

MEMO

To: System Alignment and Modification Members
From: James T. Shearin
CC: Deborah Blanchard and Pauleen Consebido

Good afternoon.

I am following up on the Task Force meeting of August 25, 2016 and the assignment given to our particular group. The chairs of the respective groups have since had the opportunity to speak with Tim Fisher and Bill Clendenen to get some further clarity on what it is that is expected of each group.

I now have a better sense of our mission and thought I might start our work by this memo. I have copied UCONN Law School student, Pauleen Consebido on this e-mail, who has graciously volunteered to do some of the leg work.

As you will recall, the title of our group is "System Alignment and Modification," but has been dubbed the "Programs" Committee. I think the latter definition gives a little bit more of a sense of what it is we have been charged to accomplish. Our objectives are as follows:

1. Survey the field to determine what legal services programs are being used in Connecticut and elsewhere. In this respect, we are not just limited to the civil side of the equation, but we should also consider criminal programs like the CJA Panel in Federal Court, administrative efforts, probate system undertakings and any other programs that help people meet their essential human needs through some kind of legal undertaking. Pauline and I can probably amass much, if not all, of this information from some of the sources in our drop box as well as what we might know ourselves. However, it would be helpful if each of you would send an e-mail by September 13, 2016 either explaining a program that you think might not have been the subject of published materials or that somehow might have slipped through the cracks, particularly on the administrative and probate sides where there is less material to fall back on. We do not need much, just give us some indication of where we should look for further explanation.
2. Once we identify the collection of programs, we also have to do some analysis of whether they are successful, how effective and efficiently they are delivering legal services and at what cost. I suspect some of this information may be difficult to gather and we might need to divide up the programs when we reach that point, but if folks could start thinking now about factors we might want to consider to determine the success, it would be helpful. Again, shoot me an e-mail as to what you think by September 18, 2016 and I will assemble the collective wisdom so we will have the framework to go forward with.

3. The third prong of our work is to do some analytical thinking about how we might improve upon the current playing field as we have determined and measured it. Should resources be moved from one program to another? Should programs be consolidated? Should we focus in an area that is currently being underserved? Should we focus whatever additional funding we can acquire into a particular subject matter? What recommendations do we have for improvement? Should there be a permanent committee for reviewing these programs and under what circumstances? I suspect this latter part of our focus will not be undertaken until we have finished items 1 and 2, but we can certainly start thinking about them now.

So, your homework is to 1) send an e-mail by September 13, 2016 identifying programs you are aware of that you think Pauline and I might miss and where we can find some explanation of them; 2) send me an e-mail by September 12, 2016 listing the kinds of questions we should ask and, in fact, that we should consider to determine the effectiveness, efficiency and cost of the programs we identify.

I do not see a reason to meet as a group before our next meeting on September 30th, but would like to schedule a call for September 28th at 5:00 p.m. to discuss our preliminary thoughts.

Comments welcome.

Thank you.