

**Surviving Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation Committee.**  
**Civil Legal Needs & Services Subcommittee NOTES**  
**7/28/2020 10:00 AM**

- Discussed the meeting that all the Chairs had with Reena.
  - Collaborate with the ProBono Committee? Laura will try to attend some of their meetings and communicate with their Clerk.
  - Get an idea of costs- will we need to have some funding to implement the survey? Keep track of them as we go.
  - Reena wants us to focus more on *access to justice/access to the courts*- how the pandemic has impacted access to the court.
    - Ask for questions about the different types of proceedings.
    - How has the pandemic affected the ability of our vulnerable population to receive justice through the courts?
  - We can breakdown our questions to identify
  - Keep the frame of Before the Pandemic v. Now.
    - Ex: Did you have a problem getting hearings before the pandemic v. Do you have a problem getting hearings now?
    - Ex: Under immigration: Have you struggled to get asylum hearings before the pandemic v. Now.

-We will get feedback from an AAG to make sure we are in compliance with Human Subject Research Laws.

- Karen: **Ask questions** about virtual hearings Have clients/service providers struggled to get access to virtual hearings?

- **Question:** any problems with uploading documents - access to computer and computer knowledge

-Don't worry too much about finding what issues have been created by COVID- even if the problems already existed before, they are being exacerbated now.

- Ashley asked about the goal of the Task Force to help us focus on our goal.

- **Goal:** Gather information so that we can work from a base of knowledge about the inadequacies of our legal system and what the legal community/public need.
- "The Task Force will develop strategies, devise solutions, and drive reforms and innovations necessary to ensure equity, fairness and access to justice for all Marylanders."

-Don't worry too much about a question limit now. It is better to have too much now and just cut back on questions late.

- Ashley will discuss with service providers in other areas of Maryland that we do not have represented on our task force.

- **Question:** Issues with communication with the court and not knowing when deadlines are?

- Courts have been giving clients/attorneys the wrong date/time

- **Question:** How has going remote impacted your ability to have a fair hearing?

- Final protective orders were difficult because the judge cannot see the demeanor of those involved.

- Nick- CASA has been doing alot of work with interpretation which has always been an issue.

- Ashley- There were times when interpreters were not allowed in the building due to social distancing.

^ Ask a **question** about this.

- Karen: Many struggled to get wills in order. Had to get an executive order to be able to do wills virtually. Many lawyers struggled with the change.

- **Question:** Ask about how lawyers have been able to execute legal documents online and if they have been struggling with the change.

- Collaborate with the Life Planning Committee?

- Funding: What will our need be? Will we have any incentives to do the survey?

- We will have **Maryland Legal Services Corporation** do the dissemination to the grantees.

-Are there other recipients that we want to target?

- Public defenders office, DSS, State Bar

- Question: Ask what has been BETTER. What improvements would you like to keep?

- This pandemic has pushed the courts to improve. In some ways going virtual has been beneficial.

Look at **questions** Sandra Barnes has provided and see if we can implement them:

- What have been the most serious challenges for your agency, staff, and consumers?
- If it was January 2019 and you knew COVID was coming, what would you have done to prepare?
- How or if this experience will impact how you do business post-COVID-19.
- Your major concerns for the next year.
- Have there been unanticipated opportunities for program improvement that COVID-19 has provided?

**Open ended:** How would you have prepared for the pandemic if you had known in advance what was coming?

Dissemination: Not really a problem because all of our recipients have some online access.

**Date for future goals and next meeting:** By Next meeting have all questions together in the survey so we can start finalizing. Ann will send out the survey by Thursday 7/30 and we should all look at it by next meeting.

**Next meeting: Tuesday August 4 at 10 AM.**