

The Hamilton County Court of Domestic Relations predicts that the future of court operations will continue to evolve with further innovations utilizing remote technologies. The Supreme Court of Ohio technology grant provided much needed capital to allow for the purchasing of laptops and videoconferencing software licensing to even allow hearings to be held off-site, as needed.

It is the Court's goal to reduce foot traffic in and out of 800 Broadway while acknowledging that we will never completely eliminate it. Outlined below are a few of the Court's changed processes that further illustrate our efforts to reach this goal.

Initial scheduling conferences are being held via telephone with the use of the Court's dedicated conference line, [513-946-9101](tel:513-946-9101).

Merits hearings are heard via telephone or video conference depending on the technology available to the parties.

Most of the Court's work in the Dispute Resolution Department is being completed utilizing telephone and video conferencing capabilities.

Additionally, the Court continues to expand the use of video conferencing for all types of hearings, even contested hearings. To that end, the Court is looking to establish a small work group to examine best practices related to the proper exchange of exhibits, troubleshooting connectivity issues, utilization of interpretative services, etc.

This work group will be led by Judge Amy Searcy and will include Administrator Lisa Gorrasi, Administrative Magistrate Jeremy Richards, IT Manager Don Ammann, a CSEA attorney, a Legal Aid attorney, and a member of the practicing DR bar. It is expected that a "best video conference practices" memo will be available by September 30, 2020 based on the recommendations of the members of this work group. **If you are interested in being considered for this group, please contact Lisa Gorrasi.**

In other news, the partnership between our Court and The Children's Home of Cincinnati is going strong and the Family Visitation Center is once again serving families in need of supervised visits. Recently, the Ohio Supreme Court Civil Justice Fund notified The Children's Home that they are the recipients of a \$25,000 grant to fund visits for low-income families. This is extremely good news as the need is very high for this population.

Also, to address the needs of low-income families in Hamilton County, we are planning for the virtual reopening of the Court's Family Law Clinic and are seeking volunteer attorneys. The visits with litigants will be via telephone and will be scheduled in advance. The court will facilitate the telephone connectivity and attorneys may stay in their own office, if they so desire. For those attorneys who prefer to work in our Clinic setting, the Court will make offices available. **If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Lisa Gorrasi.**

I would like to take a moment to thank the dedicated staff of the Court who have pivoted their work processes to align with the requirements of numerous government and judicial orders and have continued to positively serve the community of Hamilton County.

Sincerely,

Administrative Judge Jon H. Sieve