



Michigan Supreme Court
State Court Administrative Office
Michigan Hall of Justice
P.O. Box 30052
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Office of Dispute Resolution
517-373-4839

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 11, 2009
TO: CDRP Center Directors
FROM: Doug Van Epps
RE: Follow-Up Information from the Directors' Meeting

The following items serve as a brief follow-up to topics raised at the recently convened Directors' Meeting:

- 1. Small claims jurisdiction.** A question arose whether the jurisdictional amount for small claims cases would be increasing. While in the 2008 legislative term both the House and Senate approved a bill that would incrementally raise the amount, the Governor did not sign the bill. As of now, there is no increase in the jurisdictional amount, although a new bill may be reintroduced in the future.
- 2. "BOPR Cases."** Another question was what became of cases, chiefly involving unlicensed builders, formerly referred by the Bureau of Professional Regulation (BOPR)? Several years ago ODR staff suggested to BOPR staff that the level of work involved in maintaining a formal referral system was not worth the exceptionally small number of cases that reached resolution through the centers. At that time, BOPR agreed to continue informing complainants in unlicensed builder disputes about CDRP, and we are told that claimant letters do include CDRP contact information. BOPR, now a part of the Bureau of Commercial Services, would like to meet with ODR staff to look at other options for managing additional case types. We expect a meeting to be held in the near future.
- 3. Furlough days.** ODR advised that staff furlough days were likely yet this year. Subsequently, we learned that the following dates have been identified as furlough days. SCAO staff will not be available on the following dates: June 19, July 6, July 24, August 7, August 21, and September 4, 2009

4. **Foreclosure bills.** By way of update, the foreclosure bills discussed at the meetings were enacted as Public Acts 29, 30, and 31 of 2009. The Acts are attached. While ODR staff continues conversations with state agencies that are attempting to address foreclosure issues, as encouraged at the Directors' Meeting, centers should feel free to assess with local lenders and housing counselors whether the centers can be of assistance in implementing the public acts. Please let ODR staff know if you develop a referral system with a housing agency or lending institution to provide mediation services.

5. **Web archive of CDRP materials and communications.** ODR will be working with Supreme Court staff in the months ahead to develop a web archive of CDRP materials with a targeted implementation date of January 1, 2010.

6. **Veterans docket.** On the topic of courts' creating a veterans docket, ODR is currently aware of discussions taking place in Ingham County courts that would focus on the special needs of veterans.

7. **Background checks.** We hope to have available a draft center policy in the next several weeks. If subsequent to the Directors Meeting any centers have experienced any difficulty in using ICHAT or in obtaining clearances through DHS, please let us know.

8. **Approved Trainers List.** Several centers requested a roster of currently approved trainers. The attached list includes trainers of MCR 2.411 general civil, MCR 3.216 domestic relations, and approved advanced mediator program trainers. A separate list includes persons approved to provide community mediation training, in contrast to the court rule training. The application process for approval as a community mediation trainer is outlined in the CDRP Policies & Procedures Manual. If a person appearing on this roster no longer provides training for your center, please let Chris know so that the list can be updated.

9. **Agreement follow-up.** In that there may have been some confusion over whether SCAO requires centers to conduct a 60-day follow up on agreements reached, we are confirming that there is no such requirement. A separate procedure for assessing agreement compliance was instituted some time ago. Instructions for completing the agreement compliance report will continue to be circulated annually as has been done in the past.

10. **Marketing.** Enclosed are three articles appearing in the current issue of ACResolution related to marketing.

As always, feel free to contact SCAO staff if you have any questions regarding these items.