

**Minutes**  
**Public Service and Trust Commission**  
**Chairs of Committee on Self-represented Parties**  
**February 18, 2009**

The chairs of the subcommittees of the Committee on Self-represented Parties held a teleconference on February 18, 2009.

Those in attendance: Hon. Henry Cohn, Ms. Krista Hess, Dean Hugh C. Macgill, Hon. Raymond R. Norko, and Hon. Jonathan E. Silbert

Judge Norko called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

1. Judge Norko commended the subcommittee chairs for their continued work and asked the chairs to provide an update regarding recent activity.

Judge Cohn reported that the Subcommittee on Legal Services is ready to go forward with their recommendations. The subcommittee's recommendations are found within Judge Cohn's proposals on unbundling and Legal Aid funding. Ms. Hess will provide the subcommittee chairs with copies of these documents as well as Judge Silbert's draft recommendation concerning the letter to self-represented parties.

Judge Silbert reported that the Subcommittee on Training has drafted a proposed letter to self-represented parties that advises parties of the perils of proceeding pro se, as well as provides resources and guidance regarding how to do so. The ultimate goal is to have this letter become system generated via E-filing. However, until this is possible, it is recommended that this letter be made available for self-represented parties in all clerk's office and Court Service Center locations. Krista Hess will follow-up with Attorney Daniel Horwitch to determine if this recommendation requires a practice book or rule change. Judge Silbert also reported that the Subcommittee on Training is working on a video-taped family support magistrate advisement of rights which will run continuously in a designated location in the courthouse to be determined. The subcommittee on Training envisions that the

creation of the video advisement would negate the need to repeat the advisement each time the magistrate takes the bench.

Dean Macgill reported that the Subcommittee on Support Services agrees that building upon current resources available at the Court Service Centers should be the main focus at this time. The Subcommittee on Support Services will need to have a meeting prior to the February 27, 2009 committee meeting to further discuss some of the subcommittee's ideas and create solid recommendations regarding enlisting volunteers to provide legal advice to self-represented parties, insurance to be used by these volunteers and dedicated dockets for self-represented parties.

Ms. Hess reported on the Subcommittee on Forms current activity. Attorney Shea is compiling a list of family and housing forms to be bundled, as well as specific examples of situations when self-represented parties would benefit from bundled forms. The subcommittee received survey results from the Subcommittee on Training to assist in determining which areas to concentrate on. The subcommittee also discussed the need to make the process of marking cases for short calendar less complicated for self-represented parties and further discussed providing a hand-out explaining the process. This handout may be included with their writ, summons and complaint. Someone from the subcommittee will contact Judicial Information Technology regarding the proposed domain name: [www.ctcourtforms.com](http://www.ctcourtforms.com).

Judge Norko reported on the progress made by the Subcommittee on Technology. The subcommittee has found California's website for self-represented parties ([www.LawHelpCalifornia.org](http://www.LawHelpCalifornia.org)) to be outstanding. CT Legal Services is moving forward with their new webpage. Judge Norko has spoken with Attorney D'Alesio and it appears that the Judicial Branch will allow the CT Legal Services website to interact with its website, providing links to forms. The issue regarding whether the CT Legal Services website will provide information to all parties, regardless of their income level still remains.

2. Judge Cohn mentioned that the Subcommittee on Legal Services' recommendations regarding unbundling should not be costly.

Judge Norko encouraged Judge Cohn to indicate such in his subcommittee's recommendation.

3. The subcommittee chairs approved the minutes from the January 21, 2009 teleconference.

The teleconference was adjourned at 3:22 p.m.

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