



FILED

APR 26 2024

ELIZABETH A. BROWN
CLERK OF SUPREME COURT
BY *[Signature]*
CHIEF DEPUTY CLERK

4/26/24

The Honorable Chief Justice Elissa F. Cadish
Nevada Supreme Court
201 South Carson Street
Suite 201
Carson City, NV 89701

VIA EMAIL

ADKT 619

Dear Chief Justice Cadish,

Each year, more people are representing themselves in Nevada's family courts without the assistance of a lawyer. This is a nationwide trend; increasing numbers of self-represented litigants (SRLs) are not unique to Nevada. In response, some states have begun to experiment with ways to address the realities in the courtroom while increasing perceived fairness by all involved.

On March 22, 2024, Judge Gregory Gordon, District Court Judge for the Family Division of the Eighth Judicial District Court, presented the Access to Justice Commission with some early work that he and other Nevada judges have undertaken to meet this need.

In practice, judges see many SRLs who are completely lost in court and who do not know or follow procedural rules. At the same time, many judges regularly follow a more SRL-friendly approach to arrive at the best outcome. These judges have proposed new court rules that recognize the situation at hand and craft a workable system. If adopted, these new rules would be optional; parties must opt-in for such use, and the option would require the consent of both parties and the court. These judges' draft rules formalize and organize a practice already commonly in place, while offering clear and consistent guidelines.

SRLs in Nevada's family courtrooms continue to create a changing landscape that would benefit from change.

The Access to Justice Commission voted to support draft rules agreed to by a consensus group of Nevada family judges. A petition for one such rule draft from the Family Law Sub-Committee of the Judicial Council of the State of Nevada was advanced by Associate Justice Patricia Lee as ADKT 0619 and was filed on Monday, April 22, 2024. The Commission supports this petition in principle, and we expect any potential public hearings or discussions to arrive at an opportunity to put measures like the proposed into effect.

The Commission thanks the court for the many initiatives that it has advanced to support access to justice for all Nevadans. The continued support of these ideas are part of creating a fairer, more just Nevada.

Sincerely,

/s/ Kristina Pickering

Justice Kristina Pickering
Co-Chair
Access to Justice Commission

/s/ Lidia S. Stiglich

Justice Lidia S. Stiglich
Co-Chair
Access to Justice Commission

CC: Elizabeth A. Brown, Clerk of Supreme Court