

Minutes of the Access to Counsel in Evictions Task Force
Outreach and Assessment Committee
Friday, December 3, 2021

Committee Members in Attendance: Reena Shah (Chair); Seema Iyer; Jim Johnson; Jessica Kaufman; Natalie McSherry; Danielle Meister; Lisa Sarro; Ryan Trout; Vicki Schultz (Task Force Chair, *ex officio*)

Task Force Staff Member and Staff in Attendance: Rebecca Guay; Deb Seltzer; Leah Tulin

Ms. Shah opened the meeting and asked for a motion to vote to accept the minutes of the four previous meetings. They were approved by a unanimous vote.

Ms. Shah explained that the goal of this meeting would be to continue discussion of the data necessary to evaluate the impact of outreach and of the program, along with evaluating whether the program is being implemented equitably and discussing best practices for data sharing. The committee discussed the following and agreed these were important areas for data collection and analysis:

- Tracking call volumes through a central number; visits to a central website; and collecting data on different types of outreach to determine which modality/process receives the most response.
- How to identify those at risk of eviction and/or are housing insecure and possible ways to connect with them as early as possible in the process. Schools, Boys and Girls clubs, DSS, and head start programs were identified as good sources.
- Tracking success at connecting tenants to counsel and referrals (e.g., tracking warm transfers from a main number/website to service providers; amount of time for tenant to be connected to counsel; number of transfers that receive counsel; whether tenants are returning for help multiple times).
- Tracking case information and outcomes: information from pre-screening; whether there was an eviction; the number of days between filing and trial and/or filing and eviction (if applicable); whether there was a trial or settlement; number of hearings; case disposition; number of postponements; and incidents of failure to appear and court's response.
- Demographic data needed to assess equity: age, race, gender, income level, disability, number of people/children in household, primary language.

The committee also agreed that it is necessary to develop a uniform, real-time tracking system and that key stakeholders should have data-sharing agreements that adequately balance the need for transparency and the importance of protecting the confidentiality and privacy of individuals.

There was discussion and support for the possibility of providing notice of the complaint to DHCD and creating a similar system to the one in place currently for foreclosure notices. This process would require resources for DHCD to implement, but would also provide a central repository for eviction notices and allow for evaluating hot spots, trends, etc.