



# MINNESOTA JUDICIAL BRANCH

## Legal Paraprofessional Pilot Project Implementation Committee

### Meeting Summary

October 28, 2019 | 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

#	Topic
1.	<b>Welcome</b>
2.	<b>Additional Discussion of Preliminary Survey Response Updates</b> <p>The committee reviewed a summary of the survey comments. Committee members commented on the diversity of opinions and responses as interesting but not very helpful in narrowing down the approach for the pilot project.</p> <p>Members also noted that it was surprising to see how many responders didn't seem to understand what paralegals are already permitted to do under current rules.</p> <p>A number of responders indicate a lack of awareness about what the pilot project is meant to accomplish and how, specifically using attorney supervision. Instead, responders seemed to think the approach is to send paralegals into court unsupervised. The committee sees this as a critical communication point in order to get buy-in. Suggestions included holding meetings with various groups of stakeholders to ensure understanding and awareness.</p>
3.	<b>Focus Group Update</b> <p>Several people volunteered to participate in the focus group; a good variety of attorneys and paralegals. Committee members provided input about what kind of information we want to elicit from the attendees. Suggestions included, ideas for the structure of the pilot, identify gaps in services that might be filled with this project, qualifications for attorney and paralegal participants.</p>
4.	<b>Pilot Structure and Criteria Brainstorming</b> <p>The committee members brainstormed ideas for the pilot project. Ideas shared included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify a team that includes court representation (judge, court administrator, both) + paralegal + lawyer. Some district court judges might be willing to support actions in their courts.</li><li>• Consider the option of having many types of pilots in a few different areas of law, with different structures to test more options, get more feedback, and see varied results for measuring the success of the process.</li><li>• Does an option similar to the "sandbox" that Utah is doing seem feasible in MN?</li></ul> <p>Thinking about the market-based options, the committee discussed housing dispute cases for association disputes, boundary line issues, contract for deed cases. All can affect individual rights, affordable housing, and can prevent homelessness. These may have more economic incentive than LL/T.</p>



# MINNESOTA JUDICIAL BRANCH

Members generally agree that family law is an area that will provide the easiest and/or clearest market-based approach. Paralegals generally bill at about 50% the hourly rate of the attorney.

## 5. Other Comments / Discussion

The co-chairs confirmed the decision from September meeting to remove debtor-creditor disputes from the pilot project. Members confirmed agreement.

Other questions, areas for additional analysis:

- How to connect paralegals with attorneys who can supervise the work if there is not a current attorney & paralegal relationship through either employment or contract?
- Members think there is absolute willingness to make use of corporate or private firm paralegals for the pilot but the training needs are high because they are not knowledgeable in the housing and family areas of law.

## Member Roster & Attendance

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Justice Paul Thissen	Co-Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Judge John Rodenberg	Co-Chair
<input type="checkbox"/>	Thomas Nelson	MSBA
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sally Dahlquist	Inver Hills Community College
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Maren Schroeder	Rochester, MN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tiffany Doherty-Schooler	Duluth, MN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pamela Wandzel	Minneapolis, MN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Christopher O. Petersen	Minneapolis, MN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bridget Gernander	State Court Administrators Office
<input type="checkbox"/>	Liz Reppe	State Law Library
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Guests:	
	▪ Ellen Bendewald, SCAO	
	▪ Hannah Reichenbach, Law Clerk	