

# Public Libraries and Access to Justice

Austin Texas, January 11-12, 2010

## Introduction to Posted Version of Conference Materials for Replication Use



**Prepared by the Working Groups of the Self-Represented Litigation Network  
General Package Editor: Richard Zorza**

Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the National Center for State Courts, or the funders or participants in the Self-Represented Litigation Network.

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## **Introduction to Materials as Posted**

These are the materials from a Conference held in January 2010 on Public Libraries and Access to Justice by the Self-Represented Litigation Network of the National Center for State Courts.

The Self-Represented Litigation Network is an open and growing group of organizations and working groups dedicated to fulfilling the promise of a justice system that works for all, including those who cannot afford lawyers and who go to court on their own. The Network brings together a range of organizations including courts, and access to justice organizations in support of innovations in services for the self-represented. It operates in a number of Working Groups and is hosted by the National Center for State Courts under a Memorandum of Understanding. Participant organizations are listed in the materials.

We hope that you will find the Conference energizing, and helpful. Above all, we hope that it will cement your commitment to the use of public libraries for access to justice, and that it will help you build the partnerships and give you the tools to be effective in this work.

Public libraries are critical access points to government institutions. As times get tougher, it becomes more and more important that people have libraries where they can find out how to protect their rights and navigate the complexities of our society. It also becomes more and more important that libraries can show how important and effective they are at meeting this need.

We particularly want to thank the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for their grant to the National Center for State Courts, which has made this Conference possible, as well as the Legal Services Corporation, which, by combining this with its own Technology Initiative Grants Conference, has made the gathering possible, and the National Center for State Courts itself, which hosts the Self-Represented Litigation Network.

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A listing of materials posted in this packet is below.

**Listing of Materials**

**All Are Available at**

**[http://www.selfhelpsupport.org/library/folder.299603-Austin Conference Materials](http://www.selfhelpsupport.org/library/folder.299603-Austin%20Conference%20Materials)**

**0. Overall Information**

**Listing of Materials, Conference Agenda**

This is this document, and it includes a general description, including of copyright issues, a listing of the available package, and the Agenda and faculty of the Austin Conference, for possible use as model.

**Listing of Faculty**

This document includes biographies and e-mails of the faculty. They may be of use in obtaining speakers for a conference.

**1. Welcome and Introduction**

**PowerPoint #1: Welcome and Introduction**

This power point summarizes the introduction as give at the conference, and can be used as a template for other gatherings.

**Principal Products of the SLRN**

This document lists the main products of the Self-Represented Litigation Network. Most are available on [www.selfhelpsupport.org](http://www.selfhelpsupport.org).

***Ensuring Access to Justice in Tough Economic Times***

This paper, by Richard Zorza, and Maryland State Court Administrator Frank Broccolina, summarizes a number of low cost approaches to solving the access to justice problem. It appeared in Judicature.

**2. The Role of Public Libraries in Assisting Patrons in Locating and Using Legal Information and Tools.**

**PowerPoint #2: The Role of Public Libraries**

This PowerPoint summarizes the role of libraries in the access to justice solution. It tells a number of stories, discusses the benefits of collaboration for the varied stakeholders, and summarizes the online tools available from these partners as access to justice tools for library patrons

**How May We Help You PowerPoint, New Jersey**

This Point was prepared for New Jersey Library staff, and is a useful model for staff outreach.

***The Law and You, Ohio Bar Download site screenshot***

This screenshot shows how the Ohio bar provides resources of use.

**Ohio Handy Legal and Government Websites**

This listing is of use as a training sample.

**Austin Court Access Map**

A great model of a court easing access through a map.

**Texas Forms Handout**

Texas makes sure that resources are used.

**3. What Public Librarians Can Do: Ethical and Legal Issues**

**PowerPoint #3: What Public Librarians *Can Do***

This important PowerPoint, prepared by Montana Law Librarian Judy Meadows, explores and clarifies the rules governing appropriate informational assistance that can be provide by library staff.

**Can/Cannot Handout for Patrons**

This is the handout that Montana uses to communicate these ideas to patrons.

**4. Online Legal Problem Solving: Using Varied Legal Information and Tools**

**PowerPoint #4: Online Legal Problem Solving**

This PowerPoint gives examples from a wide variety of legal areas, of how such assistance can be provided. Before you can use this effectively, you will need to identify the appropriate local and state resources to which patrons can be directed.

**FAQ and Links Template**

This document is a template that you can use to identify the online resources that will be most helpful to your patrons. It should not be used without review by an attorney familiar with the law of your jurisdiction. Session Nine will deal with the customization process.

**Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Public Library Law and Government Subject Areas – Website Links**

This document shows model links for one county. It is the kind of thing that can be produced using the FAQ nd Links Template.

**Limited English Proficiency, Federal Agency Brochure**

This federal brochure outlines the rights of those with limited English proficiency, and the obligations of government agencies.

**Executive Order 13166**

This Executive Order provides much of the law governing limited English proficiency issues.

**Memorandum of Agreement Between Maine Judicial Branch and United States**

This Memorandum of Agreement between is illustrative of the Agreements and rules that are being put in place under the Executive Order.

**5. Team Meetings**

**PowerPoint #5: Team Meetings**

This PowerPoint can be used to set up and manage team or group meetings. We encourage regional meetings whenever possible.

**Team Planning and Reporting Tool**

This tool is designed to assist regional groups plan and report on their plans.

**6. Technical and Privacy Issues in Public Library Legal Information Services**

**PowerPoint #6: Technical and Privacy Issues**

This PowerPoint discusses the technical requirements that must be met in order to make use of the online tools that are being discussed. It also covers how to protect the online and library privacy of patrons.

**7. The Roles of Public Libraries in the Access to Justice Movement**

**PowerPoint #7: The Role of Public Libraries in the Access to Justice Movement**

This PowerPoint discusses the role of public libraries in the access to justice movement, and how public libraries can become more involved in the state and local planning processes that are already in place. A very fine article on Access to Justice Commissions is online at:

<http://www.abanet.org/legalservices/sclaid/atjresourcecenter/downloads/grayechols.pdf>.

**8. Legal Aid, Law Library, and Court Collaborations for Public Libraries**

**PowerPoint #8: Legal Aid, Law Library, and Court Collaborations for Public Libraries**

This important PowerPoint gives examples of partnering, discusses the benefits, and sets out model goals for partnerships in access to justice.

**Maine Partnering Article**

This article tells the Maine partnering story.

**Illinois Partnering Materials**

Several documents from Illinois show how partnering works in practice.

**9. Workshop on Customizing the FAQ**

**PowerPoint #9: Customizing the FAQ**

This PowerPoint introduces the process of customizing the FAQ for a state or local area. It emphasizes the need for expert input, and organization.

**State Customization Resources**

State by state resources for customization.

**Law for the Layperson Publishers**

A summary of publishers to provide materials for use by those without lawyers.

**Website Directories of Potential Collaborators for Public Libraries**

A companion listing of website directories of use in customizing the FAQ.

**10. Role Playing of Teaching the Materials**

**PowerPoint #10: Role Playing of Teaching the Materials**

Leadership comes with practice. This PowerPoint structures having all participants experiment with being a presenter, and getting feedback.

**Instructions for Group Activity**

Instructions for the above.

**11. Planning for the Future**

**PowerPoint #11: Planning for the Future**

This PowerPoint structures a concluding session in which the group as a whole plans for its role in promoting access to justice.

**Future Ideas and Evaluation**

This document is the reporting tool used to evaluate the conference and report participants' ideas for the future.

