

Elkins Family Law Task Force  
September 16, 2008 Meeting  
Judicial Council Conference Center  
Administrative Office of the Courts  
San Francisco, California

*Members Present:* Hon. Laurie D. Zelon, Chair, Ms. Tülin D. Açikalin, Hon Lorna A. Alksne, Ms. Kathy Bañuelos, Mr. Richard Barry, Hon. Louise Bayles-Fightmaster, Hon. Jerilyn L. Borack, Ms. Linda D. Daeley, Ms. Patricia Foster, Ms. Ana María García, Hon. Michael J. Gassner, Mr. Vahan Hovsepian, Hon. Joan K. Irion, Hon. Irwin H. Joseph, Hon. Mark A. Juhas, Ms. Margaret Little, Ph.D., Ms. Judy B. Louie, Hon. Patricia M. Lucas, Mr. Mark E. Minyard, Ms. Suzanne Clark Morlock, Ms. Sandra Joan Morris, Ms. Lorie S. Nachlis, Hon. Kimberly J. Nystrom-Geist, Ms. Rebecca L. Prater, Hon. Vance W. Raye, Mr. Stephen B. Ruben, Ms. Caron Caines Smith, Hon. Nancy Wieben Stock, Mr. Hugh K. Swift, Hon. B. Scott Thomsen, Mr. Peter M. Walzer

*Members Not Present:* Hon. Irma Poole Asberry, Hon. Barry P. Goode, Mr. José Octavio Guillén, Mr. Lawrence E. Leone, Mr. Drew Liebert (*joined by phone for part of the meeting*)

*State Bar Liaison Present:* Ms. Sharon Ngim

*AOC Lead Staff:* Ms. Diane Nunn

*AOC Staff:* Ms.Carolynn Bernabe, Ms. Deborah Chase, Ms. Bonnie Rose Hough, Ms. Katie Howard, Ms. Rita Mah, Ms. Ethel Mays, Ms. Deana Piazza, Ms. Patricia Rivera, Ms. Lanette Scott, Ms. Gabrielle Selden, Ms. Julia Weber

### **Introduction**

The task force met in four separate working groups from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. All members met together at 1:00 p.m. The purpose of the task force meeting was outlined. Working groups will provide status updates to the task force, address overlapping issues, and then have the opportunity to reconvene and process task force discussions.

### **Report Back from Working Groups**

Each of the working groups presented generally on their morning discussions. Working groups include: Representation, Research and Best Practices, Process Improvements, and Improving the Status of, and Respect for, Family Law Litigants, and Family Law.

Members discussed general crossover and overlapping issues between working groups and how to address such issues. Staff will distribute documents with each working group's narrowed focus via the Moodle web site.

### **Summary of Cochairs Meeting**

The September 15 meeting was summarized, where cochairs met to discuss working groups as well as review the guiding principles that could be used to help guide the final recommendations of the task force. Members should provide comments so that the principles may be finalized.

The task force also reviewed an outreach form.

### **Focus Groups**

The task force received a summary on the status of the upcoming focus groups: The AOC has contracted with CERES policy research who will be conducting 18 focus groups that will include meetings with represented and self-represented litigants, 5 English speaking groups, and 1-2 Spanish speaking groups. The research staff has completed a focus group fact sheet that contains additional information.

### **Bar Survey**

The idea of the California State Bar survey is to gather information to build on the focus groups and key informant interviews. The survey would probe into specific areas that the other methods would not necessarily address. The final survey will be put on a Survey Monkey-type tool that would be sent as a link and be completely confidential. It will be publicized through articles in the state bar, family law newsletters, email outreach, and hardcopies only to those that cannot complete online.

Members provided input on individual survey questions.

### **Minutes from Previous Meeting**

To be formally approved at November meeting.

### **Next Meeting**

The next task force meetings are: November 19 at the AOC, February 24 at the Los Angeles Courthouse, May 12-13 at the AOC, and September 2009 (location to be determined).

### **Public Comment**

There were no requests for public comment.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.