



STATUS REPORT

BACKGROUND

The D.C. Courts established the Civil Legal Regulatory Reform Task Force in July 2023 to investigate the idea of allowing nonlawyers who have sufficient qualifications and training to provide certain kinds of legal help in civil cases to people whose important interests are involved. Current rules allow only licensed lawyers to provide legal advice and representation. The D.C. Courts asked the Task Force to seek broad input about that idea. Learn more about the Task Force's work and find a list of its members [HERE](#) (with subsequent amendment [HERE](#)).

CURRENT STATUS

The Civil Legal Regulatory Reform Task Force established three subcommittees. The first, the *External Outreach Committee*, is chaired by Jim Sandman, Vice Chair of the D.C. Access to Justice Commission and a Distinguished Lecturer and Senior Consultant to the Future of the Profession Initiative at the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School. This committee is examining similar efforts established or being considered in other jurisdictions to identify successes and best practices. These states include Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Oregon, Texas, Utah, and Washington. Members of this committee also participate in multi-jurisdictional convenings where developments among the various states are discussed. The *Scope and Qualifications Committee* is chaired by Toni Marsh, President of the American Association for Paralegal Education and founding director of the George Washington University paralegal studies master's degree and graduate certificate programs. This committee is developing recommendations on the substance of the District's potential approach, including program models, civil legal areas where nonlawyer assistance would especially advance access to justice, qualifications for nonlawyer participants, and the range of tasks that would fall under any program model. Finally, the *Outreach Committee* is chaired by Nancy Drane, Executive Director of the D.C. Access to Justice Commission. This committee is developing the Task Force's plan to inform and engage the District community on the potential program models and vehicles for the Task Force to receive input and feedback on considered approaches. The full Task Force meets bi-monthly to share learnings and discuss potential recommendations.

NEXT STEPS

The Task Force will begin targeted outreach in Spring 2024 to educate District stakeholders on potential approaches the Task Force is considering. Focus groups and survey tools will be utilized to collect substantive feedback on these ideas. This input will inform the Task Force's final recommendations that are anticipated to be developed and finalized by January 31, 2025.