

Ventura Superior Court  
Self Represented Litigants Action Plan  
September, 2002

1. Promote and Support Community Based Efforts to Increase Legal Assistance and Resources Available to Pro Pers

Objective: encourage community-based organizations to provide more legal information and assistance.

Action items:

- Encourage community-based organizations to provide more services.
- Support community based efforts to provide additional legal information and services by:
  - ✓ providing assistance securing facilities such as schools or libraries where local attorneys and volunteers can assist pro pers
  - ✓ creating and distributing informational brochures and videos. The court will secure educational materials from the AOC, other California Trial Courts, and other legal and justice affiliated organizations
  - ✓ notifying court users and the community of legal resources available
- Study the impact of accommodating unbundled legal services. Review Orange and Contra Costa County's policies and procedures for best practices. Review forms currently used by other jurisdictions in cases with limited scope representation.
- Cooperate with the local private bar to expand the existing referral network of attorneys providing pro bono services.

2. Train Staff to Serve Pro Pers Effectively and with Cultural Competency

Objective: provide staff and judicial training regarding pro pers and related issues

Action items:

- Human Resources will incorporate pro per issues into new employee orientation staff training and create a pro per training module for existing employees.
- Participate in training and enrichment opportunities provided by the AOC and CJER to educate staff and judges in order to better understand pro per litigants behavior in court.

3. Increase the Court's Public Education and Outreach

Objective: make the public more aware of existing services provided by the court and community-based organizations.

Action items:

- Explore a program to issue public service announcements on radio and local television. Review Kern County Superior Court's policies and procedures for best practices.
- Continue to strengthen partnerships between the court and community-based organizations whenever possible.

#### 4. Utilize Technology to Increase Pro Pers Court Access

Objective: use technology to increase the court's availability and accessibility

Action items:

- Review the ICAN system of interactive kiosks created by Orange County for best practices.
- Continue working with the AOC to create electronic guardianship forms, and then make them available at kiosks and online.
- Expand the courts web site, providing more links to other useful sites.
- Review the feasibility and benefit of placing additional kiosks within the community.

#### 5. Accommodate Non-English Speaking Pro Pers

Objective: make forms, materials, and assistance available in languages other than English, especially Spanish.

Action items:

- Continue ongoing efforts to make all forms and materials available in English and Spanish.
- Continue ongoing efforts to hire more bilingual personnel.
- Explore a program to use volunteer, noncertified interpreters in civil and family law proceedings to increase community access.

#### 6. Use Legal Interns to Increase Pro Per Access at Minimal Cost

Objective: create an internship program emphasizing community assistance

Action item:

- Create a structured, supervised internship program with an emphasis on community assistance, and establish relationships with local law schools to find qualified participants and to promote the internship program.