

AG's COVID-19 ACCESS TO JUSTICE TASK FORCE

Meeting of the Economic Security Committee

Thursday, June 25, 2020 at 2:00

Agenda

1. Introductions of Committee Members
2. Overview of Committee Purpose/Objectives – Paul Cucuzzella and Carnot Evans
3. Committee Organization into Subcommittees for:
 - Unemployment Insurance
 - Food Supplement Program (SNAP)
 - Temporary Cash Assistance (TANF)
 - Healthcare Benefits (CHIP/Medicaid)
4. Workplan Schedule
5. Conclusion

Notes

- Introductions
 - Present
 - Paul Cucuzzella
 - Carnot Evans
 - Reena Shah
 - David Merkin
 - Meena Agarwal
 - Conni Bright Gordon
 - Renee Phillips-Farley
 - Jessica Williams
 - Caroline Bolas
 - Lauren Young
 - Roy Prather
 - Joy Fowler

- Louis Becker
 - Ashley Black
 - Swapna Yeluri
 - Judge Louis Becker
 - Paul Cucuzzella
 - co-chair along with Carnot
 - Reena Shah - vice-chair of task force
 - Elevate issues
 - Do some interventions to help people on the ground
- Overview
 - Goal today is organizational
 - Will break down into subcommittees
 - Will focus on public benefits and access issues related to public benefits
 - Broken down into 4 principle programs
 - Unemployment
 - Snap
 - Tanf
 - chip/medicaid
 - Short-term focus
 - Identify access issues to these programs, particularly as they relate to covid
 - Huge volume of unemployment insurance claims
 - Difficulty processing at state level
 - How can the task force be leveraged to bring in community organizations, non-profits, other entities that can assist people with access issues?
 - Make filing of claims more efficient
 - Ensure that on receiving end the claims are properly submitted
 - What are barriers people have to access?
 - Long-term
 - More open ended
 - Subcommittees may find issues that could be addressed through legislation
 - Is just okay to raise issues as well as come up with solutions
 - Initially looking for “low hanging fruit”
 - Timeline
 - Task Force will exist until end of December
 - Initially looking at short-term, between now and when recommendations should be made

- Went around for introductions, people were asked to identify an interest in a subcommittee and if they were interested in chairing the committee
 - A few shared specific interests, for the most part people offered to help where needed
 - Jessica Williams - assistant AG at civil rights division, just listening in to confirm discussions are mindful of racial equity
 - Conni Bright Gordon - director of advocacy for admin law at maryland legal aid, history of public service, supervising statewide admin law cases, has established unemployment committee at maryland legal aid, happy to help wherever
 - David Merkin - assistant AG for MVA, first 10 years of career did prisoners rights work, public defender, treasurer of pro-bono research maryland, happy to help wherever
 - Joy Fowler - advocate, worked with aba, happy to help wherever
 - Judge Louis Becker - addiction, mental health experience, happy to help wherever
 - Renee Phillips-Farley - Assistant AG in maryland aviation admin
 - Lauren Young - director of litigation at disability rights maryland
 - Swapna Yeluri - most familiar with healthcare
 - Ashley black - public justice center, systemic advocacy for all sorts of public benefits
 - Carolina Bolas - Maryland Soul program, helps people with mental health issues and homeless access federal disability benefits
 - Roy prather - Beveridge and Diamond, most work is in environmental, some work with unemployment and healthcare
- Subcommittee organization
 - Unemployment
 - SNAP
 - TANF
 - CHIP/Medicaid
- Carnot suggested taking the preferences off-line to better allocate expertise
 - Will designate a chair, committee can choose to change
 - Will email out a list with committee assignments
- Workplan Schedule
 - Subcommittees should meet sometime next week to do initial discussion and identify subcommittee focus
 - Following week Paul and Carnot will meet with chairs of subcommittees
 - Likely subcommittees will be meeting weekly or biweekly
 - Members will have some work to do between meetings

- Chairs can have weekly or biweekly meeting with paul and carnot
- How other committees factor in
 - Data - able to get data for other committees
 - Is there data we will need for this committee
 - Is there any tech solutions that might come out of this committee
 - Public awareness and community engagement
 - Is there something related to public benefits that needs to get disseminated through the comms folks
 - Pro-bono and reduced fee engagement
 - Maybe this committee's solution is more lawyers - that can get filtered into the probono committee
 - Policy and race equity
 - All of the work should be looking at these issues with a race equity lens
 - Is there a disproportionate impact?
 - If so, solution must take these factors into account
 - Civil legal aid
 - Some states have partnered with programs to provide supports
 - Opportunity to consider how these programs might be applicable to maryland and this committee
 - How can the cares act be applied to this
- Conclusion
 - Should receive email detailing subcommittee assignments - not final