

**Utah Judicial Council's Standing Committee on
Resources for Self-Represented Parties Summary Minutes**

VIA Conference Call
March 13, 2020
12:00 PM – 1 PM

Members	In attendance	Excused	Via phone conference
Judge Suchada Bazzelle			X
Sue Crismon			X
Monica Fjeldsted			X
Leslie Francis			X
Nicole Gray			X
Susan Griffith			X
Carl Hernandez			X
Judge Catherine Hoskins			X
Jacob Kent			X
Judge Richard Mrazik - Chair			X
Shawn Newell			X
Nathanael Player			X
Charles Stormont			X
Peter Strand			X
Virginia Sudbury			X
Judge Doug Thomas			X
Janet Thorpe			X
Jessica Van Buren			X
Guests	In attendance	Excused	Via phone conference
Amy Hernandez (Domestic Violence Program Coordinator)			X
Kara Mann (Language Access Program Coordinator)			X
Justice Christine Durham (Access to Justice Commission)		X	
Rob Jepson (Access to Justice Commission)			X
Amy Sorenson (Access to Justice Commission)			X
Staff	In attendance	Excused	Via phone conference
Nancy Sylvester	X		

(1) Welcome and approval of minutes

Judge Richard Mrazik welcomed the committee to the meeting.

The committee approved the December 2019 minutes with Charles Stormont moving, and Virginia Sudbury seconding the motion.

(2) Budget request

The committee discussed joining the Judicial Outreach Committee's budget request. Geoff Fattah and Judge Hruby-Mills will work on updating their request with this committee's priorities. The budget request is due in August to the Judicial Council.

(3) Best practices for ensuring access during COVID-19

The committee discussed the following best practices for ensuring access to the courts during COVID-19:

- If the bailiff will turn people away, they need to ask people for names and case numbers and tell court staff that the person came to court but was turned away because of illness so the court will not default that person
- Courts should allow people to appear remotely without court approval
 - Via phone
 - Via WebEx
- Courts should accept filings via email
 - Courts should provide help in accessing paper forms and allowing them to be emailed
- Courts should liberally grant continuances right now
- When hearings are continued, the court should make sure notice is provided – especially if the hearing is scheduled for a date in the near future
- Encourage volunteer attorneys to help self-represented litigants through:
 - Lawyer of the day program
 - Virtual clinics
 - Utah free legal answers

Nathanael Player and Nancy Sylvester will work on passing them along to the Pandemic Response Work Group.

(4) Other discussion on pandemic impacts

- All of the PBI clinics and libraries are being closed. We'll need to have a plan for dealing with that.
- Ms. Thorpe: The Washington Justice Court is relaxing their rules.
- Nicole Gray: The clerks of court are putting together emails for filing by email. They have also been discussing the bailiff issue.
- Third district: All civil trials and criminal trials are continued.
- Electronic filing: The committee should create a resolution about adopting this for pro se litigants on an expedited basis given the current climate. Virginia Sudbury moved to create a resolution to pass along to the Technology Committee. Nathanael Player seconded the motion. The committee approved the motion.

(5) Other discussion on access

- Janet Thorpe (Washington Justice Court) observed that the small claims affidavit and summons should be in Spanish. Nathanael Player said Kara Mann should be consulted about translation of forms.
- Mr. Player noted that there is an effort underway to update the website. A company will be asking pro se litigants what they need to help navigate.
- Leslie Francis expressed concerns about people also being able to navigate OCAP.

(6) Discussion of criminal cases and self-represented parties

- Janet Thorpe asked whether the committee is focused solely on civil litigants. She observed that there are criminal defendants who don't qualify for appointment of counsel.
- A criminal cases subcommittee was formed: Janet Thorpe-chair, Charles Stormont, Amy Hernandez.

(7) Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at approximately 1 p.m. The next meeting will be held on May 8, 2020.