



CONNECTICUT ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HOUSING MATTERS



Reply to:

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NOTICE OF NEXT QUARTERLY MEETING

**3:00 p.m.
Wednesday, September 10, 2025**

Meeting will be held by Zoom

Please mark your calendars appropriately.

Minutes of the Meeting of June 11, 2025

The meeting was held in-person at the United Way of New Haven, 370 James Street, Room 403, New Haven. The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Raphael Podolsky, at 1:12 p.m. The members introduced themselves. The following persons were in attendance:

Council members present: Denise L. Chancey, Michael H. Clinton, Kathleen M. Flaherty, Venoal M. Fountain, Catherine H. Freeman, Jane Kelleher, Vanessa M. Liles, Samuel T. Neves, Cyd O. Oppenheimer, Raphael L. Podolsky, David R. Purvis, and John C. Wirzbicki

Council members absent: Richard DeParle, Nilda Rodriguez Havrilla, Houston Putnam Lowry, Carl Lupinacci, and Stephanie W. Ma

Public officials: Bill Pitt (Chief Housing Court Clerk)

Members of the public: None

1. Preliminary matters

- a. The Zoom rules for the meeting were reviewed.
- b. The agenda was approved without dissent.
- c. The minutes of the March 12, 2025 meeting were approved upon the motion of Mr. Wirzbicki, seconded by Mr. Clinton. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Public comment

None

3. Updates on pending proposals

- a. Council recommendations on Judicial Branch forms concerning 47a-18, 47a-18a, and 47a-23c: Mr. Purvis gave the report of the Forms Committee. It is waiting to hear back from Judicial on suggested forms re 47a-18 and 47a-18a and suggested changes to HM-44 regarding 47a-23c. Mr. Pitt reported that it is still being worked on and confirmed that, before such forms or changes go live, they will be given to the Council with an opportunity for additional input.
- b. Housing mediator stipulation forms (HM-11 series): These forms, used by mediators in writing up settlements, have been modified so that mediators will routinely check whether buildings are subject to C.G.S. 47a-23c protections and whether the defendant is over age 62 or disabled. There was discussion about the relevance and the propriety of asking some of these questions if the eviction is not based on lapse of time and about whether it is inappropriately invasive to ask about disability unless it is a potential defense in the case. Mr. Pitt reported that Court Operations, in consultation with judges, decided to make this a "hard" checklist for all mediations to ensure that these issues will not be overlooked. Council members raised questions as to whether this might be an over-correction to the problem that generated the change in the form.
- c. Notice of judgment forms: The Forms Committee is continuing to review these forms. The Committee reiterated its concern that the absence of Judicial Branch participation in Committee work has made it difficult to draft appropriate clarifying changes to those forms.
- d. Police guidelines: The Chairperson reported that the Chief State's Attorney has finalized its guidelines for police officers who are present at the execution of a summary process judgment. While some modification was made in light of the Advisory Council's recommendations, other changes requested by the Council were not incorporated into the final version.

4. Housing Court updates

- a. Prosecution: There was no report except as to the police guidelines.
- b. Clerk's office and mediation:
 - i. Staffing and scheduling: Mr. Pitt reported that staffing levels are stable. The exhaustion of ARPA funds, however, has caused some movement of staff. One person assigned to the New Haven Housing Court has been lost. With e-filing, however, it is possible for staff assigned to one court to help in other courts remotely. Hartford has a high caseload and has added additional hearing days.
 - ii. Back-up judges: Administrative judges have designated specific back-up judges for housing, which has made it possible for judges with housing court experience to function as back-ups in some courts (Judge Baio in

Hartford and Judge Spader in New Haven). This helps move dockets more efficiently.

- iii. Limited-scope representation: Mr. Pitt reported that Judicial is working on trying to make limited-scope representation forms part of e-filing (currently they must be hand-filed in person or faxed).
- iv. Filing of fee waiver applications: In response to a question about e-filing fee waivers, Mr. Pitt indicated that doing so might be complicated but that he will look into it.
- v. Milford hearings: It was suggested that hearings in the Milford court should be moved back to the 1st floor courtroom. The acoustics in the 2nd floor room, in which they are now being held, are very bad. Mr. Pitt will inquire about this.
- vi. Resources for self-represented litigants: There was discussion about what resources are available to self-represented parties who sign up for e-services. Mr. Pitt stated that there is an e-services phone help line and that some information is available online. He also noted, however, that procedural assistance is usually best done in person.

5. **General Assembly – 2025 landlord/tenant legislation**: The Chairperson reported that most proposed landlord-tenant legislation did not pass, including H.B. 6889, which would have expanded the applicability of C.G.S. 47a-23c, the just cause eviction statute. The legislature did pass a bill requiring all towns with population between 15,000 and 25,000 to have a fair rent commission or be part of a regional fair rent commission by 2028 (the current mandate applies only to towns above 25,000 population). That proposal, however, is part of a larger, multi-section zoning bill (P.A. 25-49), which newspaper reports indicate the Governor may veto. There was also discussion about a section of H.B. 5002 prohibiting the closing of landlord online payment portals before the end of the rent-payment grace period and of a section prohibiting use of certain anti-competitive algorithms in the setting of rents.

6. **Council planning for next six months**: Mr. Clinton suggested that members send ideas to the Chairperson. It was also recommended that the Council continue to look for more effective ways to interact with the Judicial Branch so as to be able to give proactive (rather than reactive) input.

7. **2025 meeting locations**: The Council decided to keep the plan adopted at the March meeting in place for now, i.e., to conduct the September meeting as a Zoom meeting and the December meeting as an in-person meeting. There was a sense that today's in-person meeting had been successful in drawing attendance by Council members and creating opportunities for direct contact; but it was also noted that, except for Mr. Pitt, no non-members of the Council had attended at all.

8. **Other business**: There was no other business.

9. **Adjournment:** Mr. Clinton moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fountain and was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 pm.

Next meeting: September 10, 2025, by Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Flaherty
Secretary