

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S ACCESS TO JUSTICE TASK FORCE  
CONSUMER PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, August 12, 2020  
3:30 pm – 4:00 pm

<b>Participants</b>
Angie Barnett
Aracely Panameno
Arzhang Navai
Christine Hines
Christopher Dews
David Finkler
David Schlee
Anthony Davis
Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk
Delegate Pam Queen
Eric Friedman
Hank Greenberg
Helene Raynaud
Joy Sakamoto-Wengel
Lydie Glynn
Markisha Dobson
Michele Honick
Nikki Thompson
Nino Li
Pokuaa Owusu Acheaw
Rory Murray
Sarah Frush
Steve Sakamoto-Wengel
<b>Observers</b>
Diana-Lynne Hsu, Maryland Hospital Association

**Agenda**

1. Welcome - -Steve (5 minutes)
2. Roll – Steve (5 minutes)
3. Review minutes from August 5 meeting- Steve (5 minutes)
4. Process updates-Steve (10 minutes)
5. Subcommittee Reports 20 minutes
  - a. Consumer Education - Robin
  - b. Mediation/ADR/ODR/Support services - Amy
  - c. Court forms/Notices - Aracely
  - d. Court procedures/Access - Kat
6. New discussion items

7. Set next meeting – 5 minutes

### **Actions & Tasks (Overview)**

Meeting called to order at 3:33. Committee reviewed minutes from the last meeting. David Schlee made a motion to accept the minutes, Helen Raynaud seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Exchanging ideas and progress of all subcommittees.

### **Discussions made by the participants**

1. Steve: as far as the advocacy is considered on behalf of the letters sent to the Governor and the Chief Judge, the Task Force would like to collect stories of people who are facing debt collection and evictions that are related to COVID-19 and affected because of the termination of moratoria. Example: a story of Baltimore sheriff's employees working at court test positive for coronavirus.  
Link: <https://www.wbaltv.com/article/coronavirus-baltimore-sheriffs-deputy-employees-security-officer-cummings-courthouse/33575407#>. Please send us more of these kinds of stories if available, including stories of tenants being evicted using a Tenant Holding Over action instead of a Failure to Pay Rent action because the COVID-19 defense is not available in THO cases under the Governor's Order.
  - Even though the Task Force report will come out in December, it's been requested that if we have thoughts on legislation or court form or rules changes that we plan to propose, we need to get them to the Task Force in time for its September 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. The proposals would not have to be in final form but could include mediation requirements, changes to the court complaint and summons forms, etc. If the report is to be issued in December, it would need to be drafted in November and the recommendations would need to be adopted by the Task Force at its September meeting, although the Task Force may also add an October meeting.
  - Steve: because the Consumer Education and Court Form/Notices subcommittees are also working on building Microsites, we need to make sure they do not overlap.
2. Subcommittees:
  - Mediation/ADR/Debtor support resources (Markisha reported on behalf of Amy and Toby): I'm still working on the checklist in different areas. Let me know if you want to have something added in the list
    - On behalf of Toby: The district court ADR office has conducted some orientations to the staff of the self-help centers. They are having an online self-mediation report form that the individuals can complete and it goes directly to the District Court ADR office. But currently, the self-help centers are referring people to a centralized place to reach community mediation centers, they still need to follow up with community mediation recording action for integrated questions like legal information and advice from the intake, we asked for the number of referrals of they received from the self-help centers and are waiting for the report.
    - Steve: Reena has suggested that the Mediation Subcommittee should think about the triage of people's cases from the self-help centers, we should come up with different types of referrals that people might have (whether people lack the money to pay; whether people have defenses; whether people have a

dispute over the amount of debt owed, etc.) Breaking the information down will be helpful.

- Court Forms/Notice (Aracely): we have no meeting so far but plan to have our meeting tomorrow. As David said in the meeting chat, we are moving forward with our ideas on our microsite.
    - David Finkler (in the chat): I had a call with Robin earlier this week and confirmed that the forms/notice committee's website is not duplicating the communications committee information. We agreed to talk again in the future to integrate our microsites.
  - Court Access and Procedure Subcommittee (Delegate Pam Queen): We were working on drafting the letter to the Rules Committee to modernize electronic signatures. We were also working on a temporary order to make an automatic exemption for property garnishment, we will have more discussion on this topic in the next meeting. Kat and Sarah will investigate the Modria Online Dispute Resolution System. Manny will investigate the MDEC rollout status. We also reached out to other elected officials for constituent updates on courts' issues in different jurisdictions, so that we can learn about issues the public is facing due to COVID-19.
    - David Schlee: we are actively working with Baltimore City. Anthony circulated a reopening plan for Baltimore City District Court and will search for any others that he has.
    - Anthony: I will email these updates to the members.
  - Aracely: (Question) Can we develop an app that is made available to consumers/debtors with referrals to education, forms, defenses, and other resources?
    - Steve: I'm not sure if we are able to engage with it both technically and financially. But we can look into that.
3. Motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:52, seconded by Helene Raynaud, The motion passed unanimously.