



MINNESOTA JUDICIAL BRANCH

Legal Paraprofessional Pilot Project Implementation Committee

Meeting Summary

April 16, 2019 | 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

#	Topic	Facilitator(s)
1.	Welcome and Introductions	Justice Thissen Judge Rodenberg

The Minnesota Supreme Court Chief Justice opened the meeting with an introduction about why the Court decided to move forward with this pilot, noting that it is because it is our mission to provide access to justice and there are case types that have high numbers of self-represented litigants on both or one side of the case. She thanked the members for being there and serving on the committee. Members introduced themselves.

2.	Review the Supreme Court Order	Justice Thissen Judge Rodenberg
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One of the reasons for the pilot is to test this practice out and try to determine the best approach for Minnesota. The Committee is charged with establishing a pilot effort.

3.	Overview of the MSBA Task Force	Steven Marchese, MSBA
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There is a lot of information on the Task Force available on the MSBA site:
<https://www.mnbar.org/about-msba/leadership/msba-committees/alternative-legal-models-task-force>

The Task Force’s goal was to identify an easier and lower cost way to provide access to justice. They looked at three different models; the Washington state model (which was the only one in existence at the time); a statutory model focused on forms completion; and the British Columbia system where paralegals operate under a licensed attorney. The best summary of what the Task Force reviewed is in Appendix C of the final report.

Some of the considerations reviewed by the Task Force that will be relevant to this committee as well include oversight models, IOLTA, practice rules, exams and licensing, ethics rules, length of time to implement, and ability to fill the new role with qualified individuals.

Lessons Learned:

- There is room to think creatively about the roles of the participants.
- There is opportunity to address rural community needs.



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4. Report on Examples from other States

Steve Johnson, Utah
Steve Crossland, Washington

Steve Johnson, Utah

[\(https://www.utcourts.gov/utc/limited-legal/\)](https://www.utcourts.gov/utc/limited-legal/)

Utah had an Access to Justice Task Force 4-5 years ago that looked at the three most common areas with majority of SRLs; family, landlord/tenant, and debtor/creditor (same as MN). Feels they were able to start right away because of Washington's program and experience.

Utah's LLPs are not permitted to appear in court but can in other types of hearings, e.g., arbitration. Communication and change management efforts were important. They talked about it everywhere they could, such as Bar Association meetings to ensure a shared vision. Majority of stakeholders now see this as an opportunity rather than a barrier. Law firms see it now as a way to bring more clients into their firms.

Education requirements: Need to be licensed paralegals + have a set number of hours of experience working with attorneys (500 hours for family cases and 100 hours for LL/T and debtor/creditor).

Steve Crossland, Washington

[\(https://www.wsba.org/for-legal-professionals/join-the-legal-profession-in-wa/limited-license-legal-technicians\)](https://www.wsba.org/for-legal-professionals/join-the-legal-profession-in-wa/limited-license-legal-technicians)

Their areas of need are the same as Utah and Minnesota. Eventually they would like to expand to other areas of law but have no immediate plans to do so. There are many types of legal assistance people need; some need forms help but others need advice.

Education requirements: 3 years; 2 years at a community college and 1 year (3rd year) through the law schools. LLLTs can become licensed where they live, this addresses assistance needs in rural areas that are often under-served because large school loans means new attorneys are probably not going to move to rural areas. This program also requires LLLTs to have liability insurance and they are members of the state bar association with a seat on the board.

Both guests responded similarly to a question about what kind of resistance they encountered and how did they handle it. Both stated they encountered resistance from stakeholders, primarily attorneys. Both states reported using standard change management techniques, which primarily included outreach efforts to bar associations, events, and practitioners. It also included ensuring that stakeholders understood that the program is helping unrepresented people so lawyers are not losing clients to the program.

5. Roadmap for Implementation Committee Tasks

Justice Thissen
Judge Rodenberg

According to the order, the committee needs to pick an area of law to focus on for the pilot. Members agreed that to do this the committee should gather information about all three areas to inform the decision.



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The committee agreed that the next few meetings should focus on one of the areas, providing the committee with a deeper dive into the topic. This will include overviews by subject matter experts, data on the topic (raw and percentage based + anything else that is relevant for that topic).

6. Future Meeting Schedule

Justice Thissen
Judge Rodenberg

Staff will send a poll to members to select the best day of the week for meetings. Length of meeting each month will extend to half-days to accommodate the volume of information to be covered.

7. Adjourn

Member Roster & Attendance

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Justice Paul Thissen | Co-Chair |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Judge John Rodenberg | Co-Chair |
| <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> | Christopher O. Peterson | Minneapolis, MN |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Bridget Gernander | State Court Administrators Office |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Liz Reppe | State Law Library |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Guests in Attendance: In-person – Steven Marchese, MSBA; By phone – Steve Johnson, Utah and Steve Crossland, Washington | |