

Innovation Initiative
Indiana Office of Judicial Administration
Fuse Center
February 14, 2024
Minutes

1. **Attendees:** Mag. Molly Briles, Judge Steve Creason, Mary DePrez, Chuck Dunlap, Justin Forkner, Judge Kim Hall, Prof. Bill Henderson, Bernice Corley, Chris Naylor, Judge Jaime Oss, Alexandria Hanauer Pittman, Bob Rath, Judge Sam Scheele, Joe Skeel, Brad Skolnik, Judge Leanna Weissman
Guests: Abbie Bush, John Floreancig, Jon Laramore, Scott Wylie, Megan Stewart, Jane Dall Wilson
Staff: Amanda Wishin, Kate Mead, Janelle O'Malley, Phyllisia Gant

2. **Justice Reform opportunities from the perspective of civil legal aid organizations:** Civil legal aid organizations presented various ideas for committee discussion. Justice Molter welcomed the Committee to reach out if they are interested in working on any projects discussed.
 - a. **Cell phones in courts** – Jon Laramore presented that unrepresented litigants need their cell phones to calendar the next hearing, make calls if they are running late or need a ride, and if they have evidence on their phone. The issues for the courts are security and impermissible recording.
 - b. **Swearing in new attorneys** – John Floreancig presented that the 5-6 weeks between bar passage and swearing in is frustrating to legal aid providers who need those new attorneys as soon as possible. Brad Skolnik stated that it is the policy of the Supreme Court that no applicants can be admitted until the date of the ceremony and once admitted they cannot participate in the ceremony, however, ACE is trying to move the ceremony up so that it is only 3 weeks after bar passage.
 - c. **Remote hearings** – John Floreancig presented that legal aid could help throughout the state with more efficiency if attorneys knew that they would not need to drive to hearings. He proposed that an attorney from legal aid would be considered “good cause shown” under Admin. Rule 14. Bernice Corley suggested that public defenders also fall under that exception.
 - d. **Text reminders** – Scott Wylie, aided by Janelle O'Malley, presented that sending text reminders of hearings increases appearance rates dramatically. Mr. Wylie suggested changing the appearance form so that it says, “cell phone” instead of just “phone number” to help collect more cell phone numbers. Mary DePrez noted that court staff can also track if the text message was received.
 - e. **Approval of forms** – Abbie Bush discussed the forms available at indianalegalhelp.org. She noted that the 150 Indiana Bar Foundation kiosks across the state direct people to the forms, which were all approved by the Coalition for Court Access. The issue is that some courts are not accepting the forms, rejected by instruction of the clerk or judge.

- f. **Eviction/ejection** – Jon Laramore presented this issue as a request for judicial education. Judges confuse the statutory framework for ejection and eviction. Either can be used in a residential eviction context, but some plaintiffs and judges are using the worst parts of each process for defendants.
3. **Next meeting:** March 13, 2024 (remote); May 8, 2024 (remote); June 12, 2024 (in person)
Note: the meeting of April 10, 2024 (in person) has been cancelled, as it overlaps with the annual Spring Judicial College presented by the Indiana Office of Court Services.