BEST PRACTICES IN MANAGING SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGATION:
GUIDELINES, STRATEGIES, AND BENCH SKILLS
March 30, 2012 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Forefront Conference Center, Waltham, MA

Program Outline

9:15 – 9:30  Opening Remarks/Framing the New Set of Challenges
- Welcome from the Program Chair, Hon. Cynthia J. Cohen & Introduction of
  Chief Justice Roderick L. Ireland
- Brief Remarks from Chief Justice Roderick L. Ireland
- Outlining the new reality: challenges, future trends, demographics in
  Massachusetts, what the solutions are, etc.

9:30 – 10:45  Big Picture Ground Rules and Getting Your Bearings
- Presenter: Professor Russell Engler, New England Law | Boston
- Discussion of the Code and case law
- The changing or evolving role of judges
- Include discussion of Turner v. Rogers
- Survey of judicial attitudes

10:45 – 11:00  Morning Break

11:00 – 11:45  Guidelines and the ICC
- Panel chaired by Hon. Peter Doyle. Also to include Professor Russell Engler,
  Hon. Paul F. LoConto (confirmed), and Hon. Diana Horan (to-be-invited).
- Discussion to include issues of process and procedure (actions that can get
  judges into trouble), rather than statistics.

11:45 – 1:00  Break-out Sessions (Part 1)
- Discussion of new techniques and skills in three or four break-out sessions
  with dynamic break-out leaders
- AM and PM break-out leaders will include: Hon. Edward F. Donnelly, Jr.,
  Geraldine S. Hines, Hon. Maureen H. Moak, Hon. Robert Ronquillo, Jr., and
  Hon. Jeffrey M. Wiorki. All are confirmed.
- Each break-out session composed of judges from all courts.
- Show video vignettes from Self-Represented Litigation Network
- Break-out leaders to be given reference list of several topics. Suggested
  topics:
1. Framing subject matter of hearing and explaining process that will be followed
2. Eliciting needed information from litigants
3. Ensuring fair and meaningful settlement agreements
4. Providing understandable oral and written decisions
5. Using effective verbal and non-verbal communication, including perhaps extreme litigants or “frequent filers.”

- Each topic to be given 20 minutes, plus an additional 20 minutes at the end to discuss a topic of the group’s choosing.

1:00 – 2:00 Lunch

2:00 – 2:30 Other Responses
- Discussion of resources available, including LAR, self-help centers, technology, etc.
- Presenters: Hon. Dina Fein, Hon. Ralph Gaits
- Throughout the day, Marnie Warner (Trial Court Law Libraries) to display what other resources are available.

2:30 – 3:45 Break-out Sessions (Part 2)

3:45 Evaluations and Adjournment
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