**PROBATE BENCH-BAR COMMITTEE MEETING**

Overview from November 9, 2020

Location: Zoom

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Notes from the meeting:

* Watts Hearings have resumed, so the backlog is being tackled with the use of Zoom in lieu of in-person hearings.
* GALs should update their information on CCAP if they have moved or have new contact information.
* The policy for admittance to the courthouse is described in detail on the County website <https://county.milwaukee.gov/EN/Courts>. Temperature checks are being done.
* The program for the annual probate CLE is being finalized. A link to register for the December 11 seminar follows:  [https://milwbar.memberclicks.net/cle-events](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fmilwbar.memberclicks.net%2fcle-events&c=E,1,EDMTQXJMjI6EPQHGCc9oUW2yHyyccqmlEDvnGiNjlKJ2jcz18L06scso8Q5w15_Gb2hXDvxEBypQM6ihfwmjTzk4qZ0DkGLS2bCq-WWXlv5vMI8MNYe16ik,&typo=1).

Because there will be updates from the probate court at this seminar, there may be no Bench/Bar meeting in December.

* With the spike in Covid-19 cases, facilities are returning to lock-down mode and it may be more difficult for GALs and process servers to gain access. It is important to connect with those who have the authority in the facility to grant access. Facilities may need to be reminded that if they want guardianships to proceed, then they need to provide doctors, attorneys, etc. access. Another approach is to reference the Patient Rights Statute. The petitioner should be alerted if anyone has problems with accessing the ward.
* Best practices are being developed for Zoom hearings to address disruption, Zoom bombing, waiting rooms, and identification of phone participants. Please let the judge’s clerk know how many people are expected for a hearing and their level of sophistication using Zoom. The Zoom meeting identification codes are being changed to work with phones (that may not have upper/lowercase features) and will be numeric. Commissioner Baker indicated that the same identification code is being used for the Tuesday and Thursday hearings and that is working well.
* Best practices for scheduling hearings were discussed given the delays with mail delivery, etc. To allow for the mailing of Zoom instructions, it may be best for hearings to be scheduled at least 25 days out.
* Reminder: the Supreme Court rejected the practice of electronic witnessing of wills; all will witnessing must be done in-person. <https://www.wicourts.gov/news/docs/emergencyestateplanning.pdf>

Respectfully submitted by Nancy L. Shue