hess will distribute the survey results from the Subcommittee on Training to assist the Forms subcommittee in determining which areas to concentrate on. Similarly, Attorney Horwitch discussed the survey results from the survey conducted by the LEP (Limited English Proficiency) Committee. The LEP Committee surveyed all Court Service Center staff to determine which forms were most frequently requested by self-represented parties. In addition, the survey looked at which publications were related to these forms. For example, if a self-represented party requested the small claims writ, they would also be given the small claims process publication. This subcommittee might want to consider bundling not only the most requested forms, but also, their corresponding publications.

A discussion was held about the process that new and existing judicial publications go through with respect to being revised or reviewed for plain language and conversion to tri-fold format. Judge Nazzaro suggested the foreclosure process might benefit from a tri-fold, plain language publication.

Additionally, the subcommittee discussed the procedure for marking a case on short calendar and how this process might also benefit from a plain language, tri-fold publication. The subcommittee agreed that the short calendar marking process can be very confusing to self-represented parties. Judge Bozzuto suggested a hand-out regarding the short calendar marking procedures be provided to all self-represented parties when they obtain their writ, summons and complaint.

A discussion was also held regarding an investigation through the Judicial Branch's IT department as to the availability of the proposed domain name: www.ctcourtforms.com.

4. The subcommittee agreed to select the date for their next meeting at the conclusion of the meeting of the full Committee on Self-represented Parties on February 27th.
5. Judge Bozzuto adjourned the meeting at 2:30pm