

Elkins Family Law Implementation Task Force
Meeting Minutes
Judicial Council Conference Center
October 12, 2010

Present: Hon. Laurie D. Zelon, Chair, Hon. Sue Alexander, Hon. Lorna A. Alksne, Hon. Louise Bayles-Fightmaster, Ms. Linda Daeley, Ms. Ana María García, Mr. José Octavio Guillén, Hon. Mark A. Juhas, Mr. Drew Liebert, Hon. Patricia M. Lucas, Ms. Lorie S. Nachlis, Hon. Kimberly J. Nystrom-Geist, Mr. Stephen Ruben, Hon. Nancy Wieben Stock, Mr. Peter Walzer

Staff: Dr. Charlene Depner, Ms. Bonnie Rose Hough, Ms. Katie Howard, Mr. Joseph Nguyen, Ms. Deana Piazza, Ms. Patricia Rivera, Ms. Nancy Taylor, Ms. Julia Weber

Chair Justice Laurie Zelon called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. by describing the overarching goals for the task force.

The task force will be providing an interim report to the council by December 2010, as requested by the council at its April 23 meeting.

Members and staff provided information on aspects of the Elkins Family Law Task Force recommendations that have been implemented so far including educational programs for family court services mediators and judicial officers, the Family and Juvenile Law Summit and Beyond the Bench Conference. Significant aspects of the recommendations are reflected in both Assembly Bill (AB) 939, and AB 1050, both effective January 1, 2011. The task force will continue to work closely with members of the Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee, the State Bar, and the Executive Committee of the Family Law Section (FLEXCOM) to ensure coordination of implementation.

A comprehensive review of local rules of court and forms has also been undertaken as part of the implementation effort.

Related efforts include the Sargent Shriver Civil Counsel Act Implementation Committee, which Justice Zelon is vice-chairing. The Administrative Office of the Courts' website is being completely revised and as a result a revised Self-Help Web site, with approximately 4,000 pages of new content in both Spanish and English, is scheduled to be launched by January 2011. As part of that effort, staff is looking at existing videos about family law matters and editing clips for the new You Tube California Courts channel.

Members then provided information on working group efforts which will be included in the interim report to the Judicial Council.

The task force recessed for lunch and then divided into working group meetings from 1:15 to 2:45 p.m.

Working Group Meetings

The *Rules and Forms* working group discussed rules required by AB 939.

The *Process and System Improvement* working group conferred on how to best simplify forms and orders on findings and dissolution, and how to best implement case management requirements.

The *Judicial Branch and Litigant Education* discussed various efforts already underway to provide education on children's participation. The group discussed judicial education, and public and litigant education. Members discussed the importance of providing education on family law generally.

The *Research and Workload Data* working group did not meet due to two of its four members being absent and another needing to chair a different working group meeting. The fourth member is also a member of the Judicial Branch and Litigant Education group and joined that meeting.

Members regrouped and reported back after their individual meetings, and discussed next steps for the implementation work.

Members passed around a list detailing their leadership roles within affiliated organizations so that task force working groups could work collaboratively on implementing the recommendations, and on whom Justice Zelon could call as needed.

Staff provided information on the rules and projects (RUPRO) process for the upcoming work.

Members discussed the proposal being drafting to fulfill the legislative mandate for a rule addressing live testimony. A draft will be circulated in preparation for the proposal to be submitted to the RUPRO committee.

The Elkins Family Law Implementation Task Force meeting adjourned at 4:24 p.m.