

Use of Remote/Virtual Services by Court Navigator Programs—Several examples (as of 2/2021)

In light of court closures and other operational disruptions occasioned by COVID 19, many court-based nonlawyer navigator programs around the country which had previously provided only in person services to help self-represented litigants (SRLs) in their basic civil legal matters have incorporated, in whole or in part, virtual or remote services. Many now provide both in person and remote services.

The following list includes examples of the ways in which some programs have altered their work toward remote services--indicating the program, a very brief description of the types of services that have been incorporated, along with contact information for the relevant program leader. In some cases, program leaders have highlighted their work on an SRLN Navigator Working Group webinar and, if so, a link is also included. You can go to the webinar that is indicated by date and simply register with your name and email. The timing on the webinar of the speakers' remarks are also indicated in the links below.

Please reach out to any of these program leaders if you want to learn about their remote services efforts or, listen to their webinar remarks, where available.

1. Court Service Centers Massachusetts Trial Court [Learn About CSCs Here](#)

Contact: Sheriece M. Perry, Acting Co-Director, Department of Support Services, 617-878-0338, sheriece.perry@jud.state.ma.us

Court Service Centers ("CSCs") have moved to a remote platform using Zoom video conferencing, enabling CSC staff and navigator interns (including high school, college and law students, among others) to duplicate services that were previously provided to SRLs in person in courthouses throughout Massachusetts. In Zoom breakout rooms, navigators, supervised by staff, assist SRLs with their court forms, answer questions, make referrals and provide language access services as needed. CSCs also provide remote services telephonically if SRLs have technological limitations. **Hear Sheriece Perry describe the services at ([Webinar](#) - Sept 2020 27:15-41:35)**

2. Housing Court Answers (New York) <http://housingcourtanswers.org/>

Contact: Jenny Laurie, Executive Director, 347-306-1158, jennyl@hcanswers.org

Nonprofit staff (nonlawyer navigators who are housing advocates), previously based at information tables in New York housing courts, have moved to a hotline and provide through a web-based commercial call center assistance to SRLs that includes help with court forms, referrals for legal services and procedural information about eviction moratoria, etc. Some staff have also been partnered with a local nonprofit to help SRLs complete DIY forms through its website. Staff are also available by telephone to answers questions and provide information about, e.g., SRL hearing notices etc. **Hear Jenny Laurie describe the services at ([Webinar](#) - Sept. 2020 5:40-15:05)**

3. Illinois JusticeCorps Illinois Bar Foundation (in partnership)

<https://www.illinoisbarfoundation.org/illinois-justicecorps>

Contact: Stacey Jonas Weiler, Program Operations Director, 608-354-2686, sweiler@iljusticecorps.org

In courts around Illinois, many AmeriCorps members (as navigators) are providing information to litigants about how and when to attend remote hearings. In some instances, SRLs benefit from a check-in phone call in advance of their hearing. Other members are staffing court information hotlines where they answer general questions about courthouse hours, assist with e-filing, and make appropriate referrals to other resources. Additionally, some navigators help answer questions and provide relevant procedural information to SRLs via a partner nonprofit's website through online chats. **Hear Stacey Weiler describe the services at ([Webinar](#) - July 2020 16:20-28:50)**

4. Legal Navigators Southwest Georgia Legal Self-Help Center www.dougherty.ga.us/lawlibrary

Contact: Legal Navigators: Nancy Long, Legal Navigator, 229-302-3295, nlong@dougherty.ga.us or Darlene Kelley tkelley@dougherty.ga.us

Self-help center based paralegal navigators use a variety of virtual tools to reach out across the state to help SRLs, including assisting SRLs and the legal community in using Zoom or WebEx for their state and interstate jury trials, virtual hearings and depositions; using email and phone to make legal referrals; and using email and social media such as Facebook to answer SRL questions. To connect to zoom services patrons and/or the legal community must give the SHC a 48-hour notice and bring the web link. **Hear Nancy Long describe the services at ([Webinar](#) - Nov. 2020 21:04-34:40)**

5. Hamilton County Municipal Help Center (Ohio) <http://cincyhelpcenter.org/>

Contact: Rob Wall, Director, 513-946-5732, wallrj@ucmail.uc.edu

A phone assistance platform enables law students and other navigators to provide a range of relevant procedural information or make referrals to SRLs. **Hear Rob Wall describe the service at ([Webinar](#) - Nov. 2020 5:30-20:30)**

6. Justice for Montanans AmeriCorps program-Montana Legal Services Association in partnership with the Montana Supreme Court Help Program <https://www.mtlsa.org/ameri-corps-state-justice/>, <https://courts.mt.gov/selfhelp>

Contact: Kiley Gage, Self Help Law Administrator, State of Montana, 406-841-2975, kiley.gage@mt.gov

AmeriCorps members(navigators) in self-help centers use a variety of virtual tools including phone, texts, email, video chats and zoom to provide information to SRLs and to help them complete relevant court forms.

7. California JusticeCorps Judicial Council of California (in partnership with CA Superior Courts)

<http://www.courts.ca.gov/justicecorps.htm>

Contact: Nicole Claro-Quinn, Senior Analyst, Judicial Council of California, 415-867-9010,

Nicole.claro@jud.ca.gov

AmeriCorps members in three major jurisdictions around the state assist SRLs with relevant neutral information, referrals, and completion of forms by phone and through video conference. Members are supervised remotely and/or in person by attorneys and other qualified staff of the court-based legal self-help centers benefiting from the placement of AmeriCorps members.