

Supreme Court of Missouri Committee on Access to Family Courts



Report to the Supreme Court of Missouri

July 2011

Committee on Access to Family Court Members

The Honorable Douglas Beach, Judge, 21st Judicial Circuit

Kathleen Bird, Esq., Dispute Resolution Services, 7th Judicial Circuit

The Honorable Kelly Broniec, Judge, 12th Judicial Circuit

Karen Brown, Esq., Jackson County Family Court, Kansas City, Missouri

The Honorable Theresa Burke, Judge, 22nd Judicial Circuit

Don Crank, Assistant Attorney General, Springfield, Missouri

Fredrich Cruse, Esq., Hannibal, Missouri

Lou DeFeo, Esq., Jefferson City, Missouri

Beth Dessem, Executive Director, CASA, Columbia, Missouri

Richard Halliburton, Esq., Kansas City, Missouri

Marsha Holiman, Circuit Clerk, 34th Judicial Circuit

Richard Holtmeyer, Esq., Tipton, Missouri

Lori Levine, Esq., Jefferson City, Missouri

Kelly Martinez, Esq., Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

Mary Ann McClure, Director - Civil Records, 16th Judicial Circuit

The Honorable Brent Powell, Judge, 16th Judicial Circuit

Patricia Scaglia, Esq., Independence, Missouri

The Honorable Leslie Schneider, Judge, 13th Judicial Circuit

Deanna Scott, Esq., Legal Services of Southern Missouri

The Honorable Dennis Smith, Judge, 21st Judicial Circuit

Allan Stewart, Esq., St. Louis, Missouri

The Honorable Miles Sweeney, Judge, 31st Judicial Circuit

The Honorable J.D. Williamson, Judge (retired), 16th Judicial Circuit

Lori Levine and the Honorable Dennis Smith serve as co-chairs of the committee.

Bob Stoeckl, The Missouri Bar, serves as staff liaison between the committee and The Missouri Bar.

Kelly Cramer, Debbie Eiken, Terri Norris and Cathy Zacharias serve as staff liaisons between the committee and the Office of State Courts Administrator.

Summary

In April 2008, the Supreme Court of Missouri created the Committee on Access to Family Courts (CAFC). The committee was charged with developing specific ways to insure access to justice for Missouri families in the family court divisions of this state, consistent with the eight recommendations of the Joint Commission to Review *Pro Se* Litigation.

Since 2008, much has been accomplished to assist self-represented litigants and the courts that handle their cases. Initially, the primary focus was to prepare educational programs, forms and proposed rules for dissolutions of marriage. However, during the past year, the activities of the committee have expanded to address paternity cases, both through forms and educational programs. Eleven separate forms have been approved by the Court for use in paternity cases.

The focus of the committee continues to be assisting Missouri's poor and the data collected confirm that since the beginning of this effort, more than 70 percent of online users have an annual income under \$30,000, while 85 percent have an annual income under \$40,000. Although the "Representing Yourself" website primarily is used for dissolutions of marriage, the committee continues to develop the website to include information and forms for other family law matters.

A review of the activities and projects undertaken or continued by the committee and its various subcommittees in 2010-2011 to implement the original recommendations is as follows:

Recommendation #1

***Pro se* litigants in specific types of cases should be required to participate in an education program that describes the risks and responsibilities of proceeding without representation.**

A litigant awareness program (LAP) subcommittee was created to implement recommendation #1. The LAP subcommittee met several times from July 2010 through June 2011. During this time, movement toward expanding online family law information and improving access to plain language materials was made.

The LAP subcommittee completed work on modification (custody, child support) and name change content, which currently appear on the website. Most recently, the paternity component of the LAP curriculum was developed and submitted for approval to the Committee on Access to Family Courts. This material was approved during the CAFC meeting June 3, 2011.

Additionally, a paternity brochure – modeled after a brochure published by the Michigan Department of Human Services and adapted to Missouri law – was developed for distribution to never-married parents across the state at various distribution points (i.e.

hospitals, child support agencies, courts, etc). The brochure will be added as a link to the website and made available in both English and Spanish.

Efforts are underway to modify LAP content to comply with plain language standards. Proposed plain language revisions to the website include the sections about *How the Missouri Court System Works*, the LAP program instruction page and the LAP video instruction page.

Recommendation #2

Guidelines should be developed for court staff that clearly defines what information is and is not considered legal advice. The guidelines should be made available to each circuit court with the option of also distributing the guidelines to *pro se* litigants. A curriculum and training program for court staff and advocates who interact or assist *pro se* litigants should be developed.

Members of the clerk education subcommittee presented at the fall 2010 and spring 2011 court clerk colleges hosted by the Office of State Courts Administrator. The program consisted of "Pro Se Litigant Issues" presented by Karen Brown, "What's new in limited scope representation (LSR)" presented by Kathleen Bird and "Self-represent Website and Forms Update" presented by Mary Ann McClure. Approximately 80 clerks attended the program. This was the first time most of the clerks who attended received information about the CAFC activities and resources. The response was overwhelmingly positive. The clerks' feedback and suggestions have been shared with the CAFC committee.

Recommendation #3

The Judicial Education Committee should develop a curriculum and training program for the judiciary on effective court management techniques in cases involving *pro se* litigants. The curriculum should include education concerning ethical dilemmas created by *pro se* litigation and should consider the development of standard protocol for handling hearings involving *pro se* litigants.

The Honorable Brent Powell was appointed to the Trial Judge Education Committee as a liaison from this committee in 2010. Judge Powell and Judge David Chamberlain are scheduled for a one-hour presentation about limited scope representation at the 2011 Judicial College. The presentation includes a segment about the Supreme Court Rules that relate to limited scope representation and a discussion about how limited scope representation can work and help a busy judge better deal with self-represented litigants. This session was approved for ethics hours by The Missouri Bar.

The subcommittee also worked with Lou DeFeo to develop *The Judge's Tool Kit on Pro Bono Legal Assistance*. This tool kit is a resource for judges to access when handling cases involving *pro se* litigants. Additional information regarding the tool kit is contained in recommendation # 7.

Recommendation #4

An internet-based centralized clearinghouse should be developed and maintained to serve as a repository for information concerning all *pro se* services and programs available statewide.

The website subcommittee continues to monitor activity on the self-represent website and review user comments to make the website more user-friendly. Additional sections of the litigant awareness program were added and the pages reorganized so visitors may request information relevant to their type of case after obtaining information about their general rights and responsibilities. Arrangements have been made to translate the written LAP pages into Spanish. Additional information was added to the “Online Resources” page. A section for military service members, veterans and their families is being created.

The survey developed for the Representing Yourself website continues to gather data about the effectiveness of the site and the forms provided for use by self-represented litigants. The survey results from calendar year 2010 are included in Appendix A.

Recommendation #5

A pamphlet or brochure should be developed and made available for distribution in each circuit court describing the resources available to educate and inform the *pro se* litigant of the risks and responsibilities of proceeding without professional legal representation.

The brochure was completed during 2009-2010. The brochure was distributed along with the litigant awareness program DVD to all judicial circuits with permission to duplicate it for local use.

Recommendation #6

The circuit and family courts should strengthen alliances with state and local bar associations throughout Missouri to encourage, promote, and support lawyer referral programs that will link those in need of legal representation to lawyers who are available to provide some services in family law cases at reasonable or reduced rates.

The subcommittee of the CAFC focusing on limited scope representation has been working to clarify the practice of LSR. The goal is to define the ethical boundaries of a practitioner who is providing LSR. To this end, the committee requested an informal opinion from the legal ethics counsel (a copy is included in Appendix B). Further, the subcommittee has accepted the offer of volunteer services from a law student to research the ethical and practical parameters of LSR as it has been addressed in other states.

The primary focus of the subcommittee is to develop a protocol for practitioners who wish to provide LSR, and to provide and disseminate an educational component for the practice of LSR. The subcommittee has discussed with The Missouri Bar the mechanics of presenting the educational component, which is scheduled to be finalized prior to September 2011.

A previously established self-help center that served the 13th Judicial Circuit – the Mid-Missouri Access to Justice Project – and provided assistance at differing levels to low-income individuals attempting to access the courts in civil matters recently was dissolved. It was determined that Mid-Missouri Legal Services, through a weekly in-house self-help clinic, was more efficient and effective in serving the needs of unrepresented persons in family court matters. As a component of and in conjunction with Mid-Missouri Legal Services, a special committee was formed to monitor and problem solve regarding continuing issues with unrepresented persons in family court cases. One meeting has occurred with this collaborative group.

In light of the knowledge gained from this project, it was determined that active participation by members of the local bar in partnering with Legal Services or separately in providing individual legal services to *pro se* litigants was a possibility. Presently under discussion is local family law attorneys providing free legal services to *pro se* litigants on one or two *pro se* dissolution dockets each week.

It became apparent to self-help center project members that a stand alone center was duplicative of the efforts Legal Services provides because not enough persons were being served to justify the costs. Legal Services had the organization in existence – including computer hardware, support staff, collaboration with the law school and general infrastructure – to promote this project. Likewise, The Missouri Bar and local bar have a similar structure in effect and have funds available to support a program.

Further, self-help center project members determined the vast majority of persons accessing family courts *pro se* met the financial guidelines of Legal Services. The project board further believed the Representing Yourself website, including the forms contained therein, was being used adequately by the majority of persons not meeting Legal Services Corporations' financial qualifications.

Currently, the subcommittee is exploring the need for *pro se* assistance based upon the number of unrepresented people accessing the courts. The subcommittee has enlisted the aid of the state courts administrator's office to tally the number of *pro se* litigants involved in family court matters by circuit. This research is in the beginning stages; we anticipate there will be substantial anecdotal data that also will be helpful.

Ultimately, it is the subcommittee's goal to form a model that will work effectively and efficiently in Missouri to provide all citizens access to family courts, in consideration of the financial resources available to the court. A set of recommendations will be forthcoming.

In March 2011, a subgroup of the self-help center subcommittee was established to focus on the needs of rural Missouri.

Recommendation #7

The court system and organized bar should proactively encourage lawyers within the state to offer *pro bono* services annually and encourage initiatives to provide more sources of *pro bono* legal assistance.

The main focus of activity on *pro bono* initiatives during the year July 1, 2010, to June 30, 2011, was the development of *The Judge's Tool Kit on Pro Bono Legal Assistance*. With the assistance of former Chief Justice Ray Price, information and resources were requested from the National Center for State Courts and the American Bar Association Center for *Pro Bono*. The responses received provided extensive independent research about *pro bono* resources in other states.

The goal of the tool kit is to give judges the information, resources and tools to provide the leadership to increase and support *pro bono* representation sufficient to meet the local need for access to justice. A 2009 American Bar Association survey of attorneys found one of the most significant factors motivating attorneys to do *pro bono* representation was the leadership of judges.

A draft of the tool kit was circulated among judges and attorneys within and without Missouri, and current and past members of the CAFC. Based on the comments and suggestions for improvement received, the tool kit was enhanced and additional components were developed.

The Supreme Court approved the tool kit for publication on the Court's website and on the judiciary's training site, and in March it was published live in both locations. Supreme Court Judge Mary Russell, liaison to the Committee on Access to Family Courts, announced the tool kit at the annual meeting of presiding judges. Judge Russell later followed up with a personal letter e-mailed to all state trial and appellate judges. The Missouri Bar publicized the tool kit through *ESQ.* and a brochure was prepared for all attorneys attending the May Bar committee meetings. During March, more than 300 hits were made to the online tool kit.

The Missouri tool kit is a generation beyond similar efforts in other states. Compare for example Michigan (<http://www.michbar.org/programs/atj/pdfs/probonotoolkit.pdf>) and California (<http://www.courts.ca.gov/partners/92.htm>).

Recommendation #8

The Supreme Court of Missouri should develop and approve plain language, standardized forms and instructions that are accepted in all state courts and made available to *pro se* litigants.

Within the last year the Supreme Court approved various family law forms required for use by Rule 88.09 for *pro se* litigants. The approved forms are available on the Representing Yourself website and may be completed online and printed, or printed and then filled out.

The following forms were effective as of January 1, 2011, and are available:

- CAFC 301 – Father’s Petition for Declaration of Paternity
- CAFC 302 – Mother’s Petition for Declaration of Paternity
- CAFC 302a – Mother’s Petition for Appointment as Next Friend
- CAFC 303 – Presumed Father’s Petition for Declaration of Non-Paternity
- CAFC 304 – Petition to Set Aside Judgment of Paternity and Support
- CAFC 311 – Answer to Father’s Petition for Declaration of Paternity
- CAFC 312 – Answer to Mother’s Petition for Declaration of Paternity
- CAFC 313 – Answer to Presumed Father’s Petition for Declaration of Non-Paternity
- CAFC 314 – Answer to Petition to Set Aside Judgment of Paternity and Support
- CAFC 370 – Paternity Judgment.

Under Rule 88.09, these forms “**shall be accepted by the courts of this state.**” Every party not represented by counsel in proceedings for dissolution of marriage, legal separation, parentage or the modification of a judgment in any such proceedings **shall use** the approved forms unless waived by the trial court. “Mail order” or online forms (other than the approved forms) are no longer acceptable in Missouri courts for *pro se* litigants. If a litigant is represented by an attorney in the preparation of pleadings and documents, the approved forms are not required.

The following new forms have been forwarded to the State Judicial Records Committee and the Family Court Committee:

- CAFC 371 – Judgment of Non-Paternity
- CAFC 401 – Petition for Change of Name
- CAFC 470 – Change of Name Judgment
- CAFC 701 – Notice of Change of Address
- CAFC 711 – Request for Personal Service
- CAFC 712 – Request for Service by Publication.

Recommendation #9

The Supreme Court of Missouri should establish a *Pro Se* Implementation Committee responsible for the implementation of the approved recommendations of the Joint Commission.

This committee was established on April 15, 2008, to improve access to family court division cases with particular focus for self-represented litigants. To accomplish the goals set out by the Supreme Court, the recommendations of the Joint Commission were essential and served as areas of focus for this committee. Subcommittees are formed as needed to carry out the recommendations and/or revise and improve on past actions.

The committee has experienced challenges along the way, primarily the reluctance of some judges and attorneys to accept the fact of *pro se* litigants and the concept of limited scope representation. However, as time has passed it appears that reluctance, while still present, is slowly decreasing. A good example of recent acceptance is from Clay County. In Clay County a *pro se* pre-trial docket was established in September 2009. Although

the local bar association initially expressed reservations about limited scope representation, last year the Clay County Bar Association officers supported the creation of a list of local attorneys willing to provide limited scope representation services to the participants in this docket. As of June 2010, the Clay County Bar Association had 17 attorneys that offered limited scope representation services to family court litigants. Some attorneys have tailored their practice to include limited scope representation and have seen its benefits. Although *pro se* litigants will always have some impact on the operation of the court, limited scope representation has become more accepted by both the bench and bar.

Throughout the life of this committee and the Joint Commission to Review *Pro Se* Litigation, the one thing that has stayed consistent is the profile of a *pro se* litigant. The Joint Commission completed a study of the *pro se* litigant in 2003. Those findings were compared to the survey results from the Representing Yourself website surveys completed between January 2010 and December 2010. Consistent with the 2003 survey data collected in Missouri courtrooms, current survey results have found the following:

- 72 percent of online users reported annual income below \$30,000.
- 74 percent of online users were seeking information about obtaining a dissolution of marriage.
- Only 13 percent of online users have a bachelor's degree or higher.
- The slight majority of online users were married 5 years or less.

This data confirms several beliefs of the committee:

- The characteristics of a *pro se* litigant have remained essentially the same.
- The increase in users with an annual income below \$30,000 from 60 percent in 2003 to 72 percent in 2010 supports continued expansion of limited scope representation and *pro bono* services.
- The typical *pro se* litigant cannot afford legal representation and is not the target clientele of most attorneys.
- The website is reaching its intended target audience.

The ongoing and future initiatives of this committee include collaboration with The Missouri Bar on a *pro bono* program and web presence, supporting and encouraging lawyers to provide *pro bono* or reduced fee services, developing educational programs on the effective use of limited scope representation, continuing support of existing and future self-help centers or libraries and continuing to supplement the Deskbook for *Pro Bono* Attorneys.

Representing Yourself Website Survey Statistics
Jan. 16 – Dec. 31, 2010
(n = 4,083)

2. How many years of schooling have you completed?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Answer	18	.4	.4	.4
Some High School	518	12.7	12.7	13.1
GED	375	9.2	9.2	22.3
High School Graduate	882	21.6	21.6	43.9
Some College	1138	27.9	27.9	71.8
Associates Degree	343	8.4	8.4	80.2
Professional School Degree	37	.9	.9	81.1
Occupational/Vocational Degree	238	5.8	5.8	86.9
Bachelors Degree	365	8.9	8.9	95.9
Masters Degree	142	3.5	3.5	99.3
Doctorate Degree	27	.7	.7	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

3. How much money do you make a year before taxes are taken out? Do not include your spouse or anyone else living in your house.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No answer	32	.8	.8	.8
Unemployed	237	5.8	5.8	6.6
\$0 - 10,999	1219	29.9	29.9	36.4
\$11,000 - 19,999	703	17.2	17.2	53.7
\$20,000 - 29,999	754	18.5	18.5	72.1
\$30,000 - 39,999	533	13.1	13.1	85.2
\$40,000 - 49,999	265	6.5	6.5	91.7
\$50,000 or over	340	8.3	8.3	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

4. How many children do you have?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No answer	30	.7	.7	.7
None	1060	26.0	26.0	26.7
1	749	18.3	18.3	45.0
2	1078	26.4	26.4	71.4
3	663	16.2	16.2	87.7
4	339	8.3	8.3	96.0
5	103	2.5	2.5	98.5
6	33	.8	.8	99.3
More than 6	28	.7	.7	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

5. How long have you been married?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No answer	106	2.6	2.6	2.6
No longer married	425	10.4	10.4	13.0
Less than 1 year	339	8.3	8.3	21.3
1 - 5 years	1414	34.6	34.6	55.9
5 - 10 years	859	21.0	21.0	77.0
More than 10 years	940	23.0	23.0	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

6. Where do you most often use the Internet?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Courthouse	8	.2	.2	.2
No answer	28	.7	.7	.9
Other (please specify below)	73	1.8	1.8	2.7
Friend or relative's house	358	8.8	8.8	11.4
Public Library	412	10.1	10.1	21.5
Work	608	14.9	14.9	36.4
Home	2596	63.6	63.6	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

Where do you most often use the Internet: Other

	Frequency		Frequency
School	14	Community Center	1
Cell phone	11	Dad's shop	1
Don't use Internet	7	Divorce	1
College	5	Family house	1
Home	3	Filing a divorce	1
Mother's house	2	Friend's house	1
McDonald's	2	Home and work equally	1
Prison	2	Housing Authority	1
Public Library	2	I travel	1
Resource Center	2	3g	1
Apartment Facility	1	Occasionally	1
Brother's house	1	Organizations	1
Career Center	1	Research and entertainment	1
Caseworker	1		

7. Have you talked to a lawyer or free legal service about your case?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No answer	66	1.6	1.6	1.6
Yes	1342	32.9	32.9	34.5
No	2675	65.5	65.5	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

**8. Since you answered YES to question 7, why do you want to represent yourself.
(Select the one that best fits your situation.)**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
I did not like him or her	8	.2	.2	.2
Lawyer had a conflict	25	.6	.6	.8
Personal reasons	64	1.6	1.6	2.4
None of the above	137	3.4	3.4	5.7
I think I can represent myself	223	5.5	5.5	11.2
Too expensive	889	21.8	21.8	33.0
No answer	2737	67.0	67.0	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

9. Since you answered NO to question 7, why do you want to represent yourself. (Select the one that best fits your situation.)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
I can afford to hire a lawyer, but I do not want to hire one	194	4.8	4.8	4.8
None of the above	328	8.0	8.0	12.8
I think I can represent myself	1051	25.7	25.7	38.5
I want to hire a lawyer, but I cannot afford one	1074	26.3	26.3	64.8
No answer	1436	35.2	35.2	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

10. What type of family law matter are you intending to file? (Select all that apply.)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Order of Protection (Domestic Violence)	22	.5	.5	.5
Enforcement of Orders	26	.6	.6	1.2
Paternity	30	.7	.7	1.9
No answer	33	.8	.8	2.7
Visitation	75	1.8	1.8	4.6
Name Change	92	2.3	2.3	6.8
Modification	95	2.3	2.3	9.1
Other (please specify below)	111	2.7	2.7	11.9
Child Support	193	4.7	4.7	16.6
Custody Issues	388	9.5	9.5	26.1
Divorce	3018	73.9	73.9	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

What type of family law matter are you intending to file? (Select all that apply.): Other

	Frequency		Frequency
Legal Separation	28	Helping a friend do their divorce	1
Contempt	8	I am acting as a paralegal for a friend	1
Dissolution of Marriage	5	Involuntary TPR	1
Adoption	5	Joint Guardianship	1
Guardianship	4	Judgment	1
Small Claims	4	Judicial Review Form	1
Unemployment	3	Just reviewing the forms, am an attorney licensed in TX with family in MO	1
Civil	3	Lawsuit for money owed	1
Maintenance	3	Lawsuit	1
Annulment	3	Medical Bills	1
Expungement	3	Medical payments for 50/50 child custody – not support	1
Traffic Citation	2	Missouri Beneficiary Deed Form	1
Landlord Tenant	2	Modification of spousal support	1
Appeal	2	Modification of Exclusive Jurisdiction	1
Breech of Contract	2	Modify Child Support/Maintenance	1
Probate	2	Motion for Rehearing	1
Step-parent Adoption	2	Motion to pay out funds	1
I am a lawyer	2	Moving out of state with kids and I have consent from ncp	1
Criminal	2	Name a legal guardianship	1
Contract Law	2	No right to order never lived in state	1
Car Title	2	Not contesting divorce	1
M wife is filing against me	2	Order of protection/stalking	1
Alimony	1	Parenting Plan	1
401K and profit sharing	1	Personal Property	1
Abandonment	1	Petition of Modification of Custody	1
Answer to Petition for Divorce	1	Power of Attorney	1

Answer to Summons	1	Probate Estate	1
Appeal to Supreme Court	1	Property/Damages	1
Appealing Custody	1	Quit-Claim Deed	1
Back Child Support Adjusted	1	Rent & Possession	1
Bank Attachment	1	Rental Contract	1
Bigotry	1	Respondent w/ cross petition	1
Biological parents and birth certificate	1	Respondents Answers	1
Certificate	1	Response	1
Child Support	1	Response to Divorce Petition	1
Civil Case of Eviction	1	Response to Motion to Modify	1
Civil Suit	1	Return of property and damages	1
Civil – Auto Accident	1	Settlement divorce	1
Conspiracy and Defamation	1	Show Cause	1
Constitutional Rights	1	Special Civil	1
Court Review of Claim Exemption	1	Spousal Support	1
CPS	1	Spouse Abandonment	1
Civil Suit	1	Supervised Visitation	1
Credit Card	1	Termination of Guardianship	1
Custody Modification	1	Termination of Spousal Maintenance	1
DFS	1	TPR	1
Dispute against landlord	1	Transfer of case from NY to MO	1
Eviction	1	Trespassing	1
Family Court – they're making it impossible	1	Trust Enforcement	1
Fraud upon the court	1	Wish to keep maiden name	1
Hardship/Garnishment	1		1

11. It was easy to find what I was looking for on the Representing Yourself website.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No answer	10	.2	.2	.2
Not Applicable	125	3.1	3.1	3.3
No Opinion	591	14.5	14.5	17.8
Disagree	261	6.4	6.4	24.2
Strongly Disagree	276	6.8	6.8	30.9
Agree	1677	41.1	41.1	72.0
Strongly Agree	1143	28.0	28.0	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

12. The educational information was easy to understand.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No answer	30	.7	.7	.7
Not Applicable	148	3.6	3.6	4.4
No Opinion	646	15.8	15.8	20.2
Disagree	91	2.2	2.2	22.4
Strongly Disagree	215	5.3	5.3	27.7
Agree	1871	45.8	45.8	73.5
Strongly Agree	1082	26.5	26.5	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

13. Without the educational information I would not have been as prepared for court.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No answer	49	1.2	1.2	1.2
Not Applicable	239	5.9	5.9	7.1
No Opinion	1119	27.4	27.4	34.5
Disagree	177	4.3	4.3	38.8
Strongly Disagree	194	4.8	4.8	43.5
Agree	1549	37.9	37.9	81.5
Strongly Agree	756	18.5	18.5	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

14. It was easy to know what forms I needed to use.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No answer	40	1.0	1.0	1.0
Not Applicable	161	3.9	3.9	4.9
No Opinion	832	20.4	20.4	25.3
Disagree	319	7.8	7.8	33.1
Strongly Disagree	234	5.7	5.7	38.8
Agree	1732	42.4	42.4	81.3
Strongly Agree	765	18.7	18.7	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

15. The forms were easy to use.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No answer	68	1.7	1.7	1.7
Not Applicable	183	4.5	4.5	6.1
No Opinion	961	23.5	23.5	29.7
Disagree	146	3.6	3.6	33.3
Strongly Disagree	200	4.9	4.9	38.2
Agree	1778	43.5	43.5	81.7
Strongly Agree	747	18.3	18.3	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

16. After looking at everything on this site, I feel more ready to represent myself in court.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No answer	73	1.8	1.8	1.8
Not Applicable	181	4.4	4.4	6.2
No Opinion	947	23.2	23.2	29.4
Disagree	99	2.4	2.4	31.8
Strongly Disagree	204	5.0	5.0	36.8
Agree	1728	42.3	42.3	79.2
Strongly Agree	851	20.8	20.8	100.0
Total	4083	100.0	100.0	

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF MISSOURI

March 30, 2011

BY FACSIMILE ONLY TO 314-863-5312

Allan Stewart
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Dear Mr. Stewart:

This is in response to your request for a written informal advisory opinion dated March 10, 2011.

This is a non-binding, informal advisory opinion pursuant to Missouri Supreme Court Rule 5.30(c). This opinion is based only upon a review of Supreme Court Rule 4, the Rules of Professional Conduct, and relevant advisory opinions of which I am aware. It does not affect the authority of a judge or quasi-judicial officer to rule on any matter. It is based solely upon the facts you have presented in your letter. Additional or different facts, other than those presented in your letter, could result in a different conclusion.

Copies of correspondence related to this opinion request will be maintained for a minimum of five years after the date of this letter. After that, they may be destroyed.

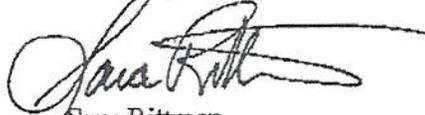
An attorney who is providing limited scope representation must disclose the limits of the attorney's appearance in court pursuant to Rule 55.03(b). Additionally, it is permissible for an attorney to disclose information about the scope of representation relevant to interaction with the court. Such disclosure is authorized by Rule 4-1.6(a) as disclosure impliedly authorized to carry out the representation.

To the extent that the court asks an attorney to disclose information about the scope of representation that the attorney believes is not relevant to interaction with the court, the attorney should determine whether the client consents to the disclosure. If the client consents, the attorney may disclose. Pursuant to Rule 4-1.6(b)(4), the attorney may also disclose if ordered to do so by the court. If the court orders disclosure, the attorney should either comply or seek review of the court's order by a higher court.

Allan Stewart
March 30, 2011
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I hope this information is of assistance to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sara Rittman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sara Rittman
Legal Ethics Counsel

SR:rh