

**** Volunteer Attorneys Needed ****

Judicial Branch

Volunteer Attorney Program – Contract Collections

Chief Justice Chase T. Rogers has established re-engineering as a defined component of the second phase of the Judicial Branch's strategic plan, directing that the entire process of dispute resolution be reviewed and evaluated with the goal of better meeting the needs of the people that the Branch serves. Input from Branch stakeholders pointed out that the re-engineering of the civil justice system could not be accomplished without addressing the needs and impact of the ever-increasing number of self-represented parties in civil cases. Addressing those needs, therefore, is one of the four general areas of civil re-engineering.

As part of the efforts to address the needs of self-represented parties in civil matters, volunteer attorneys are being sought to participate in the Judicial Branch's brand-new Volunteer Attorney Program for contract collection cases. Consumer collection cases are the most voluminous civil case type pending in our courts today and they also boast a large percentage of self-represented defendants. These cases represent an enormous unmet need for legal assistance, advice and education.

This new program will be regionally based in the following Judicial District court locations:

- ❖ Bridgeport
- ❖ Harford
- ❖ New Haven
- ❖ New London
- ❖ Waterbury

The program will run every other week for a two-hour period.

The program operates under Rules 1.2 and 6.5 of the Rules of Professional Conduct where lawyers provide limited legal advice and assistance without any expectation of long-term representation. Participating attorneys do not file appearances on behalf of the self-represented parties to whom they provide advice.

Participating attorneys select the dates they are able to volunteer. The time commitment to the program is up to each individual attorney.

Participating attorneys must be in good standing in accordance with PB 2-65.

Prior experience in the area of contract collections law is sought but not required. The Judicial Branch will provide substantive training in this area of the law.

Attorneys who are interested in participating or have questions about the program should contact Krista Hess at 860-263-2734, x3043 or email Krista.Hess@jud.ct.gov