

December Bar News

MINOR SETTLEMENTS/SETTLEMENTS FOR INCAPCITATED PERSONS

At the time a settlement GAL is requested from the Ex Parte Commissioner, please advise the court of: the nature of the case e.g. products liability, medical malpractice, personal injury based on automobile accident, etc., any unusual issues and whether there are multiple minors or incapacitated persons.

NOTE FOR ELECTRONIC COMMISSIONER/JUDGE CALENDAR CHANGE

“Nature of Hearing” descriptions will soon be appearing on all electronically filed Notes for Commissioner’s Calendar and Note for Judge’s Motion Calendar. Once implemented, you will be required to select one or more “Nature of Hearing” description options from the LINX web page in order to file a Note and set a Show Cause or Motion proceeding. Examples of some of those options are: “Child Support”, “Spousal Maintenance”, “Parenting Plan”. Updates regarding implementation will be posted on Superior Court’s Home web page and the LINX Public web site.

REMINDER PCLSPR 94.04(c)(2)

Notice and Hearing: **“...A copy of the Note for Commissioner’s Calendar shall be attached to each set of copies delivered to the Commissioner Services Department. In the upper right-hand corner mark "Working Copies" and who is delivering the papers (moving party or opposing party).** Anyone e-filing documents shall be responsible for ensuring working copies are timely provided to the Commissioner Services Department. A fax or email transmittal of working copies shall not be acceptable delivery. (Emphasis added)

SETTLEMENT CONFERENCES

PCLR 3 (c) (1) Effective September 1, settlement conferences are still required in all cases, but judicial officers are assigned as to hold settlement conferences in the family law cases. All other cases must use an alternative dispute resolution mechanism to comply with the settlement conference requirement. Each judge has the discretion to ask that a settlement conference judicial officer be assigned to a case. Please review your case schedule and contact the appropriate department prior to contacting Commissioner Services Department.

EX PARTE PROCEDURES

As a reminder, the court file is required for all matters being presented. Please check in with Records in Room 110 to have the court file brought over to Ex Parte Dept. As you enter the Ex Parte courtroom, fill out the form slip and give it to the Court Clerk. The Court will call you in the order that it is received. Ex Parte Department are open on Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

SUPERIOR COURT RETREAT

The Court, ever mindful of the tight budget, held its minimal cost 2009 retreat at Pilgrim Firs Conference Center in mid October. It was beautiful in its rustic environs which included the sleeping cabins. Part of the retreat was devoted to a review of the Family

Court, its progress, strategic plan and statistics. The Commissioners' Report was one of heavy workload with little reprieve in sight. Discussion was also devoted to the Criminal Case Backlog reduction efforts including the Sexual Assault Unit project. The Judges also touched on the issue of civil/criminal case rotation and panel assignments. Juvenile Court reported on their issues and difficulties with the requested 2010 budget reductions. Statistics as they pertained globally to the work in Superior Court was discussed by the Administrator as were the many achievements in 2009. Presiding Judge Chushcoff ended the retreat with a review of the issues he has encountered this past year and a descriptive (humorous) video depicting his first year as Presiding Judge.

GUARDIAN AD LITEM CERTIFIED REGISTRIES

Applications for the RCW 26.09 Guardian ad Litem/Parenting Investigator and the RCW 11.88 Guardian ad Litem Certified Registries will be accepted January 1, 2010 through March 24, 2010. Both Certified Registries are effective July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011. You may obtain your application packet in Superior Court Administration, 334 County City Building, Tacoma, WA 98402 or on the website at: www.co.pierce.wa.us/superior

Only applications with the revision date of 11/9/09 will be accepted. All new applicants and former registry members not currently serving on the RCW 11.88 Certified Registry and the RCW 26.09 Guardian ad Litem/Parenting Investigator Certified Registry must complete the "new applicant" application packet and supply all written documentation including a resume. All current members on the Certified Registries must complete the "renewal" application packet, submit a resume, and an updated residential history. The application period closes on Friday, March 24, 2010 at 4:30 p.m. All application must be submitted by the close of business to the Superior Court Administrator. No late applications shall be considered. If you have not attended the required training by the application closing date, you may timely submit your application and indicate when and where you will be attending the training. Once the training is completed, you must immediately forward a copy of your Certificate of Attendance to the Superior Court Administrator.

2009 PRO TEM SETTLEMENT VOLUNTEERS

Attention Superior Court Pro Tem Volunteers: Please put January 27, 2010, on your planner for noon in Room 100 for an appreciation lunch for all your hard work in 2009. Your contribution to the justice system is truly appreciated by those who have benefited from your good work. Scores of civil cases have been settled in a timely fashion which would otherwise still be floundering in the system. We will have year end figures to share. The Pro Tem Committee hopes to see you there. Please call 798.3605 to RSVP.

WANTED ATTORNEYS WILLING TO REPRESENT MINORS IN SEXUAL ASSAULT PROTECTION ORDER (PRO BONO)

If you are willing to represent minors in sexual assault protection order matters, pro bono, please submit your interest to Andra Motyka, Superior Court Administrator, 930 Tacoma Avenue South, Room 334, Tacoma, WA 98402.

COURTHOUSE TOUR VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Pierce County Superior Court is hoping to find energetic people that have some time to share with their community as a Courthouse Tour Guide. Introducing students to court and court proceedings can be a life changing experience and volunteers are critical to make this happen. This opportunity is a rewarding and enjoyable community service for the children and youth of Pierce County. Training will be provided. Retired educators and people from the legal community are encouraged to apply. For more information, please call 798-3654, press 7.