

LSBA Legal Services for Persons with Disabilities Committee

May 29, 2020

Minutes

Attendees:

- Garret Scott DeReus Bizer & DeReus, LLC
- Lauren Elizabeth Godshall Tulane University Law School (co-chair)
- Margot E Hammond Attorney at Law
- Elena M Perez, Southeast LA Legal Services (co-chair)
- Monte T Mollere, LA State Bar Association
- Steven David Reed Southeast Louisiana Legal Services
- Nicholas S Russell Louisiana Guardianship Services
- Dayna Ryan Theus, Grisham, Davis & Leigh, LLC
- Derek Warden Attorney at Law
- Debra Judith Weinberg, Disability Rights Louisiana

1. Welcome & Introductions

- Minutes from the April 3, 2020 meeting approved without objection.

2. COVID-19 Updates

- During the last meeting, various COVID-19-related resources were shared. SLLS continues to post COVID-related resources on their web page under “Blog”, which can be accessed [here](#).
- Disability Rights Louisiana also has a [COVID-19 Resource page](#) with helpful links to information and resources related to the pandemic and not just legal resources.

3. Disability Law CLE 2020

- Given COVID-19 and social distancing requirements, the committee supports moving the CLE to an online platform as long as it can be accessible to the disability community. Read more about how to make virtual meetings and events accessible [here](#).

- Note that the Supreme Court waived online CLE restrictions through the end of the year. The committee could host a series of CLEs between November and December. There has been some pushback from local bars regarding free CLEs, so staff will need to check with CLE department to see if we can offer it for free.
 - Programming – Last year’s topics included: Clients & Capacity; Attorney Obligations & the ADA; and Public Benefits. What topics would this committee like to focus on this year? Derek Warden has offered to present on the history of the disability rights movement.
4. Justice Index 2020 – The LSBA is helping to answer a survey for National Center for Access to Justice’s Justice Index 2020. It includes questions related to 4 areas of information in Louisiana Courts: Attorney Access, Language Access, Self Help, and Disability Access. The Disability Access survey includes 29 questions regarding service delivery, court services, etc. We’re hoping members of this committee could help us answer the Disability Access survey by the end of June. The last Justice Index results can be viewed at: <https://justiceindex.org/>. Some of these issues may be good projects for this committee to work on in the future.
 5. Bar Journal – The committee discussed interest in submitting an article for the Bar Journal. Derek Warden offered to work on an article regarding the ADA.
 6. Policy/Legislative Updates
 - Margot Hammond is tracking legislation and will later provide a memo with updates.
 - During the last meeting, this committee discussed the proposed bills allowing for notarial acts by electronic means in light of the particular needs of persons with disabilities. Thanks to this committee, the LSBA’s Board of Governors determined it will support position for HB 274 on two conditions: (1) they add an LSBA member to the stakeholder committee, and (2) they try to make the process simpler for attorneys. You can see the publication here: <https://www.lsba.org/documents/Legislation/2020RLSBABOGPositions.pdf>. The bill was passed.

- The committee briefly discussed the current forced sterilization laws in Louisiana. Disability Rights Louisiana previously litigated the issue.

7. Upcoming Trainings

- CLE opportunity on Tenants' Rights this Wednesday, June 3, 2020 online from 11AM – 12:30 PM. This CLE is designed specifically for private practitioners who are interested in working with tenants and will specifically cover relevant laws and strategies for tenants facing extrajudicial evictions, including causes of action for wrongful evictions, evidentiary issues, quantum resources, and damages. You must register to attend—will send link [here](#).

8. Other Business

- An attorney in Alexandria has a non-indigent client looking for assistance with non-compliance with virtual meetings. Referred to Disability Rights Louisiana and Garret Dereus.

9. Adjournment