

February 2011

COURTROOM 100 COMMISSIONER RELOCATION

Matters normally heard before the Court Commissioner in Room 100 will be heard in Courtroom 2A possibly through March 2011. **Please watch for signs.**

JUDGE GARY STEINER RETIREMENT PARTY

A retirement party for Judge Steiner has been set for Friday, February 25 at the Fircrest Golf Club. Social hour will start at 5:30 with dinner at 6:30. Cost is \$40 per person. Please send your reservation and payment to TPCBA.

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 3, 2011 through March 24, 2011. Both Certified Registries are effective July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012. 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 12/1/2010 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 Thursday, March 24, 2011 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.

JUVENILE COURT DEPENDENCY FILINGS

Dependency filings (child abuse and neglect cases) at Juvenile Court have hit an all time high in 2010. There was 55% increase for 2009! This has had a tremendous impact on the Attorney General’s Office, Department of Assigned Counsel, Children’s Administration, Guardian ad litem (GAL)/Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA—volunteers), and of course the Court. The numbers continue to remain steady at our “new normal,” meaning, we continue to see large numbers of filings. The stakeholders meet regularly and many changes and adjustments have been made to try to address the huge increase. We appreciate the collaborative efforts of all the parties and look forward to continuing dialogues and improvements in 2011 to deal with the combination of skyrocketing numbers of filings and the increasingly glum government budget outlooks.

SEXUAL ASSAULT PETITIONS

Beginning February 7, Department 12 (Judge Arend) will begin conducting a six month pilot program regarding sexual assault petitions as follows: Commissioners will continue to handle

the initial ex parte hearing and the 14 day hearing. If a temporary protection order is signed at the 14 day hearing, the case will be assigned to Judge Arend for case management and scheduled for an Assignment of Trial Date proceeding. The parties will be directed to court administration (Room 334) for the issuance of a trial assignment date. An Order Setting Case Schedule will be printed and given to the parties with the Assignment of Trial Date.

FILLABLE PDF CRIMINAL DOCUMENTS

The following Superior Court criminal forms are fill-able PDF documents: Felony Non-Sex Plea, Felony Sex Plea, Misdemeanor Plea, the Attachment B and Criminal Scheduling Order. The forms are available online at www.co.pierce.wa.us/superior. To access the fill-able PDFs select the “Forms” link located under the “Information” section. The fill-able forms allow the user to fill in the pertinent information, save and print the form for proper submission to Superior Court. If you have questions regarding the use of the fill-able forms please contact DCM at 798.2988

COURT INFORMATION DESK VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Pierce County Superior Court, District Court and Tacoma Municipal Court are seeking volunteers to work at the information desks on the 1st and 2nd floors of the County City Building. The goal of this project is to assist building visitors in finding what they need and to provide general information to anyone visiting the building. Volunteers are requested to make a minimum commitment of 5 hours per week. Volunteer service is contingent upon successfully passing a background check. The program was funded by a grant from the State Administrative Office of the Courts. If you are interested in this program or know of someone who might be, please contact Mary Madden at Pierce County Superior Court; (253) 798-2991 or email at mmadden@co.pierce.wa.us.

LOCAL RULES

BY Judge Elizabeth Martin, Chair, Pierce County Local Rules Committee and Charles Johnston Bar Representative, Pierce County Local Rules Committee.

It is my pleasure to be writing to the members of the TPCBA as Chair of the Pierce County Superior Court Local Rules Committee. I am joined in this article by our bar representative, Charles Johnston, who recently replaced Heather Young. I want to extend a public thank you to both Ms. Young and to Mr. Johnston. They have been faithful in their attendance and commitment to this hard-working committee. Their input is invaluable as we work collaboratively to address issues of common interest to the bench and bar with respect to our Pierce County Local Rules.

Together, Mr. Johnston and I wanted to bring you up to date on issues currently being considered by the Local Rules Committee. We are in the process of drafting a new local general rule to address anticipated mandatory e-filing of documents being implemented by the Pierce County Clerk’s Office. If approved, this rule would be published in September 2011 to take effect January 1, 2012. Several other local rules will likewise need to be revised to reflect the implementation of e-filing. Other issues which have been on our agenda include possible implementation of page limits for civil (non-family law) motions. We have looked at comparable

rules in other jurisdictions within our State in this regard. Before we proceeded any further on this issue, however, we want your input. If you have strong feelings one way or the other regarding page limits on civil motions, please contact either Charles Johnston at (253) 473-3090 or me at (253) 798-6630.

We are always interested in input from the members of the TPCBA. If you have issues you'd like to have addressed in the context of Local Rules, please feel free to contact one of us at any time. We expect proposed revised rules to be submitted to members of the local bar for a 45-day comment period by not later than April 2011.