

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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REPORT TO THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
ON THE
FAMILY DIVISION
OF THE
MAINE DISTRICT COURT



January 2011

Prepared by:

Administrative Office of the Courts

Family Division

171 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

Introduction

In 1997, the Maine Legislature passed enabling legislation, creating the Family Division of the Maine District Court. It described the Family Division's purpose as to provide "a system of justice that is responsive to the needs of families and the support of their children." 4 M.R.S.A. § 183. To help the District Court respond to the needs of families, the Legislature authorized the creation of judicial officers of limited jurisdiction, called Family Law Magistrates (Magistrates). The legislation identified case management, education for the parties, and alternative dispute resolution (mediation) as important tools in Family Division proceedings. It authorized the Maine Supreme Judicial Court to promulgate rules for the operation of the Family Division. Finally, section 183(3) directed the Judicial Branch to keep statistical records relating to the cases handled by the Family Division and report this information to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over judiciary matters in each odd-numbered calendar year. This report is submitted in accordance with that subsection.

Family Division Facts

Statutory authority. 4 M.R.S.A. § 183 outlines the parameters of the Family Division, defines the jurisdiction of magistrates, and authorizes the Maine Supreme Judicial Court to adopt rules governing the practice, procedure and administration of the Family Division.

Operational rules.

The Maine Supreme Judicial Court adopted Rules for the Family Division of the Maine District Court, effective April 6, 1998. On January 1, 2009, the Court abrogated

these rules, which had been promulgated as a separate set of rules, and in their place adopted rules for the Family Division as part of the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure. See M.R.Civ.P. Chapter XIII. The rules outline the procedures to be followed in domestic relations proceedings. They authorize magistrates to handle cases involving children (e.g. child support, divorce with children, paternity, parental rights & responsibilities) and establish a process for managing cases and addressing child support in accordance with the Child support Guidelines, key functions of the magistrates.

Magistrate duties.

Magistrates are judicial officers of limited jurisdiction. They have the authority to:

- Conduct case management conferences and issue case management orders
- Enter interim orders relating to the care and support of children when the parties are in agreement
- Preside at contested interim hearings in actions involving establishment, modification or enforcement of child support
- Preside at contested hearings concerning interim parental rights and responsibilities if both parties consent
- Modify the parental rights provisions of a protection from abuse order to conform to an order entered in a family matters proceeding
- Conduct status or pretrial conferences
- Enter a default or default judgment
- Preside at final, uncontested hearings and enter a judgment or order
- Preside at final, contested hearings when child support is the only contested issue and enter a judgment or order
- Enter post-judgment orders by agreement of the parties
- Preside at and enter final orders in contested post-judgment proceedings when child support is the only contested issue

Magistrates do not:

- Conduct proceedings in divorce actions without minor children
- Hear and decide contempt motions
- Hear and decide post-judgment motions to enforce when there are issues other than child support
- Preside at contested final hearings when there are issues other than child support, even by agreement of the parties.¹

Role of Judges.

Judges may preside over any of the matters that a magistrate is authorized to handle. In addition, judges:

- Conduct all proceedings in divorce cases not involving minor children
- Preside at contested final hearings involving minor children when there are issues in dispute other than child support
- Hear and decide contempt motions in all case types
- Manage all post-judgment motions to enforce as well as hear and decide all motions to enforce when there are issues other than child support
- Hear all post-judgment motions, other than those solely related to child support

Magistrate knowledge and experience.

All family law magistrates must be members of the Maine Bar (licensed attorneys) and have experience in family law. 4 M.R.S.A. 183(1)(A). In addition, magistrates need effective listening and communication skills, as well as knowledge of case management principles, family dynamics, child development, domestic violence and mediation. Family law magistrates must devote themselves solely to the official duties of the position, and may not engage in the private practice of law or in any employment,

¹ See p. 8 *infra*, Magistrate Pilot Project.

occupation or business interfering with or inconsistent with the discharge of their duties. 4 M.R.S.A. 183(1)(B). The Maine Code of Judicial Conduct governs them. 4 M.R.S.A. 183(1)(C).

Number and assignment of Magistrates.

There are 8 magistrates who provide statewide coverage. This involves travel to 28 District Court locations. The amount of magistrate time at each location depends on the size of that court's domestic relations caseload. Please see the Appendix for a chart listing the approximate number of magistrate days each court receives per month.

Case management conference.

The heart of the magistrate process is the case management conference. The District Court's goal is to conduct an initial case management conference in each case between 35 and 45 days after the filing of the complaint or applicable motion. In keeping with the Family Division goal to provide a system of justice that is responsive to the needs of families and the support of their children, the Magistrate's primary objective at this initial conference is to promptly address the family's situation to ensure that the children's needs are being met, including the provision of financial support. The Magistrate will also identify the issues on which the parties are in agreement and those on which they do not agree, help them understand the court process, and schedule other pre-trial events, which usually include mediation and attendance at a parent education program. Depending on the circumstances of the case, the Magistrate may conduct a hearing immediately following the conference or later in the process.

Self-represented litigants.

The initial conference is an important means of ensuring that the needs of the parties' children are addressed and it is also an opportunity for self-represented litigants to learn more about the court process and the steps through which their case will proceed. Historically, in nearly 50% of the domestic relations cases filed, both of the parties are self-represented. In 75% of the domestic relations cases filed, at least one of the parties is self-represented. More recently, the magistrates and clerks report that the number of *pro se* litigants is on the rise and that in nearly 60% of the domestic relations cases filed, both of the parties are self-represented. Although magistrates cannot provide legal advice, the information they provide about family law and case processing is invaluable to the large number of parents who appear in court without an attorney.

Mediation.

Another integral part of the case management process is mediation. The Family Division enabling legislation required that the Family Division adopt certain practices and procedures, including referral to mediation and other alternative dispute resolution techniques. 4 M.R.S.A. 183. In turn, Rule 110A of the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure provides that when "...the parties cannot reach an interim agreement on all issues...mediation shall be promptly scheduled..." Family matters mediations are most often facilitated by a professional mediator trained by the Court Alternative Dispute Resolution Service (CADRES). If an agreement is reached through mediation and is approved by the court it may be entered as an interim or final order. When the parties are able to reach agreement without a contested hearing, the length of disruption and uncertainty in the lives of Maine's children and families is reduced.

Right to object.

If a party is dissatisfied with a magistrate's final order, the party can request that a judge review it by filing an objection to the order within 21 days of the decision.

Following review by a District Court Judge, a dissatisfied party has a further right of appeal to the Supreme Judicial Court. A statement of these rights appears at the end of all final orders signed by a magistrate.

Family Division funding.

The Family Division is, in part, supported by federal child support funds. This funding reaches the Judicial Branch by means of a cooperative agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Integrated Access and Support, Division of Support Enforcement and Recovery (DSER). The agreement provides for two-thirds reimbursement for court costs eligible under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act (related to the establishment of paternity and child support enforcement), including the salaries and benefits of the eight (8) magistrates and approximately 30 family matters court clerks. The State also receives partial reimbursement for the salaries and benefits of certain employees in the Family Division office. Reimbursement is subject to offset to account for the portion of the family law caseload that is not eligible under the federal guidelines. Notably, federal regulations prohibit use of these federal child support funds to pay for the salaries and benefits of judges, or for court costs and activities associated with cases not involving child support or paternity.

Because the Family Division is currently dependent on federal child support funds, magistrates may only handle cases in which child support is an issue. They do not,

for example, preside over conferences or hearings in divorce actions not involving minor children. Similarly, magistrates do not assist the District Court by conducting proceedings in other case types.

Magistrate Pilot Project.

In 2005 the Legislature authorized the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) to create a pilot project in which one or more family law magistrates have jurisdiction to hear and dispose of all elements of a divorce action involving children when both parties consent. 4 M.R.S.A 183(4). Administrative Order JB-06-1, effective May 1, 2006, promulgated the Magistrate Pilot Project. One of the primary goals of the Pilot Project was to expand, consistent with the enabling legislation, the types of hearings over which magistrates could preside, without adversely impacting the traditional duties of the magistrates, including most importantly the length of time between the filing of the complaint and the time of the first case management conference.

Family law magistrates sitting in Houlton, Bangor, Waterville, Lewiston and Bridgton are authorized to hear and dispose of all elements in a divorce action with children when both parties consent provided that it is reasonably likely that the hearing can be completed within two hours. In addition to the Pilot Project sites listed above, a magistrate in Ellsworth, Presque Isle, Caribou, Dover, Skowhegan, Rumford, Rockland, West Bath, Augusta, Portland, Springvale and Biddeford District Courts may conduct final contested hearings with the written consent of the parties, if the matter can be heard in the time already scheduled for the case. For example, if the parties who were allocated thirty minutes for a conference have reached agreement on all issues, except how contact among the children and the parties will be allocated during the Christmas holiday, and the

parties can present evidence on this one contested issue in 30 minutes, the parties may sign a Final Hearing Request Form and the final hearing will be conducted during the time already allocated for the conference. If a party is dissatisfied with a magistrate's final order issued pursuant to the Pilot Project, the party may object/appeal in accordance with the same procedure applicable to all other final orders issued by magistrates. (See "Right to Object" at page seven above.)

Since the inception of the Magistrate Pilot Project more than four and one-half years ago, there have been approximately twenty-three final hearings reported. Fourteen of those hearings were held in 2010. In addition, magistrates have declined multiple requests for hearings either due to the time necessary for hearing or the nature of the case.² In the cases that were heard by magistrates pursuant to the Pilot Project, litigants' cases were resolved more promptly than they would have been had the parties been required to wait for a final hearing date before a judge.

Family Division Caseload

In calendar year 2010 there were 9,572 new domestic relations matters filed in the District Court. In addition to new cases, the Judicial Branch also tracks the number of family cases coming back to court through the filing of post-judgment motions. These motions usually ask the court to modify child support, to change the primary residence of a child, to change parent-child contact arrangements, to impose penalties for failure to comply with provision(s) of an existing court order, or to enforce the support or visitation provisions of an order. In calendar year 2010, there were 6,316 post-judgment motions

² For example, a Magistrate would decline a parental rights and responsibilities case since the enabling legislation limited the Pilot Project to divorce cases.

filed. The Appendix includes a table showing the number of new cases and post-judgment motions filed in each court location.

Of the 15,888 original and post-judgment family matters filed in the District Court during calendar year 2010, approximately 9,497 were proceedings initially conducted before a magistrate.³ New complaints and post-judgment motions generally require more than one court event before disposition, so it is not surprising that magistrates report handling 16,131 events during calendar year 2010. These events fall into 3 major categories: conferences, interim hearings and final hearings. Magistrates conducted 11,704 conferences, 533 interim hearings, and 3,894 final hearings during this time period. Conferences usually take between 15 and 30 minutes, with initial case management conferences requiring the greatest amount of time. In 2010 the number of interim hearings conducted increased by 110 and the number of final hearings conducted increased by 1,038. Although the magistrates conducted far fewer interim and final hearings than conferences, these hearings can be very time consuming, lasting anywhere from an hour to a full day.

As noted above, the core mission of the Family Division is to provide a system of justice that is responsive to the needs of families and the support of their children. The heavy volume of court filings and the limited number of magistrates (8) creates a challenge for the court to address each family's case in a timely manner. This was a particular challenge in 2010 since there were several magistrate vacancies that occurred,

³ The remaining cases represented divorce cases without children as well as enforcement and contempt motions that do not fall within the jurisdiction of the Magistrates.

impacting dockets over several months.⁴ The Judicial Branch cancelled as few magistrate dockets as possible, thereby impacting other case dockets and stretching its already limited judicial resources painfully thin. Judges and magistrates were reassigned in order to keep these priority cases moving forward.

The Court's goal is to have families appear before a magistrate for an initial case management conference within 35-45 days of the filing of a complaint or motion. The most recent data indicates that 20 out of the 28 district courts meet or come close (within five (5) days) to meeting this scheduling goal. Given the magistrate vacancies in 2010, it is notable that nearly 72% of courts met the goal to get families before the court in an expedited manner.

In part, the ability of the courts to manage these caseloads is attributable to the Judicial Branch scheduling model adopted in 2004. That scheduling model organized the trial courts into eight (8) regions and established trial court efficiency measures to manage caseloads. The scheduling model impacts the Family Division in several ways, including: (1) the adoption of case completion standards for family cases; (2) the facilitation of judicial assistance between courts; and (3) the utilization of managed trial lists for cases requiring more than two hours of hearing time.

As a result, judges and magistrates are able to complete family cases at nearly the same rate of new cases being filed. In fact, in 2010 most courts kept up with the new filings in family matters, clearing cases at an average rate of over 95%. More importantly, the time in which family matter cases are resolved has been cut in half.

⁴ The vacancies occurred when the Governor appointed three magistrates to serve as District Court judges.

Between 2001 and 2010, the average numbers of days that family matters were pending prior to resolution dropped from 323 days to 157 days. This reduction in the time it takes to reach resolution in a family case responds to the needs of families and the support of their children by reducing the length of disruption and uncertainty in the lives of Maine's children and families.

Magistrates, judges and clerks work hard to prevent backlogs in family cases that would increase the time to resolution in those cases. During 2009 and 2010, the Family Division worked with clerks and magistrates throughout 2009 and 2010 to develop scheduling practices that would make the most efficient and effective use of court and litigant time. For example, several courts implemented block scheduling in post-judgment child support dockets to streamline child support cases. This "block" scheduling avoids magistrate "down" time between cases by providing for several cases to be scheduled for an assigned time period (e.g. 8:30 a.m. until 11:00 a.m.). The cases in which agreement is reached are addressed quickly so that court's time can be properly allocated to the unresolved cases that need prompt attention.

Family Division Activities

To lend support to Family Division operations, the Judicial Branch established a subdivision of the Administrative Office of the Courts. The Family Division office serves as a resource for magistrates, judges and clerks on family related issues. In addition, the Family Division is responsible for developing training programs and case management manuals for family matters clerks. It also serves as a liaison to governmental and other agencies. Staff within the office monitor family-related laws and regulations, family court caseloads, attend to Magistrate training and resource needs, assist with developing

or revising forms and procedures, help with training, prepare reports, identify and promote family services, and administer several grant projects. Because the jurisdiction of the Family Division extends beyond the family matters handled by magistrates, the Family Division office supports the work of the courts in other areas, such as child protection proceedings. The Family Division is funded almost entirely through a variety of grants. Few general fund dollars support the staff and activities of the Family Division office; grant funding mainly supports the office. The following is a brief outline of the other projects operating under the Family Division umbrella.

Access & Visitation.

The Family Division enabling legislation required that the Family Division adopt certain practices and procedures, including education for the parties. 4 M.R.S.A. 183. The Family Division, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services, administers the federal Access & Visitation (A&V) grant. Grant funds are primarily directed toward ensuring the availability of local educational programs for divorcing or separating parents. These basic four-hour programs help parents focus on the needs of their children, teaching how to manage their own conflict so they can work together for the good of their children. Nationwide data indicates that participation in such programs increases both child contact with non-custodial parents and the payment of child support obligations. Judges and magistrates often recommend or order parents to attend a local parent education program. These programs offer financial assistance to ensure that the cost of attending (usually about \$60) is not a barrier to low-income families.

In 2010 more than 1,714 parents attended the basic parent education program at one of 14 sites around the state. Approximately 933 mothers attended and 858 fathers attended. The Appendix includes a chart identifying the locations at which the programs are offered and the numbers of parents attending. Approximately 3,472 of Maine's children were impacted by their parents' participation.

Guardians *ad litem*.

When the custody of a child is in dispute, the court may appoint a guardian *ad litem* (GAL) to help investigate the circumstances of the family and make a recommendation regarding the best interests of the child. In domestic relations cases, the use of a guardian *ad litem* is discretionary and may depend on the parents' financial resources. The court budget does not include funding for the appointment of a GAL in domestic relations cases. In November 1999, the Supreme Judicial Court adopted rules governing the training, rostering, and oversight of GALs. At present, 310 individuals are on the statewide GAL roster. The Family Division is responsible for maintaining the GAL Roster. This includes processing all applications for GAL status, obtaining background checks on each applicant, and organizing and conducting all training sessions for GALs. The Appendix includes a sample guardian *ad litem* training schedule.

Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA).

Maine law requires that a guardian *ad litem*, whether a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) or a rostered GAL, be appointed for every child when a protective custody case is filed in court. 22 MRSA §4005 (1). *Maine CASA* recruits, trains, and supervises selected adult volunteers from the community who are willing to act as a

guardian *ad litem* appointment for children alleged to have been abused or neglected. At present, there are approximately 148 CASA volunteers serving 177 children. During 2010 Maine CASA volunteers were appointed as guardians *ad litem* in 234 open protective custody cases, representing the best interests of 276 children.

Utilizing fiscal year 2010 figures, a “snapshot” view of June 30, 2010 demonstrated that Maine CASA volunteers served as guardians *ad litem* in 8.2% of all pending child protective cases. Maine CASA was appointed in 98 of the total 736 fiscal year 2010 filings, or approximately 13.3% of all new cases filed.⁵ If the 8.2% of child protection cases handled by CASA volunteers instead had been assigned to private-attorney guardians *ad litem*, the cost to the Judicial Branch would have increased by approximately \$206,062.

Family Treatment Drug Court.

Currently, there are three Family Treatment Drug Courts (FTDCs) operating in the following District Courts: Augusta (serving families from Kennebec County), Lewiston (serving families from Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford Counties), and Bangor (serving families from Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties). The courts are a collaborative effort between the Judicial Branch, the Office of Substance Abuse, Maine Pretrial Services, the Department of Health & Human Services, and local treatment providers. The mission of the Maine FTDC is, through judicial accountability and enhanced access to comprehensive treatment services, to improve the safety and welfare of children and support the recovery of parents from alcohol and drug abuse. All three FTDCs were implemented through federal grants. Maine’s Family Treatment Drug

⁵ This percentage represents a one (1) percent increase over FY 09 figures.

Courts have graduated 57 parents, reunified 76 children with their families, and seen 26 drug free babies born to mothers enrolled in the drug court.

Child Abuse and Neglect Evaluation Project.

The Child Abuse and Neglect Evaluators Project (CANEP)—funded through a federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) grant⁶—provides consistently high quality forensic child maltreatment and parental capacity evaluations in pending child (protection) cases. CANEP utilizes Ph.D. evaluators trained and skilled in forensic evaluation and court procedures and subject to annual peer review.

From its inception to January 2011, CANEP had coordinated a total of 696 individual forensic evaluations in child protection cases. There are currently 19 evaluators participating in the program.

Court Improvement Project

The federal Department of Health and Human Services awarded the Maine Courts the Basic, Training and Technology Court Improvement Program Grants (CIP), to facilitate improvements within the child protection judicial system and to implement new initiatives. The Court Improvement Grants (CIP) support the District Court in establishing best practices in child protection cases. Court improvement training grant funds are earmarked to enhance training for judges, attorneys, guardians *ad litem*, and court personnel in child welfare cases, including cross-training with State and Tribal child welfare staff and their contractors. The 2010 training forum—held in 10 locations throughout the State—educated child welfare stakeholders on CANEP as well as FTDC and the impact of substance abuse on families in the child protective system. In 2010, the

⁶ The CAPTA grant fully funds the administrative costs of CANEP.

federal CIP training grant also funded the most recent statewide conference, *With the Child in Mind*. The two-day Statewide Conference focused on the impacts of childhood trauma and had over 400 attendees, including judges, attorneys, advocates, and DHHS staff. Both programs were fully grant funded.

Conclusion

The Family Division has enabled the District Court to make significant progress in timely addressing the needs of Maine's children and families involved in court proceedings. The Magistrates continue to garner widespread respect through their dedication and hard work, as well as their commitment to bringing the parties before the court as soon after the filing of a complaint as possible. The Judicial Branch will endeavor to further increase responsiveness to the needs of families and the support of their children, to evaluate and manage caseloads, and to bring quality alternative dispute resolution and co-parenting education to Maine's families. There is still work to be done.

APPENDIX

1. Maine District Court – Family Matters Filings (01/01/10 – 12/31/10)
2. Number of Family Law Magistrate Days per Court per Month
3. Guardians *ad litem* Training Schedule Agenda – Fall 2009
4. Parent Education Program Totals – Participation by Region 2009-10

**Maine District Court
Family Matters Filings
01/01/10 - 12/31/10**

	Divorce Complaints w/ Children	PR&R and Paternity Complaints	Divorce Complaints w/o Children and Other FM Filings	Total FM Original Complaints	Post-Judg. Motions Divorce w/Children	Post-Judg. Motions PR&R	Post-Judg. Motions w/o Children	Total Post- Judgment FM Motions	TOTAL FM FILINGS (Original and Post- Judg.)
Augusta	191	131	243	565	218	126	59	403	968
Bangor	269	171	283	723	309	111	63	483	1206
Belfast	107	68	99	274	98	52	15	165	439
Biddeford	225	139	229	593	263	132	42	437	1030
Bridgton	131	35	113	279	80	31	20	131	410
Calais	34	30	43	107	51	13	12	76	183
Caribou	28	37	45	110	80	29	20	129	239
Dover-Foxcroft	61	37	49	147	59	27	11	97	244
Ellsworth	155	78	165	398	127	64	37	228	626
Farmington	80	53	97	230	72	50	20	142	372
Ft. Kent	35	27	38	100	55	21	15	91	191
Houlton	49	45	51	145	36	18	7	61	206
Lewiston	278	249	310	837	306	180	61	547	1384
Lincoln	61	27	64	152	36	13	5	54	206

**NUMBER OF MAGISTRATE DAYS
PER COURT PER MONTH
2010**

COURT	NUMBER OF MAGISTRATE DAYS PER MONTH
AUGUSTA	8
BANGOR	11
BELFAST	5
BIDDEFORD	11
BRIDGTON	3
CALAIS	2
CARIBOU	3
DOVER	2
ELLSWORTH	5
FARMINGTON	2
FORT KENT/MADAWASKA	2
HOULTON	3
LEWISTON	15
LINCOLN/MILLINOCKET	2
MACHIAS	2
NEWPORT	2
PORTLAND	24
PRESQUE ISLE	4
ROCKLAND	5
RUMFORD	2
SKOWHEGAN	5
SOUTH PARIS	3
SPRINGVALE	9
WATERVILLE	6
WEST BATH	8
WISCASSET	3
YORK	4
<p>Numbers are based on a four-week month. These numbers fluctuate somewhat. There may be a temporary shift in FLM time to a court that reports a backlog. Also, holidays and vacation time can reduce the number of days at a court location.</p>	

Guardian *ad litem* Training

**Maple Hill Farm, Hallowell, Maine
Monday, October 19, 2009**

7:45 - 8:30

Registration

8:30 - 9:00

**Welcome, Overview of Agenda & GAL Rostering;
Responsibilities of the Chief Judge's Office**

Hon. Ann M. Murray, Chief Judge

9:00 - 10:15

**Overview of GAL Rules, Standards, and Caselaw: Duties
and Obligations of the GAL as an Agent of the Court**

Hon. Valerie Stanfill

10:15 - 10:30

Break

10:30 - 11:30

**Overview of Family Law: Title 19-A; Title 22, Title 18-A;
UCCJEA; UIFSA; Similarities and Differences Between
Types of Cases**

Hon. Valerie Stanfill

11:30 - 12:30

GAL Probate Law 101

Hon. Susan Longley, Probate Judge

12:30 - 1:15

Lunch

1:15 - 3:15

Determining Primary Residency: One Judge's Perspective

Hon. Jon D. Levy

3:15 - 3:30

Break

3:30 - 4:30

Report Writing and Testifying

Debbie Mattson, MSW, GAL, Mediator, Steven Chandler, Esq., GAL
& Susan Snyder, Esq., GAL, CASA GAL

Moderator: Hon. Charles LaVerdiere, Deputy Chief Judge

Day Two

**Maple Hill Farm, Hallowell, Maine
Tuesday, October 20, 2009**

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 8:30 - 9:30 | Children's Needs: A Developmental Perspective
Roy Siegfriedt, LCPC, MA |
| 9:30 - 10:30 | Relationship Building with Children and Families
Thomas Chalmers McLaughlin, MSW, Ph.D. |
| 10:30 - 10:45 | Break |
| 10:45 - 12:00 | Substance Abuse & Mental Health – Adults & Children
Barbara Piotti, LCSW & Bob Long, MS, LCPC, LADC |
| 12:00 - 1:00 | Lunch |
| 1:00 - 2:15 | Substance Abuse & Mental Health – Adults & Children
Barbara Piotti, LCSW & Bob Long, MS, LCPC, LADC |
| 2:15 - 2:30 | Break |
| 2:30 - 3:30 | Educational Issues for Children & Youth
Sara Meerse, Esq., MSW, GAL |
| 3:30 - 4:30 | Culturally & Socially Competent Child Advocacy
Sara Meerse, Esq., MSW, GAL & Thom Harnett, Esq., AAG |

Family Law Day

**Maple Hill Farm, Hallowell, Maine
Thursday, October 22, 2009**

8:30 - 9:30

Family Law: Case Management, Pre-trial, Trial Process and Post-Judgment Motions

Hon. Patricia G. Worth & Magistrate Bruce Jordan

9:15 - 10:00

A View from the Bench and the Bar

Magistrate Bruce Jordan, Magistrate Mary Kelly,
Tobi L. Schneider, Esq., GAL & Michael J. Levey, Esq.
Moderator: Hon. Patricia G. Worth

10:15 - 10:30

Break

10:30 - 12:30

Domestic Violence: The Impact on Children and Families

Juliet Holmes-Smith, Esq., Kate Huntress, Shawn Lagrega,
Kristina Joyce-Smith, Esq., GAL & Richard Dubois, Esq., GAL
Moderator: Hon. E. Paul Eggert

12:30 - 1:30

Lunch

1:30 - 2:30

The Impact of Separation and Divorce on Children and Families: Co- Parent Education and Access & Visitation Programs and Services

Jed French, Esq. & Susan Wiggin, LMSW, GAL

2:30 - 2:45

Break

2:45 - 3:30

The Role of Consensus Building

Felicity Myers, LCSW, GAL, Pamela Holmes, Esq., GAL & Toby
Hollander, Esq., GAL
Moderator: Hon. John O'Neill, Jr.

3:30 - 4:30

A View From the Trenches: Two GALs' Perspective

Terry Hayes, GAL & Toby Hollander Esq., GAL

Child Protection Day

**Maple Hill Farm, Hallowell, Maine
Friday, October 23, 2009**

- 8:30 - 9:45 **Introduction to Child Welfare Law**
Hon. Rick E. Lawrence
- 9:45 - 10:45 **A View From the Bench**
Hon. John B. Beliveau, Hon. Keith A. Powers,
Hon. Christine Foster
Moderator: Hon. Rick E. Lawrence
- 10:45 - 11:00 **Break**
- 11:00 - 12:00 **Identifying & Assessing Risk: Forensic Assessment of
Child Abuse and Neglect**
Dr. Diane Tennes, Ph.D., GAL
- 12:00 - 1:00 **Lunch**
- 1:00 - 1:30 **DHHS 101: New Initiatives and What Every GAL Needs to
Know**
Martha Proulx, MSW, Michael Kearney, Esq., AAG
- 1:30 - 2:30 **Protective Custody Law and Process: The Role of the Title
22 GAL in Each Critical Stage of a Child Protection Case**
David Hathaway, Esq., AAG, Sheila Cook, Esq., GAL & Robert
Bennett Esq., Parent's Attorney
Moderator: Hon. John B. Beliveau
- 2:30 - 2:45 **Break**
- 2:45 - 3:30 **The Last Word: Young People Who Have Experienced the
Foster Care System on Creating Youth/Adult Partnership**
Pentheia Burns, MSW & The Youth Leadership Advisory Team
- 3:30 - 4:00 **Wrap up and Closing Remarks**
Hon. John B. Beliveau

Maine Parent Education Participation by Region
2009-2010 Comparison

	# Parental Rights & Responsibilities/ Divorces filed in these locations in 2009	# of Parents involved in FM cases	# Parents Completing Parent Education Program in 2009	Average Percentage of Cases w/ both Parties Completing Program	# Parental Rights & Responsibilities /Divorces filed in these locations in 2010	# of Parents involved in FM cases	# Parents Completing Parent Education Program in 2009	Average Percentage of Cases w/ both Parties Completing Program
Augusta Kids First	303	606	103	17.0%	311	622	122	19.6%
Bangor For Kids Sake	740	1480	222	15.0%	748	1496	240	16.0%
Biddeford Kids First	776	1552	125	8.1%	814	1628	110	6.8%
Calais/Machias Kids First *	125	250	9	3.6%	138	276	2	0.7%
Ellsworth For Kids Sake	193	386	79	20.5%	232	464	93	20.0%
Farmington Kids First	132	264	40	15.2%	218	436	61	14.0%
Lew/Aub Kids First	706	1412	129	9.1%	705	1410	149	10.6%
Portland Kids First	876	1752	723	41.3%	985	1970	649	32.9%
Presque Isle - Moving Forward **	356	712	n/a	n/a	326	652	n/a	n/a
Rockland Parent Works	169	338	70	20.7%	186	372	54	14.5%
Skowhegan Kids First	309	618	24	3.9%	249	498	29	5.8%
Waterville Kids First	222	444	53	11.9%	235	470	52	11.1%
Topsham Kids First (West Bath)	385	770	108	14.0%	366	732	106	14.5%
Waldo Kids First (Belfast)	185	370	50	13.5%	168	336	47	14.0%
Total	5477	10954	1735	14.9%	5681	11362	1714	13.9%
% of Maine parents divorcing with minor children or involved in parental rights & responsibilities cases were served by Parent Education Programs	15.8%				15.1%			
	* The Calais/Machias program closed in April 2010. ** The Presque Isle program is ongoing without grant funds so total accurate data is unavailable.							