

# “Assembly Line” Divorces

A faint, stylized image of a pair of scales of justice is visible in the background, centered behind the text. The scales are rendered in a light blue color, matching the overall theme of the slide. The background is a solid dark blue.

Leigh Parsons

Supervising Attorney, Self-Help  
Center/Family Law Facilitator's Office  
Superior Court, County of Santa Clara



# Old Model for Default Judgments

1. Stand in line - Start divorce
2. Stand in Line – Help with Default forms
3. Submit Default forms – wait 6 weeks
4. Stand in Line – Help with Judgment forms
5. Schedule Default Hearing
6. Come to Default Hearing to finalize

**Customer time: 8 – 24 hours**





# **New** Model for Default Judgments

1. Stand in line - Start divorce
2. Schedule **Default Workshop**
3. Attend Default Workshop
4. *Optional: Judgment Workshop* – only 15% go on to attend or go to court hearing
  - Usually to ask for new support or CV orders or to terminate ss for other spouse in long-term marriage

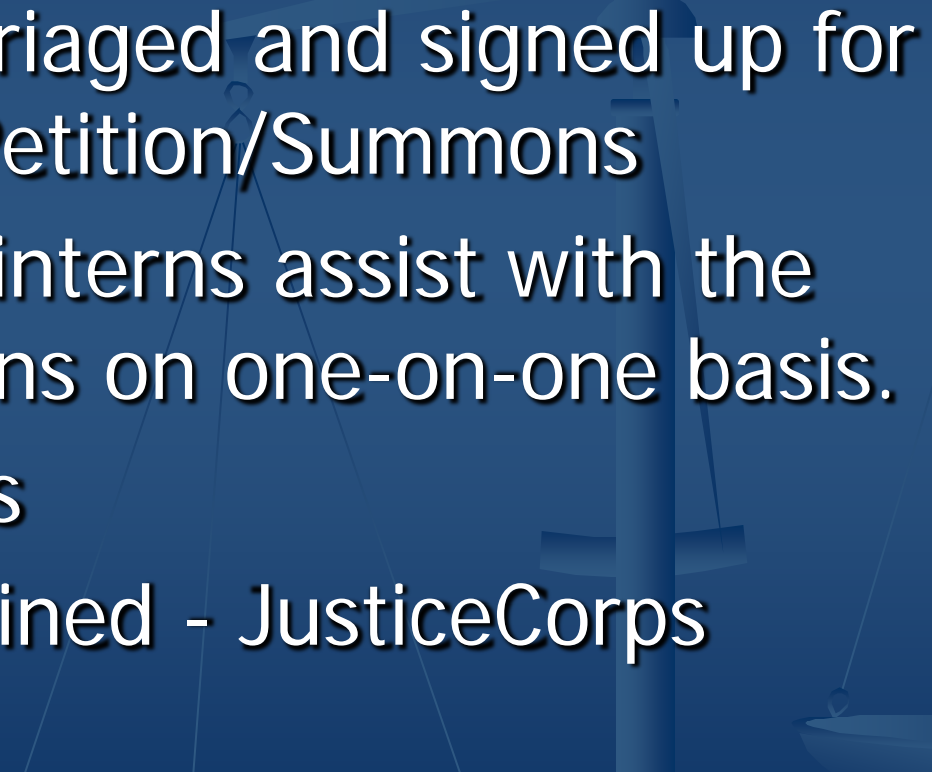
**Customer time: 5 ¼ - 11 hrs**

# Stats

- SHC processes **XX** % of total default Judgments
- 2009: Time from start to finish was **XXX** days (avg for all; no workshop yet)
- 2011: Time from start to finish is **XXX** days (avg for all; Workshop dissos were **XX**% of the total)
  
- 83% attendance - Workshop #2
- 95% attendance - Workshop #3
  
- Only 15% of Default Workshop attendees had to come back for our Judgment Workshop #3 (79% of those were because of a local rule)
  
- Only 9% were set on the Default calendar (usually to request spousal support termination for the other party in a long-term marriage)
  
- 100% of these cases used to be set on the default calendar

# Step 1: Filing Initial Petition

Pretty standard....

- Customers are triaged and signed up for help filling out Petition/Summons
  - JusticeCorps or interns assist with the Petition/Summons on one-on-one basis.
  - Attorney reviews
  - Procedure explained - JusticeCorps
  - Customer files
- 

# Step 2: *pre*-Default Workshop

## Customer:

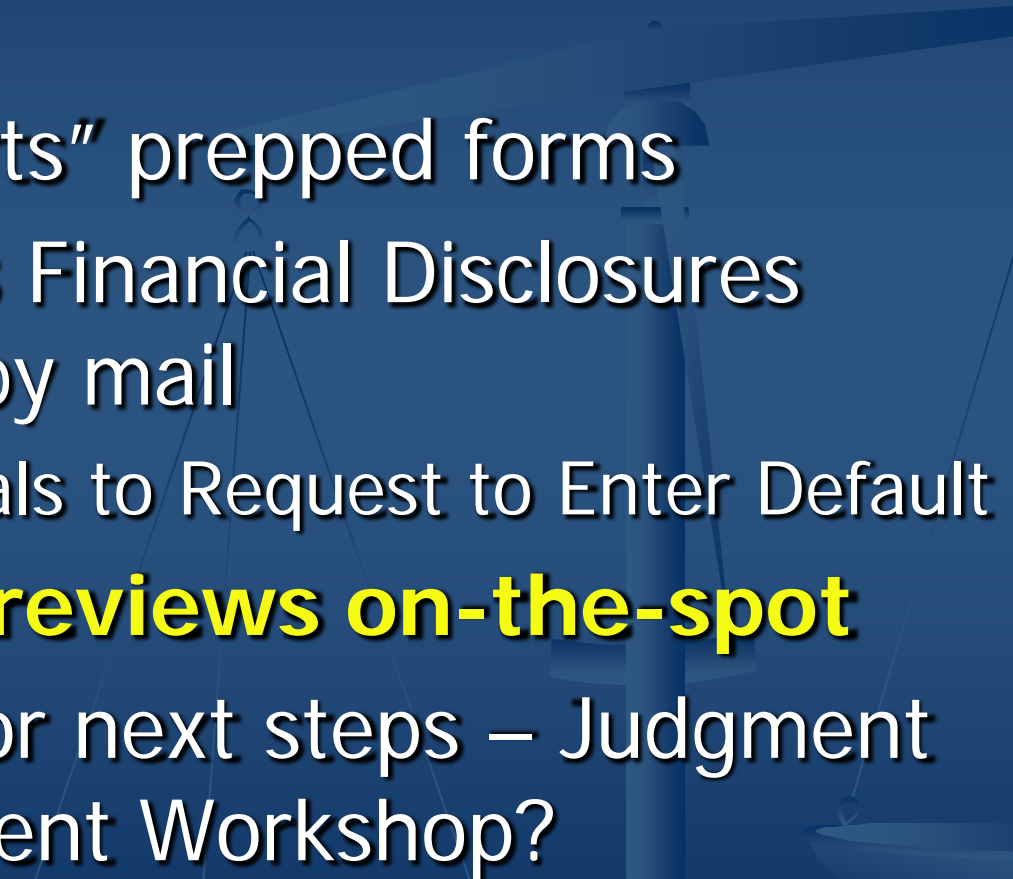
- Serves
- Waits 30 days
- Signs up for Workshop - Returns to SHC or is signed up from CMC or L & M calendars
  - Is given “Homework” – Disclosures + gather attachments + bring SASE
  - Fills out Intake slip (also used to track workshop progress on day of)
  - Envelope filled out, “Return Slip” is photocopied – given to customer and later mailed as reminder

# Step 2: *pre*-Default Workshop

## Court Specialist (Paralegal):

- Pulls file & keeps until workshop
- Preps/saves *all* appropriate forms to finish case with Essential Forms
- Sends letters/forms to customers if "issues"
- Mails out appointment reminders

# Step 2: Default Workshop

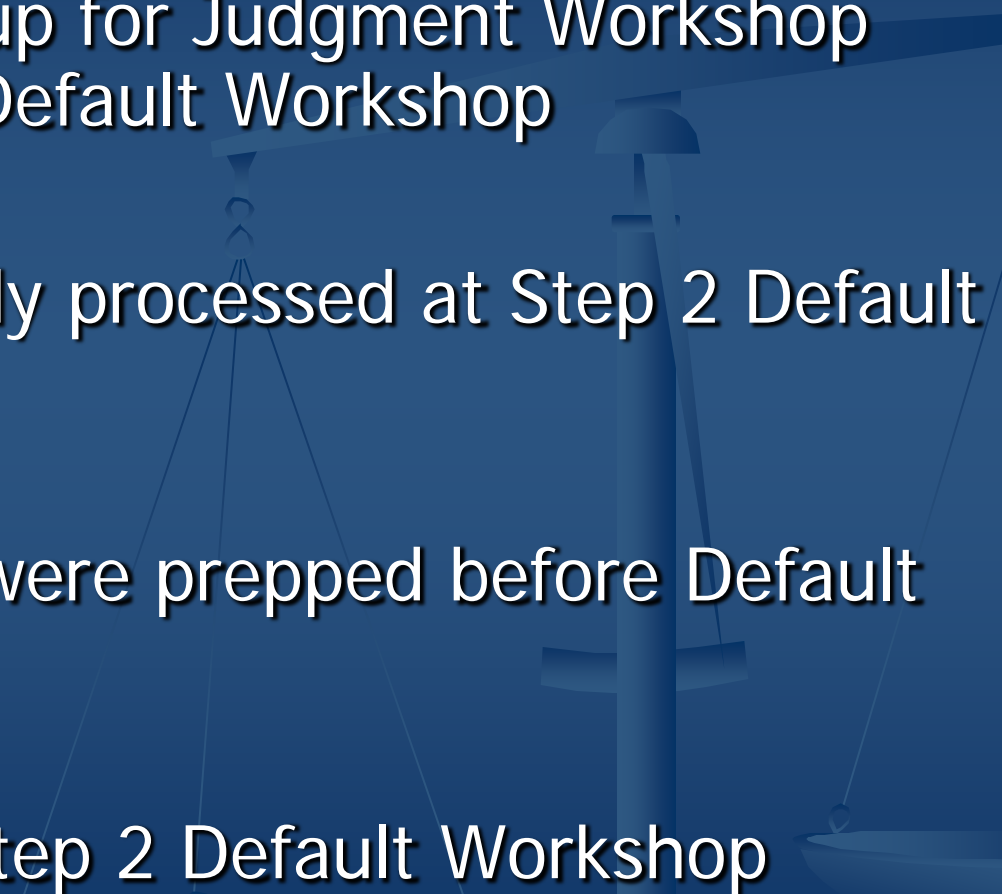
- 30 minute appt
  - Attorney "imports" prepped forms
  - Reviews, serves Financial Disclosures ("Homework") by mail
    - Attaches originals to Request to Enter Default
  - **Default Clerk reviews on-the-spot**
  - Evaluate case for next steps – Judgment today or Judgment Workshop?
- 



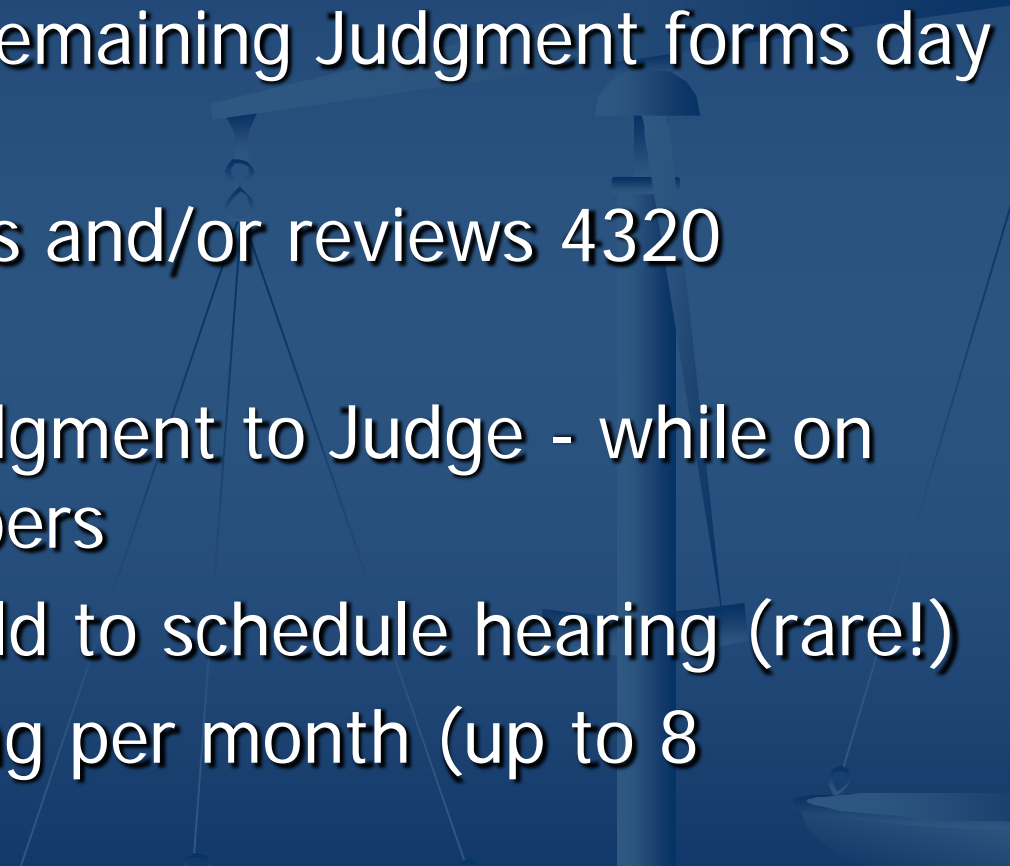
# Step 2: Default Workshop continued

- **Judge signs today if...**
  - no kids (or CV orders already)
  - no CS requested (or CS orders already)
  - no SS requested
  - SS reserved in a long-term marriage
  - SS terminated/reserved in short-term marriage...
- Sign up for Step 3 Judgment Workshop otherwise
- Tuesday afternoon (no kids – 6 cases) and Friday morning (any type – up to 15 cases) each week.

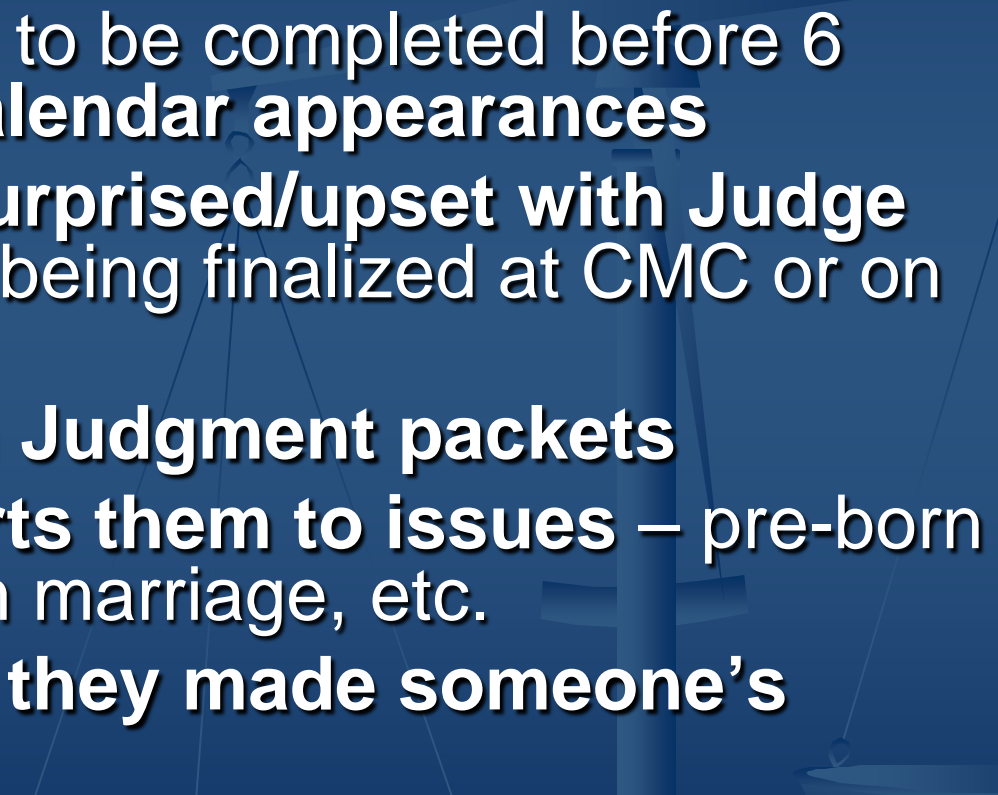
# Pre-Step 3: Judgment Workshop

- Cases are signed up for Judgment Workshop *only* from Step 2 Default Workshop
  - Default was already processed at Step 2 Default Workshop
  - All needed forms were prepped before Default Workshop
  - File is kept from Step 2 Default Workshop
- 

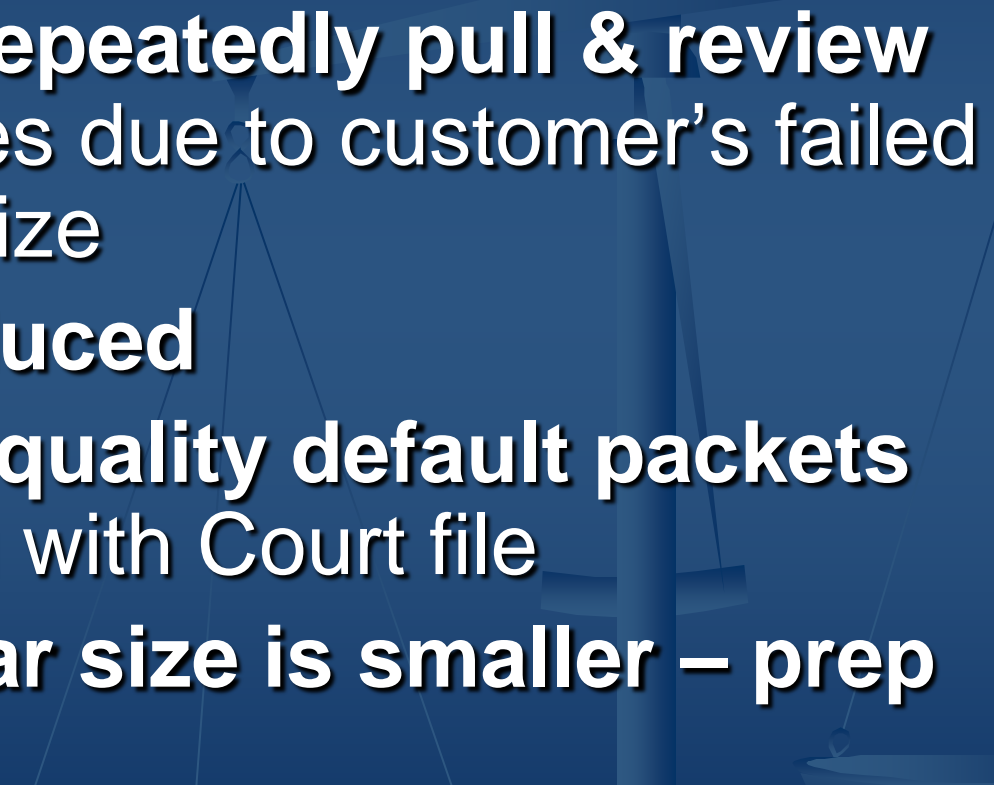
# Step 3: Judgment Workshop

- Attorney imports remaining Judgment forms day of workshop
  - Attorney runs calcs and/or reviews 4320 Declaration
  - Attorney takes Judgment to Judge - while on bench or in chambers
  - Litigant may be told to schedule hearing (rare!)
  - One Friday morning per month (up to 8 attendees)
- 

# FasTrack Project **Benefits** to... **Judges**

- Many dissos likely to be completed before 6 months with **no calendar appearances**
  - **Fewer litigants surprised/upset with Judge** that divorce is not being finalized at CMC or on L&M calendar
  - Like signing **clean Judgment packets**
  - Like that **SHC alerts them to issues** – pre-born children, long-term marriage, etc.
  - They like knowing **they made someone's day...**
- 

# FasTrack Project **Benefits** to... **Clerk's Office**

- **Don't have to repeatedly pull & review (& re-review) files due to customer's failed attempts to finalize**
  - **Frustration reduced**
  - **Receives high-quality default packets from SHC along with Court file**
  - **Default calendar size is smaller – prep work reduced**
- 

# FasTrack Project **Benefits** to... **Customers**

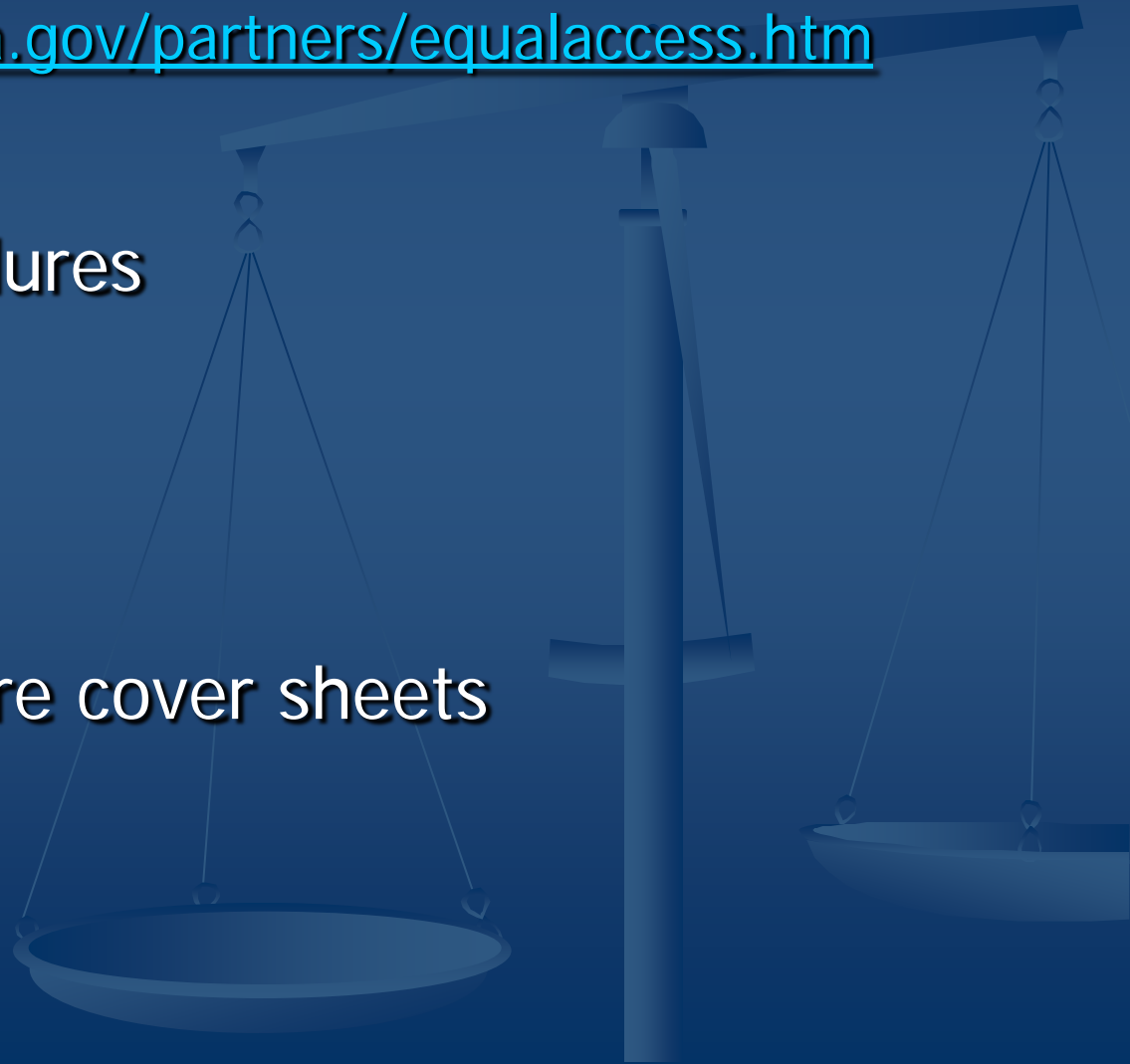
- Time in line or at SHC reduced from **7 ¾ - 23 ½ hours over 5 days** to **5 ¼ - 11 hours over 2/3 days**
- **Greater satisfaction** that their case is always moving forward
- **Less confusion** about what to do next
- In 3 (most often 2) **steps** customer can leave the courthouse with their Judgment in hand
- **Problems can often be fixed** at workshop or prior
- **Default calendar wait reduced** to 1-2 weeks from 6-8 weeks (if even needed)
- **Shorter lines** for litigants with non-Workshop issues

# Success!



# Nuts & Bolts - Online Materials

- <http://www.courts.ca.gov/partners/equalaccess.htm>
- Visit site for:
  - Detailed Procedures
  - Intake sheets
  - Sign-in sheets
  - Return slips
  - Judicial signature cover sheets

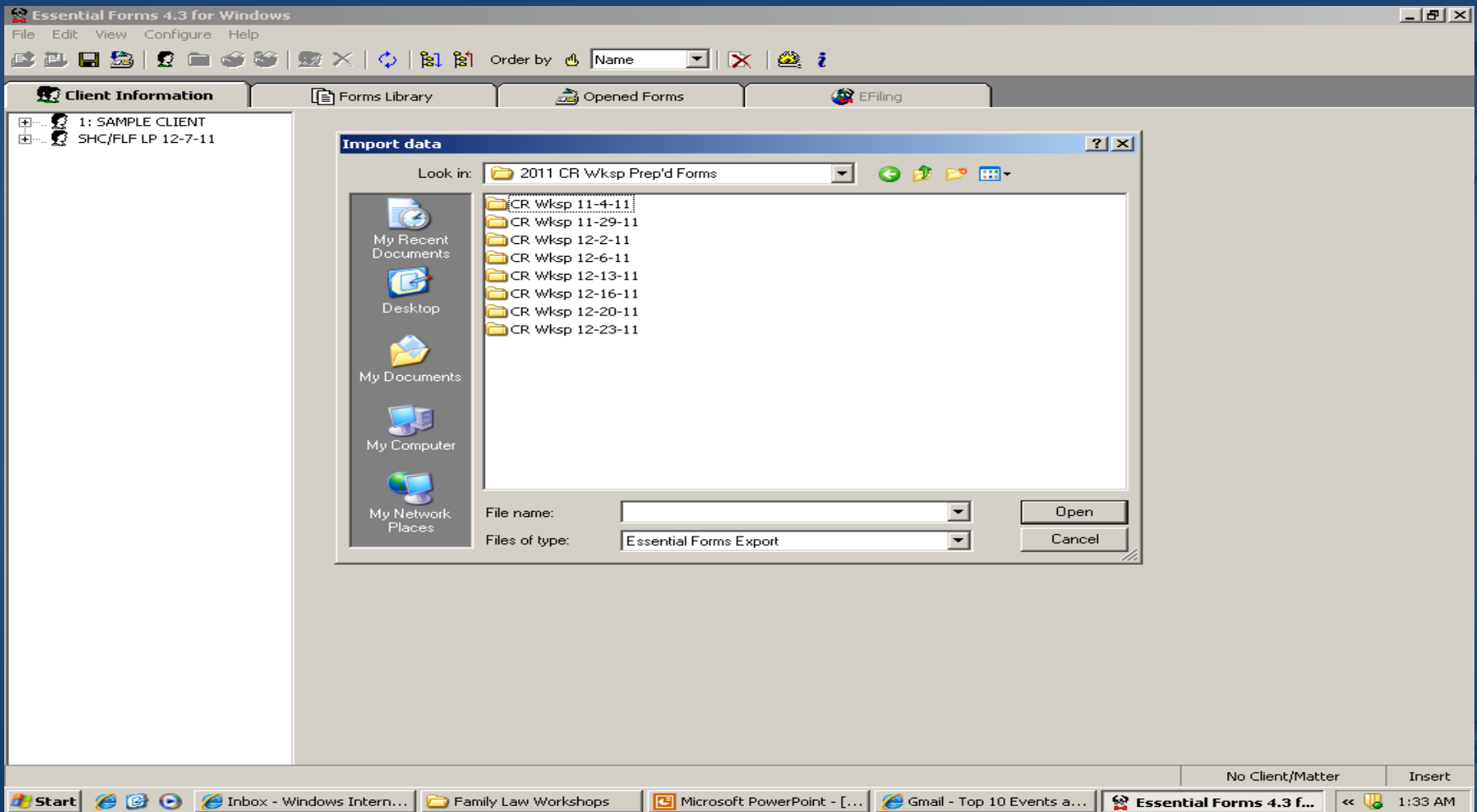




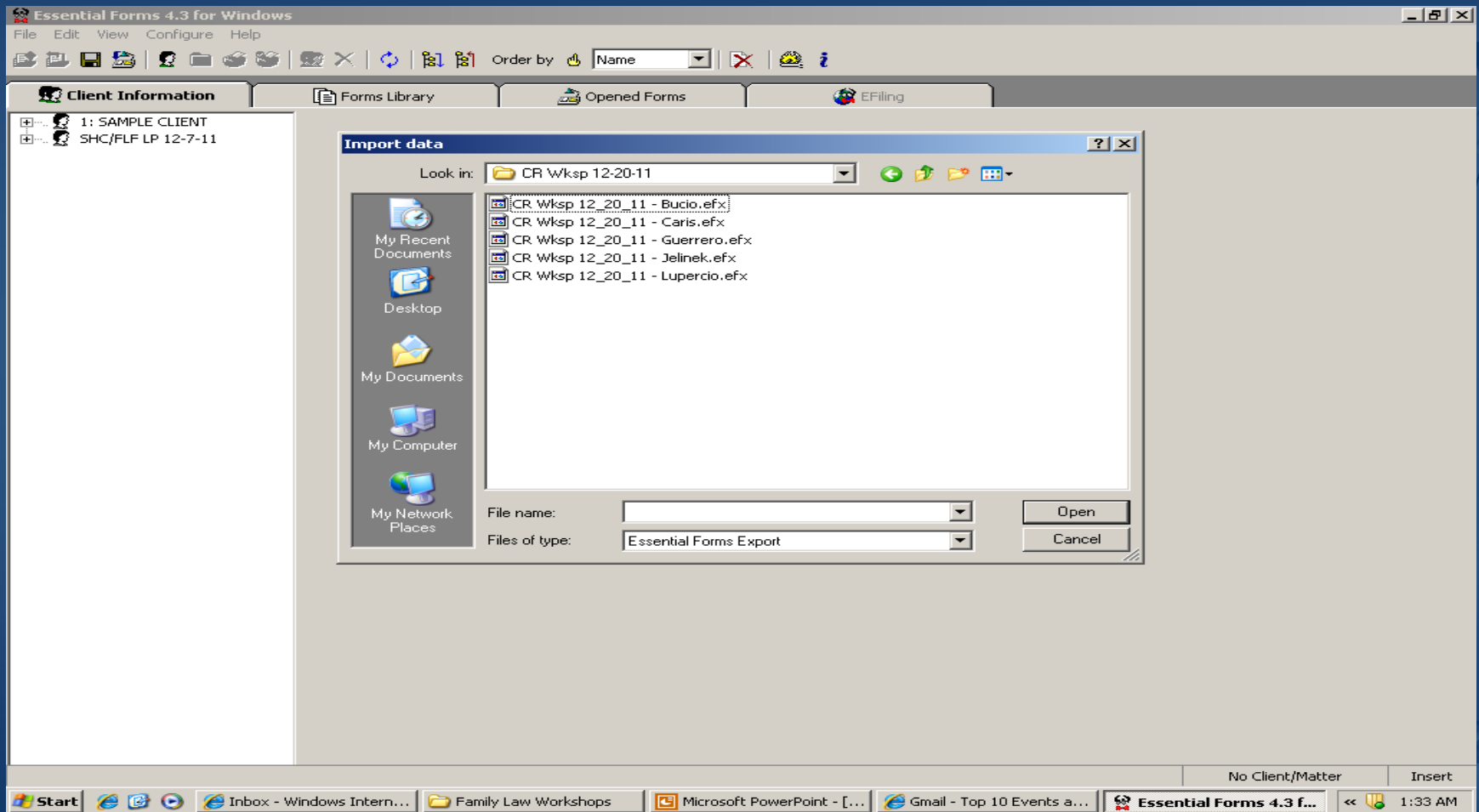
# Helpful Hints

- Pre-set CMC's – courtrooms can panic when file not available for CMC because SHC has it to prep forms
- We used to sign up for Step # 2 - Default Workshop at Petition/Summons filing but too many customers either didn't file, didn't serve or didn't show up to workshop
- Reminder forms are good – customer addresses envelope; 83% show-up rate
- 90+% of cases that need to attend Workshop #3 are only because of a local rule
- Signing up for workshop from triage line is time-consuming; going to online sign-up
- We don't schedule workshop when any holiday happens during the week
- Summer (July – mid Sept) are slower; schedule fewer

# Nuts & Bolts – Essential Forms



# Nuts & Bolts – Essential Forms



# Nuts & Bolts – Essential Forms

Essential Forms 4.3 for Windows

File Edit View Configure Help

Order by Name

Client Information Forms Library Opened Forms E Filing

1: SAMPLE CLIENT  
CR Wksp 12/20/11  
Lupercio  
FL-170 - Declaration for Default or Uncontested Dissol  
FL-180 - Judgment [12/8/2011 9:26:27 AM]  
MC-040 - Notice of Change of Address [12/8/2011 9:2  
FL-190 - Notice of Entry of Judgment [12/8/2011 9:26:  
FL-335 - Proof of Service by Mail [12/8/2011 9:26:32 A  
FL-165 - Request to Enter Default [12/8/2011 9:26:26  
SHC/FLF LP 12-7-11

**Lupercio of CR Wksp 12/20/11**

Filing attorney's name		
E-mail address		State Bar Number
<b>Firm</b>	Name Adan Lupercio	
Street address	1478 Sanborn Ave.	
City, State and ZIP	San Jose, CA 95110	
Phone	408-888-3684	Fax
Attorney for		County in which action is filed
Self-Represented		Santa Clara
<b>Court</b>	Official name Superior Court of Santa Clara County	
Street address	170 Park Ave. San Jose, CA 95113	
Post office address	191 N. First St. San Jose, CA 95113	
City, State and ZIP		
Judicial district/branch		
Plaintiff/Petitioner	Defendant/Respondent	
Adan Lupercio	Sandra Nichole Lupercio	
Short Title of Case	Case Number	
Lupercio and Lupercio	1-11-FL-158251	
<b>Opposing Counsel</b>		
Name	City, State and ZIP	
Street Address	Phone	

General Family TRO Collections Parties Guardian Probate Transitional UD I&E Notes

Lupercio of CR Wksp 12/20/11 Insert

Start Inbox - Windows Intern... Family Law Workshops Microsoft PowerPoint - [...] Gmail - Top 10 Events a... Essential Forms 4.3 f... 1:34 AM



Leigh Parsons

Supervising Attorney, Self-Help Center/Family Law  
Facilitator's Office

Superior Court, County of Santa Clara

[lparsons@scscourt.org](mailto:lparsons@scscourt.org)

408-882-2923 (Private!)

408-882-2918 (Best #; receptionist can find me...)