

KATHERINE P. LEBLANC, P.C.
Attorney at Law

4801 Lang Ave NE, Suite 110
Albuquerque, NM 87109
kpl@katherinepleblanc.net

Tel: 505-798-2676
Fax: 505-796-9601

August 3, 2023

President Dr. Buu Nygren
Navajo Nation Office of the
President and Vice President
PO Box 7440
Window Rock, AZ 86515

Honorable JoAnn Jayne, Chief Justice
Navajo Nation Supreme Court
PO Box 1779
Window Rock, AZ 86515

Speaker Crystalyne Curley
Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker
PO Box 3390
Window Rock, AZ 86515

Chairman Honorable Robert Yazzie
Judicial Conduct Commission
PO Box 3390
Window Rock, AZ 86515

Madame Chair Eugenia Charles Newton
Law and Order Committee
PO Box 3390
Window Rock, AZ 86515

RE: State of crisis in the Navajo Nation court system

Dear President Dr. Buu Nygren, Honorable JoAnn Jayne, Chief Justice, Speaker Crystalyne Curley, Chairman Honorable Robert Yazzie, Judicial Conduct Commission, Madame Chair Eugenia Charles Newton, Law and Order Committee:

I am writing to you out of my deep concern for extensive problems plaguing the Navajo Nation court system, and the resulting despair and frustration experienced by both practitioners and litigants of the Navajo public. An outline of these problems and supporting documentation are enclosed. There are additional affidavits and other supporting documents in my office, which are available for review upon request. These extensive problems have resulted in a broken court system which is in a state of crisis. Please know that these issues are not brought to your attention hastily on behalf of a disgruntled few, but were identified over time, based on input from a great many people including several practitioners, litigants, outside persons, and employees involved in various aspects of the court system.

My hope is that each of you will take these concerns to heart in the light in which they were offered, that is, to make life better for Navajo people. I became hopeful after reading an article in the Navajo Times about the new president, Dr. Buu Nygren, dated March 22, 2023. It stated that President Nygren campaigned on the question of “how do we combat the everyday things that hurt and go up against our people, like poverty, hunger, thirst, sickness, old age, greed, jealousy and laziness.” Unfortunately, the harms caused by a broken court system must be added to the list of that which hurts Navajo people. President Nygren was quoted as saying that, “his administration would begin working toward bettering life for the Navajo people.” He promised, “as your next Navajo Nation president, I will not hesitate. I will do whatever it takes to make sure that our people have a chance.” The hope is that President Nygren will include reforms to the Navajo Nation court system in this endeavor.

First, please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Katherine LeBlanc, and I am a New Mexico attorney and long-time member of the Navajo Nation Bar Association. Some of you are acquainted with me. I received my law degree from Brooklyn Law School in 1999. I was awarded a public interest fellowship by my law school, which allowed me to work anywhere in the country. I chose to clerk for the late (then) Judge Lorene Ferguson (later Associate Justice Lorene Ferguson), attending the University of New Mexico School of Law (“UNM”) as a visitor during my last year of school. I took my Indian Law coursework and other courses relevant to practice in New Mexico, such as water law, at UNM, and pursued several courses in dispute resolution both at UNM, through private programs, and the Straus Institute For Dispute Resolution at the Pepperdine University School of Law. I remained in New Mexico after graduation.

In the initial years of my practice, I lived on the Navajo Nation for a time and have enjoyed the privilege of practicing there since 2003. One of my first cases involved a successful federal court representation of a large group of Navajo people from the Canoncito Band who sought to increase their access to sacred sites in the Big Bead Mesa area, to preserve those sites while limiting BIA and other non-Navajo tours through the area, as well as the rebuilding of ruins. Thereafter, I worked for the Office of the State Engineer in Santa Fe, New Mexico, as a contract Special Assistant Attorney General, involving water law.

Following this, I officed with the late Albert Hale in 2003 and 2004 and learned many things from him. He taught me to look out for those who use Navajo culture as both a sword and a shield, as well as those who frequently talk of fundamental law, K’*e* and hózhó but do not “walk their talk.” Not only am I well-read on Navajo culture, but have met many wonderful people during my time here who have taken me into their homes, invited me to ceremonies, and shared a lot with me about Navajo culture. Their greatest gift to me was to trust me to represent them and advocate on their behalf in their most important interests. My practice is entirely focused in the Navajo Nation courts, with few exceptions.

That being said, I am admittedly and unapologetically Anglo. All the reading and teaching in the world will not change that. Nevertheless, I remain in awe of Navajo culture, and deeply committed to my clients and my law practice in the Navajo Nation. Hopefully, you will understand that it is for this reason that I have taken the time to develop and forward the enclosed package to you. It is not intended as criticism of the Navajo Nation, nor any court, judge or person referenced therein. My intent is not to cause trouble to any person or to simply ‘complain.’ The materials result from the input of a great number of people, the vast majority of whom are too afraid to come forward. Only my colleagues Joseph Austin and Chase Valasquez

shared the courage and willingness to devote time to this effort. They have prepared their own package which has also been forwarded to you.

I would be lying if I said that I do not share the same fear in putting these materials before you. As essentially all of my work is in the Navajo Nation I thus have much to lose. In fact, I expect a wide gamut of reaction from those who read the materials, ranging from vindication to rage, apathy to surprise, disbelief or even a desire to retaliate. Some may encourage you to ignore us, or will go so far as to ‘tell you what you want to hear.’ I worry that retaliation could be directed to my clients, but on the other hand, I believe the harms they are experiencing due to the problems identified in these materials are a far greater concern. For this reason, I have retained and not enclosed many supporting documents which directly reference specific courts and individuals. They are available for review upon request.

Others will say I am Anglo and your court system is none of my business. At times in my career, I have chosen to believe this myself, feeling as I do, that it is a privilege to practice in a different culture. There are, after all, the negative comments directed at ‘bilagáana’ culture that have driven me from in-person attendance at Bar Conferences, or those that have occasionally been hurled at me in a court proceeding – including by a judge. However, those remarks are few and far between, and the vast majority of people have been wonderful, supportive and respectful.

On the other hand, it seems that if the Navajo Nation is going to allow non-Navajo people to practice law here the government would anticipate and value their input, if not welcome those who love Navajo people enough to stick their neck out to advocate on their behalf. Some have warned me to remain silent as I could be driven from my practice on the Navajo Nation. If that were to happen, or the Navajo leadership were to ‘bury their heads in the sand,’ it would not make these issues go away or become ‘untrue’. It would not benefit Navajo people. Moreover, I choose to believe that will not happen and similarly, choose to have confidence in the leadership of the Navajo Nation to realize that I am bringing these issues to your attention in the course of *advocacy* on behalf of Navajo people, not for the purpose of criticism. Navajo people and their families are suffering. I have reason to believe various judges and court personnel support our efforts to seek change, including permitting virtual hearings and electronic filing.

Over the years, I have attempted to offer assistance drafting forms, offering ideas or working on domestic violence issues, only to be either ignored, or told that essentially ‘we have Navajo people to do that and we don’t need your help.’ Letters were written, issues were raised repetitively in pleadings, and conversations occurred, without response or the smallest change. On November 2, 2020, another colleague and I sent long letters to Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne detailing a few of the issues. There was no response. However, none of this deterred my resolve and deep commitment to help make change. This does not come from a place of pure philanthropy but because I have had a rich life practicing in the Navajo Nation and believe I must ‘give back.’

My only remaining recourse was to take the risk of bringing these materials to the attention of Navajo leadership, or consider drastic alternatives such as publishing those concerns in the newspaper or a book I have worked on, or even directing them to Congress. My preference is to direct these matters to each of you first, as I believe there are not only answers to these problems within the Navajo Nation, but the talent, intellect and deep love of your people and culture to make things better. The Court system is truly broken and in a state of crisis. While Covid-19 strained resources and brought new challenges to the administration of justice, it

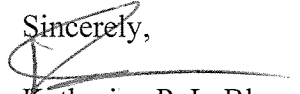
is not to blame for the current state of matters. Thus, the 'end' of the pandemic will not cure the situation and instead, has raised new challenges.

I must remain optimistic that you will see that I am raising these issues because I care enough to try and make things better for Navajo people. I am hopeful there will be change. Of course, extensive change takes time. However, there are many simple changes that would take no more than the flick of a pen to craft an Administrative Order, or develop standardized materials and direction with important results, as detailed in my outline.

My colleagues and I would like to discuss these matters further with you in detail. In fact, we tried to make an appointment with the Office of the President some months ago, without success. I believe each of us are willing to assist in any way we can with solutions. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 505-401-5117 (cell) or by email at kpl@katherinepleblanc.net.

Thank you for taking the time to look at these materials.

Sincerely,



Katherine P. LeBlanc

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ISSUES IN NAVAJO NATION CIVIL AND FAMILY COURT PROCEEDINGS

KATHERINE P. LE BLANC, P.C.
4801 LANG AVE. NE, SUITE 110
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87109
505-798-2676 (office); 505-401-5117 (cell)
kpl@katherinepleblanc.net

I. SEVERE UNDERFUNDING OF THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

A. **Introduction:** The Navajo Nation Judicial Branch is one of the most important branches of Navajo government. It is through the legal system that the issues of greatest importance to Navajo people, their families including precious children, business and government are resolved. In spite of this critical function, the Judicial Branch receives only a fraction of the funding of other branches of government. The funding is grossly insufficient to enable the court system to function efficiently and effectively, develop Navajo Nation law, preserve sovereignty, and protect families, as well as to attract and retain qualified staff or counsels, and provide meaningful programs for ongoing training and supervision.

B. **Benefits of increased funding:**

1. Ability to hire more judges
 - i Enormous backlog would be reduced; some cases have languished for years, or even decades.
 - ii Cases would be addressed in a timely manner; currently litigants and children suffer excessively, even for years, waiting for relief.
 - iii More judges will result in more specialization of judges (i.e. family law, criminal law, property/land/grazing law, cases under the ‘AlchíníBi Beehaz ánnii Act of 2011’), thereby eliminating the extensive errors which presently result from the current and impossible ‘jack of all trades’ approach to judging.
 - iv The Navajo Nation could recruit and retain more judges, staff attorneys, and support staff who have desirable experience and other qualifications with realistic salary expectations that are presently unmet.
 - (a) As Honorable Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne stated in her Fiscal Year a2023 First Quarter Report, the Judicial Branch “has a dire need for jurists.” (P 4)
 - v Caseloads would be reduced allowing judges necessary time to learn statutory/case law, eliminate burnout, attend to more training.
2. Ability to update technology to modern standards
 - i Enable courts to switch to urgently needed e-filing of pleadings
 - (a) E-filing is mandatory in most jurisdictions; Navajo courts allowed e-filing during the pandemic but confusingly still required paper copies and only file stamped when paper arrived. By Administrative Order, May 15, 2023, Navajo courts are now instructed to return to pre-pandemic practices: in short, eliminate e-filing and return to antiquated and expensive fax and paper copies. ***See Exhibit A, A-1.***
 - (b) E-filing eliminates the present unfairness created when staff do not pick up/dispatch mail in a timely manner, a constant and serious problem causing litigants to lose rights or available relief.

- (1) To'hajiilee's post office was inside of a store which closed down during the pandemic. Mail has to be obtained from Laguna and is frequently delayed.
- (c) Allows for proof of filing by recording the date, eliminating arbitrary processing of pleadings that presently exists.
- (d) Allows staff to email orders and other documents thereby eliminating postage and paper costs, saving funds.
- (e) Eliminates costly paper filing systems. Even where documents are mailed, staff can scan and load into file.
- (f) Allows documents to be retained in the system unlike paper which may be lost, misfiled, or 'not received'; another copy can be obtained instantly when e-filed.
- (g) Increases public access to the court system: litigants can e-file through their/family member's cell phones or chapter house for free and obtain instant results instead of traveling to or needing a ride to a post office.
- (h) Public can still use mail when having no access to electronics.
- (i) Positions the Navajo Nation as a modern court system in the eyes of the public and outside courts, rather than the present 'antiquated' and disorganized appearance.
- ii Enable courts to switch to urgently needed electronic hearings
 - (a) The Navajo courts are presently able to accommodate Skype and Google Meets hearings without expenditure, as was done during the pandemic; an Administrative Order has now been issued which is perceived as eliminating this approach, in favor of pre-pandemic standards, to the detriment of the public, courts, and Bar Members. *See Exhibit A, A-1*
 - (b) The Navajo Nation Bar Association has lost dozens of counsels in recent years; upon information and belief, dozens were recently disbarred for non-compliance, several passed away or quit during the pandemic, resulting in an extreme shortage of available counsels, willing to take cases, particularly in Family Law and other areas. *See Exhibit B, online Bar Listing of attorneys choosing to advertise.* The Bar Association is presently preparing Petitions for Suspension of 87 Bar Members. *See discussion on p.23, IV(A)(1)(ii).*
 - (1) The few local counsels in small communities have obvious conflicts of interest and can't fill the need.
 - (2) A significant percentage of Bar Members listed are either inactive members, judicial employees, employed by agencies that do not take cases,

- government employees or others that are actually retired or not accepting cases.¹
- (c) Electronic hearings would allow the Navajo Nation to attract and retain more bar members from other localities, who cannot be expected to drive or fly hundreds of miles for hearings.
 - (1) This is particularly problematic as judges cancel hearings at the last minute often without good cause, costing Navajo litigants hundreds or thousands of dollars for multiple attorney appearances for same issue. Most can't afford this.
 - (2) While some feel in person attendance is more efficient, it is simply unrealistic in a jurisdiction the size of the Navajo Nation with small communities spread out over hundreds of miles and inability of most outside counsels to obtain housing or office space on an Indian reservation.
 - (3) There are several mechanisms which would enable electronic appearances to function just as efficiently as in-person appearances, if only these would be codified or placed in a directive to the trial courts.
 - (d) Electronic hearings would prevent interruption or cancellation of hearings during inclement weather
 - (e) Electronic hearings would prevent the unfairness that harms the poor when they are without transportation and cannot get a ride to the court resulting in show cause proceedings, bench warrants, rescheduling, dismissal, or loss of a party's important rights, which then increases appeals, writ practice, and post judgment relief.
 - (f) Any person with access to Google on their cell phone or a relative's phone can avail themselves of Google Meets or accommodations can be made at the local chapter house.
 - (g) Electronic hearings reduce the spread of Covid-19 and other infectious and transmissible illnesses, are easier for diabetics, who must sit for hours without food, or the elderly. Covid is still a problem. ***See Exhibit C, C-1.***
 - (h) Electronic hearings mean less absence from work for those who cannot afford excess leave from employment.
 - (i) There are currently numerous seasoned counsels who cannot travel to hearings or appear in person due to health reasons who are being forced to decline cases or find another occupation because they cannot appear by phone; they are forced to risk their health and safety or experience

¹ I have requested materials from the Bar Association which contain confusing and conflicting information and therefore, I cannot provide exact numbers. However, it is plain that there are few counsels taking cases located *within* the Navajo Nation, and declining numbers accepting cases.

- pain; alternatively, they risk being held in contempt or forced to withdraw from the representation to the detriment of the public. This has already happened to several of us.
- (i) Permission to appear telephonically prior to Covid-19 was discretionary, but arbitrary, or at times took so long counsels simply declined cases or experienced enormous anxiety while waiting.
 - (j) An immediate Administrative Order with simple provisions can restore this practice and allow for efficient hearing:
 - (1) Counsels/litigants can be required to give a certain number of days of notice of intent to appear electronically, eliminating arbitrary or delayed decision making on the issue when left to judicial discretion, or unfounded objections by opposing counsel.
 - (2) Appearance can be mandated to be through a specific and widely available video program such as Google Meets or Skype, allowing the judge/parties/counsels to all see one another, see exhibits, gauge witness demeanor, prevent witness coaching, etc.
 - (3) A standardized hearing notice can provide that an Exhibit List must be filed a certain number of days before any hearing (i.e. 15), and all exhibits must be labeled and in the hands of the court or opposing counsel/party five days before hearing.
 - (k) For geographic areas with poor internet service, increased funding must be made; meantime in person hearings may still take place or litigants can use the resources of their Chapter House to appear virtually.
 - iii Facilitate on line payment of fines and filing fees
 - (a) Online payment is standard in most modern court systems.
 - (b) Is archaic to require counsels/litigants to stand in line to buy money orders, go to a post office to mail, wait for their mail to arrive at the court or be picked up by staff.
 - (c) On line payment increases public access to court services especially to the poor who cannot get to a post office.
 - iv Increased ability to conduct training of judges/staff through online programs or sessions, allowing judges to remain in communities and spend their time on learning, instead of traveling.
 - v Allows the Navajo Nation to restore publication of numerous materials such as the Navajo Nation Practice Book (out of publication for years, a further impediment to retaining new counsels), and place Supreme Court opinions back online.
 - vi Reposition the Navajo Nation as a model court system; currently has fallen far behind other tribes, due to antiquated practices caused by insufficient funding, apathy, resistance to change, etc.

- vii Each of these changes and improvements resulting from increased funding benefits the Navajo public who are currently paying the price for the out-dated, inefficient and broken court system. Navajo people should not be treated in a lesser manner than other tribes/ jurisdictions treat their people. These improvements would benefit the Navajo Nation which is presently and perhaps unknowingly embarrassed by an antiquated and inefficient court system. These multiple problems also cause forum shopping to outside jurisdictions thereby eroding Navajo sovereignty.

II TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE/JUDICIAL QUALIFICATION

- A. **Introduction:** Historically, there were many wonderful judges who presided on the bench in the Navajo Nation for years, if not decades. They gained knowledge over the years, and were able to serve as mentors for the slow trickle of incoming or experienced judges. Unfortunately, many of those judges have retired or passed on. Today, while a few experienced judges remain, there are many new or newer judges who have come on the bench in a relatively short period of time, at times without prior litigation experience.
- B. **Training of judges:**
 - 1. Current training program of judges needs to be improved if the Navajo Nation is to maintain a modern ‘flagship’ court system.
 - 2. Historically, there was greater application of common law in the courts, in addition to a relatively smaller body of statutory or case law.
 - 3. The influx of new judges was gradual in the past, allow for time to learn while being mentored by more experienced judges.
 - i. Presently there are many new judges, clerical staff, staff attorneys and a new Chief Justice all of whom assumed their positions in a relatively recent and short period of time.
 - ii There is an insufficient body of seasoned or trained persons in the court system leaving judges/staff without enough mentors and resources.
 - iii There is a need for a cohesive, effective plan of supervision, mentorship and training for all levels of judicial branch employees.
 - iv At present, each court appears at times to ‘run their own show’ resulting in inconsistency between courts in policies, procedures, forms, rulings, court administration and judicial decision making.
 - (a) The above results in forum shopping, confusion, and a disheartened, fearful public who has lost confidence in their government or who have even left the Navajo Nation to move on to cities.
 - 4. Historically, cases were decided on a case-by-case basis, common sense, application of Fundamental Law principles or concepts of fundamental fairness without need for advanced legal training, knowledge, experience.
 - i Today, the body of Navajo statutory, procedural and case law, as well as policy is greatly expanded, resulting in an increased need for complex legal analysis by the bench. (i.e. Rules of Civil

Procedure, effective July 1, 1989; Child Support Enforcement Act, enacted and adopted by resolution on December 14, 1994, amended 2021).

- ii Dozens of Supreme Court Opinions have been issued creating binding precedent which cannot be ignored in favor of 'Fundamental Law.' In the alternative, cases will be ripe for appeal.
 - iii Deciding cases based on statutes, rules and cases does not make the court system 'less Navajo' as Fundamental Law and Navajo cultural considerations, values and life ways are presumably incorporated into such laws by the legislature and case law.
 - iv Outside body of law (i.e. state, federal) overlapping Navajo law has continued to expand, again requiring increasing legal analysis.
 - (a) We can say the Navajo Nation is sovereign, makes its own laws and does not have to consider outside law, but this is short sighted.
 - (b) There is increasing enactment of government-to-government compacts between the Navajo Nation/states.
 - (c) There is overlap with increasing body of federal law, as well as interpretative federal and state regulation and case law (i.e. Indian Child Welfare Act, or Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 and enactment of the Navajo Bill of Rights)
 - (d) There is overlap with increasing body of state law (i.e. Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act, and state case law having bearing on Navajo matters.)
5. In the few instances where a judge with legal training is appointed, there is over reliance and unrealistic expectation placed on this one aspect of qualification as if training, prior legal experience or supervision is not needed.
- i. Attending law school is insufficient to presume judicial qualification.
 - ii To expect a law school graduate to skip practicing law, assume the bench, and hear cases spanning multiple areas of the law is not only unrealistic but grossly unfair to the public, and to the judge.
 - iii A Chief Justice cannot be expected to teach a new judge all that he/she needs to know about all areas of the law, as a substitute for experience, particularly with a grossly insufficient budget.
 - iv Attending law school does not prepare a student for assuming the bench, or managing a court and/or staff.
 - v Some judges have unprofessional outbursts in court, are heavy handed or even take a punitive approach to counsels, especially if a decision is challenged by a litigant, or by a practitioner who must then choose between silence or resulting malpractice, OR enraging the judge by moving to set aside erroneous decisions or filing for post judgment relief which is often simply ignored. A naat' áani

should take personal responsibility for errors and simply apologize and correct them.

- (1) Litigant costs are being run through the roof due to erroneous decision making and misguided processes.
- (a) Some judges engage in practices with court staff that are inconsistent with Navajo concepts such as K'é and/or the Canons of Judicial Conduct, resulting in staff 'pushback', deflated morale and increase turnover as staff members are unable to get redress for their grievances.
 - (1) Staff seek legal advice but counsels are afraid to get involved. *Affidavits of staff and litigants are available upon request.*
 - (2) When staff quit jobs, lack of remaining experienced staff causes delay and furthers the existing problems (i.e. delaying handling of mail, lack of seasoned personnel, etc.)
- (b) Inexperienced judges often apply law/rules unequally between pro se parties and represented parties
 - (1) Pro se parties do not get separate rules but are held to the same high standards as a counsel
 - (2) Why have counsel if you are treated better being pro se?
 - (3) Courts grant unfair/unnecessary continuances to pro se litigants, increasing costs to represented parties.
 - (4) Courts hold unnecessary hearings when a pro se party is involved, even when pro se person objects, scheduling matters months and years out on simple matters where no hearing is required (i.e. no defense is available, rules already foreclose course of action, parties have already settled and want to move on, orders urgently needed for custody, support, discovery, etc.).
 - (i) Increases costs and delays justice.
 - (ii) Takes court resources away from other parties who are waiting for adjudication or decision making.
 - (iii) Creates appearance pro se person is being favored.
 - (iv) As Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne stated in her Fiscal Year 2023 First quarter Report, "[w]e risk delaying justice for our people when we do not have the resources to move their cases along expeditiously," and "it is our goal that *every* case before the Navajo Nation courts be heard in a reasonable

amount of time and individuals are served in the best possible way.” (P4)

6. Similarly, over reliance on Navajo fluency of a judge is insufficient for judicial appointment; at times in the past, this requirement formed a predominate basis for appointment or declining appointment.
 - i Fluency, like a law degree, should only be one factor in appointment.
 - (a) Fluency does not guarantee knowledge of Fundamental Law, nor does lack of fluency preclude it.
 - (b) Laws, rules, case law, pleadings and orders are all written in the English language.
 - (c) Proceedings are almost entirely conducted in English.
 - (d) Interpretation services should be readily available in all cases; this is a necessity as transcription services simply put “unintelligible” in the transcript where Navajo is spoken.
 - (e) Roving interpreter services should be provided. There are agencies that provide translation and interpretation in all languages such as Reliable Translations. **See Exhibit D.**
 - ii Rules/law needs to be amended to address interpretation.
 - (a) Rule 43(c) Nav.R.Civ.P. only states “interpretation in Navajo and English shall be flexible and freely allowed to do justice.
 - (b) Some case law and local rules mandate non-Navajo speaking person have burden of arranging interpretation, “if a Navajo speaking party or witness appears in a court proceeding.”
 - (i) This is an unreasonable standard: no one knows when a Navajo speaker will testify in Navajo instead of English; no one can afford to arrange an interpreter in each case.
 - (c) Some Local Rules require disclosure to opposite party if party anticipates testimony of a Navajo speaker and is required to provide their own interpreter. (Chinle)
 - (d) Rules of evidence require an interpreter to be treated as an expert witness implicating other rules/processes.
7. Solutions and benefits:
 - i Will allow greater access to judicial candidates possessing a number of qualifications; language can be addressed through other means if candidate not fluent but otherwise qualified.
 - ii. Facilitates improvement in all areas below contained in outline.
 - iii Standardize local and procedural rules to provide consistent, alternative approaches to interpretation, thereby eliminating overreliance on Navajo language factor and promoting fairness.
 - iv Develop a program with law/undergraduate schools whereby Navajo Nation pays tuition (stipend, scholarship) for judicial candidate with requirement to complete program, pass state and

- Navajo bar, practice in Navajo courts for minimum number of years, and serve as a judge for minimum years to recoup cost.
- v Develop standardized judicial training program with on-going training and self-study in all areas of law, management of court, Canons of Judicial Conduct, and supervision.
- vi Develop, publicize and *utilize* a complaint process for public and practitioners regarding judicial conduct that is *effective*, accessible and speedy.

C. Domestic Violence Commissioners: training, qualification, compensation

1. The entire system of domestic violence proceedings in the Navajo Nation Family Courts is utterly broken, ineffective and causing devastation to the public and broad scale embarrassment to the Navajo Nation. Significant attention, training and increase in budget is necessary to address the following concerns on an emergency or immediate basis.
 - i Some triers of fact appear unqualified to hear domestic violence cases; this is a highly specialized and critical area of law requiring specialized training, in *addition* to training in legal analysis, weighing of evidence, and application of law, procedure and rules.
 - (a) Some commissioners believe that *only* Rules for Domestic Violence Proceedings apply in a vacuum, failing to consider any rules of procedure, evidence, or other law.
 - (b) Some commissioners and judges have insufficient legal training to weigh evidence and frequently arrive at grossly mistaken conclusions, giving protection to the actual abuser and denying protection to the victim and children.
Affidavits of litigants are on file and can be reviewed on request. Counsel can provide a number of 'horror' stories.
 - (1) Many litigants are poor and cannot afford appeals; therefore, there is no meaningful oversight into this process.
 - (2) Appeals take far too long and thus litigants are spending enormous sums filing for post judgment relief, which is often simply ignored by the issuing court. *See Fiscal Year 2023 First Quarter Report, p 27-28 revealing that 109 Supreme Court cases remain pending, the vast majority of which have piled up since 2016. An Order of Protection would have already expired and caused severe harm to litigants who are thus abused by the system.*
 - (3) Abusers are experts at manipulating the system which is not taken into account by some triers of fact due to perhaps a lack of training or ability to engage in proper legal analysis.
 - (i) The victim is abused by the abuser, and then abused again by the 'system'.

- (ii) Some of the public has become extremely frustrated, hopeless and has lost faith in the Navajo Nation court system (some may leave the Navajo Nation as a result).
 - (iii) The public ‘explains’ the lack of justice as resulting from the Commissioner only getting paid if an order of protection is entered, or believe court is ‘biased’ (i.e., all men are abusers and all women are victims, the trier of fact is related to the abuser, etc.)
- (4) Courts erroneously tell purported ‘abuser’ (who may be true victim) that without a counterpetition, he/she is not entitled to a defense, or to call witnesses or present evidence. Conversely, they allow all sorts of material into evidence not in scope of petition, instead of requiring a counterpetition.
- (5) Commissioners/Navajo Nation fails to charge false filers with perjury or impose attorney fees and costs under belief that will discourage victims from filing. There is no right to false filing and these false cases clog the docket, waste resources, harm victims/children and entirely subvert the Domestic Abuse Protection Act and its important purposes. A false filer has nothing to lose and everything to gain by false filing.
- ii Form petitions which were recently ‘revised’ are cluttered, lengthy, confusing, poorly worded and grossly inadequate to effectuate the purposes of the Domestic Abuse Protection Act.
 - (a) Petitions misstate statutory definitions of domestic violence, impermissibly altering the burden of proof.
 - (b) Petitions are confusing to both litigants: orders of protection are serious business to litigants (i.e. orders of protection can result in loss of housing, jobs, children, weapons, as well as federal prosecution of *alleged* abuser).
 - (c) Form petitions should be redrafted by an attorney or panel of attorneys *practicing in this area* to ensure forms meet a correct legal standard, and their use should be adopted and standardized across Navajo Nation.
- iii. Courts improperly accept all or most petitions for filing even when demonstrating gross facial deficiencies such as lack of subject matter jurisdiction, improper venue, failure to state *any* domestic violence, evidence of improper motive (i.e. abuser is filing against true victim to beat him to the court house, get a quick custody order or award of property, or where rambling and conflicting statements indicate obvious lack of veracity, etc.).

- (a) This practice submits litigants to extreme fear, expense to hire attorney and seek dismissal, counterpetition, post judgment relief, appeal.
 - (1) Motions to dismiss often are denied on mistaken assumption that all petitions must be heard to protect victims and should not be dismissed on ‘technicalities’: lack of jurisdiction and failure to state domestic violence are not technicalities.
 - iv. There is no system of effective compensation for Domestic Violence Commissioners.
 - (a) Commissioners are only paid if an Order of Protection is granted.
 - (1) Creates a conflict of interest.
 - (2) Public believes orders of protection are granted so Commissioner can be paid or in order to increase federal funding (by a showing of the dangers on a reservation).
 - (3) These public perceptions are another attempt to explain the lack of justice.
 - v. At times, here is a loss of outside public respect of the Navajo Nation by some, due to these problems which affects outside enforcement of Navajo orders of protection and thus slowly chips away at the Navajo Nation’s sovereignty.
- 2. Solutions:
 - i. Identify and allocate significant funds to implement solutions.
 - ii. Develop a meaningful recruitment, training and supervision program for Domestic Violence Commissioners.
 - (a) Upon information and belief, there is presently no person/agency in place in Navajo Nation government with recognized expertise in this area who develop, teach or provide such training.
 - (1) Look to persons outside Judicial Branch or Navajo government on a contract basis.
 - (2) Compose a task force of practitioners in this area to assist, including to revamp the process, forms, library of materials, resources, etc.
 - iii. Develop and fund a compensation program designed to ensure recruitment and retention of qualified personnel trying cases.
 - iv. Recruit and compensate *qualified* personnel to serve as Domestic Violence Commissioners even if must recruit outside the Navajo Nation.
 - v. Build an online library of domestic violence materials for use of public, practitioners and triers of fact to include not only public education, but availability of resources, including shelters, counseling, transportation, attorneys, animal boarding/fostering.

- vi. Develop an online video for mandatory viewing by any person wishing to file for an order of protection explaining the purpose of filing, the process, the forms, inability to obtain permanent custody orders, the consequences of perjury or false filing and directing victims to available resources.
- vii. Develop a greater public outreach to educate members of the public about the many forms of domestic violence (i.e. physical abuse, threatening, emotional abuse, coercion, control, confinement, harassment, etc.), as well as the availability of help and resources.
 - (a) Abusers often don't realize they are abusive if they were exposed to or witnessed the same behavior in childhood (still believe they are the victim), and would benefit from such education.
 - (b) Victims often don't realize they are being abused, if they were exposed to or witnessed the same behavior in childhood (the abuse is "normal").
 - (c) There is a high correlation between domestic violence and animal abuse; include this in public education.

III DISORGANIZATION IN COURTS/PROCEEDINGS

A. Judicial/Hearings

- 1. There does not appear to be any effective process in place which would ensure that cases can be addressed in a timely, judicially and legally correct and efficient manner.
 - i Some courts with seasoned judges function better (i.e. To'hajiilee), while other courts appear to struggle more.
 - (a) Decisions and cases are often not handled on a timely basis.
 - (b) There appears to be no organization of pending matters.
 - (c) Motions may sit for months or never be addressed.
 - (1) Motions to continue not addressed by time of trial.
 - (2) Counsel's Motions to withdraw may sit for months: where counsel is terminated, he/she cannot take further action, yet ongoing matters need attending to or case is getting close to trial and litigant cannot find new counsel because still represented by terminated or withdrawing counsel.
 - (3) Judges frequently do not appear to read orders prepared by counsels containing errors, and then sign them, resulting in additional proceedings to correct.
 - (4) Multiple motions in same case are addressed inconsistently: one may be handled in a month, another in a year, some are simply ignored.
 - (5) Briefs/legal issues may sit for years especially if there is a complex legal issue and judge does not

- (6) At times judge does not enter *any* order following hearing on complex issues leaving the parties in an unmanageable situation.
 - (d) It is unknown whether staff attorney (where there is one) or clerk screens materials based on urgency, need for research, decision making, or those needing mere ministerial decisions, or if judges are simply not attending to these pleadings.
 - (1) All courts need a staff attorney to aid in prioritizing and organizing these materials for the judge.
 - (2) All courts should have a realistic calendaring system maintained by judge or staff attorney.
 - (e) Solutions:
 - (1) Increase funding to allow each court to have a staff attorney.
 - (2) Require staff attorney or judge to organize cases, tickle deadlines, address motions in timely manner, prioritize cases/issues.
 - (3) Require reporting/supervision to determine status of cases, how long pending, reason for delay.
 - (4) Standardize the process across all Navajo courts.
 - (5) Issue directive mandating an order be entered in all cases.
- ii There does not appear to be a standardized process for judges to prepare for hearings.
- (a) Judges at times do not even have file with them or are not prepared at the time of hearing (i.e. have not read file).
 - (b) Judge may make decision or sign orders without facts/law.
 - (c) Where counsels submit proposed orders, are often not signed at time of hearing (or often for months) because judge does not have it with him/her at time of hearing.
 - (d) If judge is not prepared or doesn't understand matters, judge simply indicates will take under advisement and may then allow case to sit for months, years or indefinitely.
 - (e) Lack of preparedness prevents judge from making meaningful or accurate and *mandatory* findings of facts and conclusions of law.
 - (1) Erroneous decisions lead to post judgment relief, discord between parties, suffering by litigants, or filing of writs or appeals.
 - (f) These problems trap Navajo litigants in desperate, problematic situations (i.e. no custody order, no child support, cannot conclude probate and grieve, opposite party may hide funds/assets, debts go unpaid).
 - (g) Solutions:

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(g) Solutions:

- (1) Develop standardized process for hearing preparation, implement and supervise for compliance.
- iii Courts may hold too many unnecessary hearings, causing delay, clogging docket.
 - (a) Courts hold hearings on signed stipulated orders even where parties talked things out, achieved resolution, and object/don't want hearings. (The Navajo fundamental principle of law, or t'áá Mvó ají t'éego, or "it's up to him" applies to allow litigants to have input and decision making, not be treated as children who don't know their own mind or need 'protection'.)
 - (1) Hearings may not held to determine fair and just standard, but for no discernable reason; at times litigants grilled in demeaning manner (is this your signature, can you read, how is your English, are you under the influence of anything).
 - (2) Hearings are often not necessary on joint motions and stipulated orders (i.e. DNA testing, continuance, etc.), signed stipulated orders, motions to compel where all discovery deadlines passed with no response/objection/request for protection, and no response to motion to compel filed, and thus no defenses remain pursuant to rule/case law.
 - (3) Hearings are held on stipulations because "one person is pro se": pro se persons have same rules and are held to same high standards as counsel, and do not get special protection from judge, and often do not want these hearings. *See iii(a) above re Navajo maxim.*
 - (4) These hearings clog docket, take time away from other litigants (*See First Year 23 First Quarterly Report noting excessive backlog of cases, P. 63-67*), increases court/litigant costs, unfairly increases response/reply time as courts allow response and reply up to date of hearing, denying due process to opposing party and ignoring local rule deadlines; delay leaves litigants trapped in unmanageable situations (i.e. need child support, custody order, divorce, cannot grieve/finalize probate, divorcing litigants pass away before splitting property causing probate mess, assets/debts squandered by party in possession, debts go unpaid, harmony cannot be restored).
 - (5) Solutions:

- (a) Develop written guidelines for when hearings are to be held or not held (Rule 7 is too vague/broad), particularly for newer judges.
 - (b) This can be a simple flow chart with statute/rule or case law providing ‘reasoning.’
 - (c) Implement and monitor to avoid waste of court/litigant resources, timely processing of cases.
- iv Courts may set hearing for pretrial conferences before answer filed, others try to dismiss immediately following 30 day period.
 - (a) Where no answer is filed, parties move to default, pursuant to Rule 55 Nav.R.Civ.P., *not* pretrial conference/phase.
 - (1) Creates appearance of impropriety, as if trying to protect defaulting party by forcing him/her to a hearing, particularly if defaulting party is pro se.
 - (2) Runs up costs.
 - (3) Wastes judicial resources.
 - (b) Solutions:
 - (1) Develop written guidance on this issue.
 - (2) Can be a simple flow chart directing the process per Rule 16 and 55 Nav.R.Civ.P.
- v. Courts enter a standardized Pretrial Conference Notice that conflicts with Supreme Court case law. ***See Exhibit E, E-1***
 - (a) Notice states, ‘appear with witnesses and evidence’: courts *cannot* take testimony or consider evidence at pretrial or status conferences per *John Doe BF v Diocese of Gallup*, SC-CV-06-10 (Nav.Sup.Ct. Sept. 9, 2011). This is an antiquated form of notice.
 - (b) These notices terrify litigants, waste resources as people under pressure before case is developed to bring evidence and witnesses, who must take time off work and spend money on travel unnecessarily.
 - (c) Solution:
 - (1) Develop a standardized form of Pretrial Order to be adopted by all Navajo Nation courts, barring use of prior form of order.
- vi. Courts entered poorly worded written orders;
 - (a) Written orders often uninformed or written incorrectly so do not comply with law/fact.
 - (b) Do not accurately describe what a party must do or not do, causing confusion.
 - (c) Do not accurately account for funds paid/owed.
 - (d) Do not contain mandatory findings of fact and conclusions of law.

- (e) At times, court bases decision on one party's presentation, but does not recite the law/facts in oral decision and directs a counsel to draft the order causing a dilemma: should counsel include appropriate findings/conclusions where not spoken by judge?
 - (1) Opposing counsel says order inaccurate, not what judge said, won't sign order.
 - (2) Without law, facts, findings, conclusions, order will result in appealable error and confusion by parties (why did judge make that decision?).
 - (g) Each of these problems increases costs, or results in show cause proceedings, writs, appeals, modification, discord between parties, loss of confidence in court by public.
 - (h) Solutions:
 - (1) Install staff attorney in each court (or may share).
 - (2) Require orders to be reviewed for accuracy, language, etc.
 - (3) Could solve issue by taking extensive notes or allowing both counsels to submit proposed order for court to adopt with ability to modify.
 - (4) In alternative, require staff attorney to listen to recording, review briefs, prepare order.
 - (i) However, this may cause delay.
- vii Rules of Civil Procedure do not contain response/reply times for motion practice causing arbitrary/inconsistent practices by courts.
 - (a) Four courts have local rules establishing response/reply times, but at times do not comply with their own timelines.
 - (1) Court may ignore motion for months thereby unofficially 'extending' response or reply times, then accept those responses and replies late or even the night before hearing.
 - (i) Instead of disallowing late pleading, court may cancel hearing at last minute and give opposing party time to reply, further delaying case, increasing costs.
 - (ii) No response/reply should be allowed, filed or considered after deadline; parties and court will then know matter is 'at issue' for decision and unfairness is prevented.
 - (b) Solutions:
 - (1) Rules of Civil Procedure should be amended to provide clear, standardized response and reply times and consequences for expiration of those times.
 - (2) Standardize treatment of this issue in all courts

determining that pleadings are not to be accepted or acted upon outside mandatory times regardless of when hearing (if any) is set.

- (3) In alternative, standard form of Pretrial Order should issue in *all cases*, containing schedule for response and reply.
- (4) Even better, standard form of a notice or order could be served on all parties from beginning of case, accompanying endorsed petition with copy for Respondent to be served with summons, containing response/reply times, requirements for motion filing (case number, signature, certificate of service, etc.), explaining process thoroughly.

viii Courts make separate/special unwritten rules for pro se litigants.

- (a) The Rules of Civil Procedure “govern the procedure in all civil actions” (Rule 1).
- (b) Courts give legal advice and various forms of ‘protection’ to pro se persons.
- (c) Courts allow pro se person to ‘play sympathy/ignorance card’ or abuse process (i.e. ‘I didn’t answer discovery because I didn’t receive it’, despite a valid certificate of service of counsel).
- (d) Courts allow filing of simple emails or hand written notes addressed to a court from pro se persons, without date, case number, signature – required by Rule 11- or certificate of service – required by Rule 5(a) and (b) and without any compliance to rules for pleading.
 - (1) Opposing party often doesn’t even know it is filed.
 - (2) May contain impermissible material (i.e. hearsay).
 - (3) Opposing party doesn’t know if court is treating as a pleading and wastes resources on response.
 - (4) Court acts on these materials or set hearings.
 - (5) These are often ex parte and prohibited communications.
- (e) Solutions:
 - (1) Written guidelines should be provided to all Navajo Nation courts disallowing these practices of allowing separate rules, extra or last-minute continuances outside parameters of rules.
 - (i) No legal advice to any party by a judge (or clerk) in orders or from bench.
 - (ii) No separate rules: Navajo Rules of Civil Procedure/Evidence and case law apply to all parties.
 - (iii) Training for staff so that no documents should be accepted which do not comply

with Rules (case number, date, name of parties, signature (Rule 11) and certificate of service should be minimum standard.) (Historically, clerks would return the document to filer with reasons for non-acceptance checked off on a form accompanying returned item.)

- (2) Courts could go back to entering a Temporary Domestic Order or something similar, which may go further to inform all parties to a civil case of basic requirements for pleading, continuance, submission of exhibit/witness lists and actual exhibits, explaining process, etc. *See vi(b)(4)*.

ix Courts may enter pretrial orders *before* there is a pretrial conference, violating Rule 16(e) Nav.R.Civ.P., and which contain impermissible materials

- (a) These orders may contain *legal advice*, some of which is incorrect, directing parties as to what they must prove on each outstanding issue to win their case; advice may be incorrect.
- (b) Order may exceed the scope of a pretrial order or contain schedules that are impossible (i.e. telling parties to complete discovery *after* their exhibit and witness lists are due, when discovery responses are often used as Exhibits, telling parties when discovery is due when the legislature has already determined that in Rule 33(e).
 - (1) Litigant must waste resources moving for relief in order to avoid inevitable violation or impossibility of the order; court may then ignore litigant motion.
- (c) Orders often do not contain instructions re expert witnesses processes (i.e. the need to disclose expert, procedure for submitting expert material)
 - (1) Unscrupulous practitioners mail expert material to court instead of properly putting expert on stand for voir dire *before* offering report and may not give report to opposing counsel in advance of trial.
- (d) Solutions:
 - (1) Provide written direction that this practice is not allowed: Rule 16 and other Rules of Civil Procedure (i.e. Rule 33) and associated timelines are governing. Pretrial Orders entered after Pretrial Conference only and with input from counsels/litigants as to timelines, deadlines, etc.
 - (2) No legal advice to parties as to what they must prove, establish, etc.

- x There is no clear policy for continuances which are thus being allowed on an arbitrary and inconsistent basis.
 - (a) Rule 5, Rules of Court: no continuance for final hearing unless filed in writing five days in advance unless exigent circumstances (i.e. death, weather, health): Some courts allow this at last minute when parties are assembled; others deny them even when exigent circumstances present.
 - (b) There is no Rule and scant case law on when/what is process re continuance on non-final hearing, causing further confusion and inconsistency.
 - (1) At times, courts grant multiple continuances without good cause, even on frivolous grounds, driving up costs out of the reach of most litigants.
 - (2) At other times, courts deny continuances when good cause exists, causing unfairness.
 - (c) Solutions:
 - (1) Amend Rules of Civil Procedure to provide better mandates re continuances for final hearings as well as motion and other pretrial hearings.
 - (2) In the interim, enter written guidance to court to require written and timely motions for continuances with service on opposite party in the absence of exigent circumstances which should be defined in the written guidance.
- xi Courts unfairly utilize Navajo Division of Social Services.
 - (a) Courts defer almost exclusively to recommendation of case worker without consideration of evidence/law.
 - (b) Social Workers wield excessive power over people's lives while worker may lack requisite training, knowledge, skill, education and supervision in related areas, including areas of psychology, infant/child bonding, mental health and basic legal premises.
 - (1) The Division of Social Services does not have access/funding to consult with psychologists or mental health professionals for training, guidance.
 - (2) Governing law changed in 2012, allowing children's cases to be removed from judicial scrutiny as an "informal adjustment" and may be privately "settled" between the parties and case worker who may just wants to close the case due to a variety of reasons. Places children back in dangerous circumstances without court supervision.
 - (c) These deficiencies cause significant harm to Navajo families and children.
 - (d) Where parties competing for placement, courts often order

home study investigation on only one party, foreclosing consideration of other party.

- (e) Social Workers either are not ordered, or do not follow orders to give their report to both parties. (Due process)
- (e) Home study should be only one criteria for judicial decision making, not sole basis for it until such times as funding can be increased to improve standards in the Division.
- (f) Solutions:
 - (1) Informal adjustment should be abolished or greater scrutiny of this practice should be required (i.e. showing of how it satisfies best interest of child). (Amend 'Alchíní Bi Beehaz ánnii Act of 2011.)
 - (2) Provide written guidance to Courts to eliminate sole reliance on Home Study, for study to be done on all competing households, copy of report to all parties.
 - (3) Increase funding to Division of Social Services to allow for greater training, recruitment of qualified personnel and access to expert information.

B. Clerical staff issues

- 1. Mail from parties/counsel is not timely processed, or is handled in a chaotic, inconsistent and confusing manner.
 - i At times, it appears that clerical staff do not pick up or process mail for days on end.
 - (a) This causes litigants to lose available relief due to late filing or processing of their documents.
 - (b) At times, documents sent Fed-X or other prioritized mailing are not ever picked up and are returned to sender.
 - (c) At times, payment to court is not cashed for weeks on end.
 - (d) Often Clerk's Certificate of Service contains false information as to date of service, or even the act of service.
 - (e) Often, there is no Certificate of Service accompanying an order, or it contains inaccurate info (false date, false act of service, false method of service).
 - (f) Endorsed pleadings in some courts are never provided, provided weeks after filing, or are provided only to one party.
 - (g) Often orders are not dispatched to litigants upon entry, are delayed weeks, months, years or permanently.
 - (1) This causes litigants to lose important time sensitive rights, such as seeking post judgment relief, filing appeals, or complying with rights/obligations under order.
 - (2) This happens even at appellate level, in one known case, for as long as several years without service of

- the opinion, or failing to address relief requested (i.e. attorney fees for frivolous appeals).
- (h) Requests for documents/recordings and associated payment can be ignored and/or lost by court.
- ii Solutions:
- (a) Better training and written guidelines, developing clear policies and prioritizing work.
 - (b) Increase funding to increase staff.
 - (c) Permit e-filing of pleadings using e-file date, and mandate e-filing of orders with mailing of certified copies to parties. *See P.1, B(2) above.*
 - (d) Allow for online payment of all fees/funds. *See P.3 B(3).*
- iii E-filing to Court/Clerk not handled consistently/efficiently.
- (a) Often clerks use their own e-mail instead of court e-mail to contact parties, enclose documents, seek available hearing dates, etc.
 - (1) This requires counsels and litigants to know the e-mail address of every clerk employed by the Navajo Nation in order to find the documents at a later date or in the alternative know the date of the e-mail (which may be months earlier) or scroll through thousands of e-mails.
 - (2) E-mailing from Court e-mail address is much easier: that address is simply entered on inbox and all e-mails appear chronologically
 - (i) If subject line contains case name/number, it is even more efficient.
 - (b) Clerks are now accepting every document submitted by a litigant for 'filing', even where materials are impermissible (no certificate of service, no mandatory signature, no names or case numbers, no clear content (i.e. is this an answer, motion, etc.)).
 - (1) Historically, clerks were required to return these documents to sender with a form advising why it was being returned. (i.e. no certificate of service, no Rule 11 signature, impermissible material like such as expert or hearsay material, etc.) No presentation to judge was allowed.
 - (2) This process was stopped in the last few years causing chaos.
 - (i) Where expert, hearsay, impermissible material given to judge, cannot 'un-ring that bell' creating appearance of impropriety.
 - (ii) Opposing party may not even know is filed; Therefore cannot file answer.

- (iii) Litigants have no idea how court treats material (is this an answer? What to do if there are now multiple answers? Is it a motion? Response? Reply? A litigant cannot answer an Answer or Reply, but should answer a Motion or Counterclaim.)

(c) Solution:

- (1) Enter standardized written guidance to clerks in all Navajo Nation courts to stop this process, with instructions to reject or return document, accompanied by the form letter stating reasons.
- (2) If document was mailed, return with form letter checking off reasons for return, without filing.
- (3) If defective document was e-mailed, return with form letter and delete from e-mail.

C. Conclusion/consequence of inaction

- 1. The failure to address these multiple incorrect, unfair, disorganized and inefficient processes causes harm to the very Navajo public – including families, individuals, children, and businesses - the Courts are supposed to be serving.
- 2. The Navajo Nation court system appears *entirely broken*; it has often ceased to function fairly and efficiently.
- 3. It is no longer the model Indian Nation court system that it once was, which is extremely disturbing, as the Navajo Nation occupies a larger land base than other tribes and has a much larger population than most.
- 4. Other tribes with fewer resources are surpassing the Navajo Nation in their sophisticated court systems, driving Navajo people to leave the reservation, bring their cases in state courts where there is concurrent jurisdiction thereby eroding Navajo sovereignty, and causing loss of respect or in some cases, outright disrespect of the Navajo Nation by outside entities.
- 5. The longer government takes to make these urgently needed changes, the worse the problem becomes: many employees have quit their jobs or transferred, counsels are leaving or refusing to take cases, and harm continues to be accrued to litigants/public.

IV PRACTITIONERS/BAR ASSOCIATION

A. Shortage of counsels

- 1. Bar membership for practitioners taking cases has declined significantly in recent years, creating a severe shortage in several areas of law.
 - i. It is entirely unclear how many counsels are actively taking cases in the Navajo Nation Bar Association. The master list of counsels is inaccurate, contains approximately 140 inactive members, dozens of judicial members, government

employees, employees in agencies who do not take cases, etc.

- (a) The list has a number of counsels for each district, which entirely conflicts with the number shown in the master of all members, and conflicts further with the number shown with name and contact information for each judicial district.
- ii. The online listing for the public lists only 21 counsels, only five of whom state that they accept Family Law cases.

See Exhibit B.

- (a) Window Rock lists 13 counsels; none reside on the Navajo Nation, 2 reside in Gallup, the remaining 11 reside in cities 150 miles away or greater. Only 2 state they accept Family Law cases and upon information and belief, neither are accepting new cases with few exceptions.
- (b) In reality there are many more counsels, with significant numbers of inactive, judicial, government, agency/limited practice, retired persons not listed as retired and those not accepting cases due to specialty, travel, or the extreme problems in the court system.
- iii. Recently, dozens of counsels were disbarred for non-compliance with fees and CLE requirements; The Executive Director is presently preparing 87 Petitions for Suspension for non-payment.
- iv. During the pandemic, many retired, quit, or passed away; many of us have health problems and cannot travel the great distances to/on the Navajo Nation or appear in person but are being forced out of practice by refusal to allow electronic or virtual appearances.
- v. Counsels are retiring or quitting due to unsatisfactory work conditions, and extreme frustration with the situation in the Navajo Nation courts.
 - (a) Too much travel to hearings, judicial error, decline in policies/practices.
 - (b) Costs are running up from errors/poor practices, and attorneys cannot get paid (clients cannot afford).
- vi. Cannot attract new counsels unless make change to allow e-filing and electronic appearances, standardized procedures, establish written guidelines and policies, and enable access to law on line.
- vii. Litigants are desperately begging counsels to take cases;
 - (1) Most experienced counsels are overloaded and exasperated, often unpaid.

- (2) Many counsels have driven their health into the ground and are ill from the extreme stress they are subject to.
 - (3) Courts now will not let us appear electronically and we are not well enough to travel, risk diseases, drive long distances where medical services are not readily available, sit or stand for long periods, be without water, medication, food.
 - (4) Some counsels take far more cases than they can manage and cause harm to their clients or become part of the 'problem' as a result.
2. The Navajo Nation must make changes identified above so that existing/experienced counsels can be retained in more manageable work environments, and new counsels can be recruited.

B. Standards of practice by counsels are declining instead of improving

- 1. Unscrupulous counsels take advantage of the lack of training/knowledge of judges or simply having declining morals/morale resulting from frustration and exasperation ("If you don't care about your court system and litigants, why should I?")
 - i Documents are filed/submitted that do not comply with law, mislead courts or out-and-out lead court 'astray'.
 - a. This leads to judicial error, post judgment pleadings, increased costs, writs and appeals or worse, injustice and outright harm.
 - b. It is embarrassing to the Navajo Nation when outside courts/agencies become aware.
 - c. These practices contribute to the erosion of the court system as newer counsels/judges have no one to learn from. (Our profession should engage in 'bootstrapping' to pull one another up, not oppress.)
 - d. Judges are busy and should be able to rely on the work of a counsel put before the judge.
 - e. When judge does not know the law, there is no 'checks and balances' on these behaviors.
 - f. Many members of the public experience poverty and do not have the funds to hire counsel or replacement counsel to rectify these matters.
 - ii Many counsels violate settled law with their practices (i.e. discovery rules) on a repeat basis and courts do nothing about it to the detriment of the public.
- 2. Ghost writing
 - i. A number of counsels prepare pleadings for litigants when such counsels have not entered their appearance and are therefore, frequently ill-advised in the case.
 - a. They do not sign their name to pleadings, in violation of Rule 11 although presumably taking

funds for the work; the litigant is therefore left 'holding the bag' if there is a violation. (Three courts have local rules addressing this but they are not enforced.)

- b. The Navajo Nation should promulgate rules/law addressing this practice. (i.e. Either prohibit it with consequences for violation or allow it on specific terms and conditions.)
- c. Other persons practice law without a license and are not disciplined in any way, even when their participation is obvious.

3. Lack of disclosure to the public

- i. Counsels occasionally have misleading advertisements directed to the public that violate state bar rules, while practicing on the Navajo Nation.

- a. Can the Navajo Nation make rules barring this when they do not license state attorneys?

- ii The Navajo Nation has allowed advocates to position themselves as attorneys without distinction, unlike other tribes who provide public notice of the 'advocate' status.

See Exhibit F.

- a. Advocates have served a very important function in both government and private sector work on the Navajo Nation. Some of the Navajo Nation's best judges and long-term employees are advocates.

- b. However, the public has a right to know the difference when hiring counsel.

- (1) Attorneys must have a bachelors and law degree; advocates are not required to have either.

- (2) Attorneys must maintain trust accounts/ accounting regarding client funds; advocates are not required to have either and usually comingle funds or are unable to refund them when problems arise.

- (i) An advocate may choose to have a separate client account but there is no agency to monitor the trust aspect of such an account as there is with attorneys.

- (3) Most jurisdictions require attorneys to carry professional malpractice insurance or at minimum, make disclosure as to the lack of insurance; advocates are not required to do either.

- (i) An insurance carrier will not provide such coverage to a non-law trained person due to the risk.
 - (ii) Law suits for malpractice are possible against both attorneys and advocates, but an advocate does not have the insurance to provide for the damages.
 - (4) Attorneys are either required or encouraged to have written client agreements governing the representation; advocates are not.
- c. Advocates have always served an important purpose and been part of the Navajo Nation Court system and should continue to do so; their numbers are declining.
 - (1) Disclosure of differences should be made to the public.
 - (2) Rules should be enacted to require advocates to resolve some of the differences (i.e. carry contracts, have a 'trust' account, not access client funds until earned, etc.).
 - (3) In the alternative, the public may be harmed.

C. Lack of CLE's

- 1. At present, there are few alternatives for a Navajo Bar member to obtain their continuing legal education credits ("CLE").
 - i The annual bar conference, which requires travel that some ill counsels cannot attend, or choose not to attend because of problems with content, offensive statements, etc.
 - a. Recently the conference has been video-taped providing another option, which should continue.
 - ii A last chance CLE in December.
 - ii A relatively small number of recordings.
- 2. There is an enormous body of CLE material offered through state bars, universities and private providers, on an equally enormous range of topics that would be beneficial to counsels and judges, many of which are available at reasonable cost (i.e. \$150.00 for a full 12 credits) or occasionally, at no cost.
 - i The Navajo Nation does not allow credit for participation in these CLE's which deprives its members of a significant amount of education on topics not provided by the Navajo Nation Bar Association, including many on relevant topics including Indian Law, trial practice, family law, business law, etc.
 - ii The Navajo Nation should allow at least a portion of annual CLE's to be completed from these sources.

END.

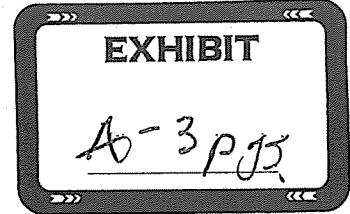
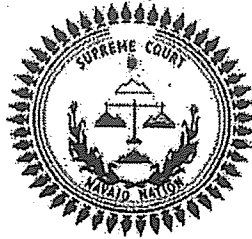
TABLE OF EXHIBITS

<u>Exhibit No.</u>	<u>Exhibit</u>
A	Administrative Order 42-2023 (3 page)
A-1	Memorandum from Crownpoint Judicial and Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court declining electronic mail filings, dated June 1, 2023
B	On line Navajo Nation Bar Association Listing of membership public (paid) listing with case types accepted (12 pages)
C	Email from Executive Director of Bar Association to membership warning of spread of Covid-19 at annual conference, dated June 12, 2023
C-1	Email from Executive Director of Bar Association to membership warning of spread of Covid-19 among people at swearing in event, dated June 14, 2023
D	Email from Reliable Translations advertising translation services in any language (3 pages)
E	Sample Notice of Pre-Trial Conference currently used by the courts which does not comply with 2011 Supreme Court case law (May 6, 2023)
E-1	Sample Notice of Pre-Trial Conference currently used by the courts which does not comply with 2011 Supreme Court case law (December 2, 2022)
F	Listing of Attorneys and Advocates Authorized to Practice in the Fort McDowell Tribal Courts

JUDICIAL BRANCH OF THE NAVAJO NATION

JOANN B. JAYNE
Chief Justice of the Navajo Nation

ELEANOR SHIRLEY
Associate Justice, Navajo Supreme Court



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE

P.O. Box 1779 Window Rock, Arizona 86515
Telephone 928-871-7669 Fax 928-871-6866

CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE NAVAJO NATION ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 42-2023

IN THE MATTER OF COURT OPERATIONS IN THE COURTS OF THE NAVAJO NATION BY RESCINDING THE CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN, THE ROADMAP TO FULL CAPACITY PLAN, TELEWORKING AGREEMENTS AND THE MASK MANDATE FOR JUDICIAL BRANCH FACILITIES

WHEREAS, the Chief Justice of the Navajo Nation is authorized to issue administrative orders pursuant to 7 N.N.C. § 371;

WHEREAS, the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch performs all justice services to the public guaranteed by the laws of the Navajo Nation;

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management declared a public health emergency to minimize the spread and adverse impacts of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) on the Navajo Nation and the Navajo Nation Department of Health issued an emergency public health order on March 18, 2020, to prohibit mass gatherings (social or group gatherings were limited to 10 people) and implemented other protective health precautions to address COVID-19;

WHEREAS, on March 24, 2020, the Chief Justice of the Navajo Nation directed the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch to immediately implement a number of protective measures to promote a safe environment for everyone who must visit or work in a Navajo Nation Judicial Branch facility during the COVID-19 public health emergency, including prioritization of essential cases and strict limitations of access to Judicial Branch facilities;

WHEREAS, on January 20, 2023, the Navajo Nation Department of Health with the Office of Environmental Health and Protection Program lifted the Indoor Mask Mandate through Public Health Emergency Order No. 2023-001, and on May 5, 2023, removed exceptions for the indoor mask mandate on the Navajo Nation through Public Health Emergency Order No. 2023-02;

WHEREAS, on April 10, 2023, President Joe Biden signed H.J. Res. 7, terminating the national emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, on May 5, 2023 the World Health Organization determined that COVID-19 no longer constitutes a public health emergency of international concern;

WHEREAS, on May 11, 2023 the United States Department of Health and Human Services allowed the federal Public Health Emergency to expire in order to transition out of emergency phase of public health responses;

WHEREAS, the Judicial Branch incorporated the four-step Diné problem solving methodology at the onset of the pandemic wherein Branch leadership used *Nitsáhdkees* to think through and formulate emergency operating plans. The Branch moved into the *Nahat'á*, stage with the adoption and implementation of the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) on March 27, 2020, and the Roadmap to Full Capacity Plan: Covid-19 Guidelines for the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch (Roadmap) on July 22, 2020. Since 2020, we have moved into *I'indá* and through our experiences to move forward with returning to full capacity we have learned how to reach our next step of *Sihasin* where we achieve enhanced functions to reach full capacity;

WHEREAS, the Judicial Branch provides for protective health and safety measures in its facilities while also ensuring our facilities remain open to provide services and maintain rule of law for the Navajo Nation;

WHEREAS, the courts and programs have effectively used the COOP and Roadmap to move toward full capacity operations;

WHEREAS, masks will continue to be available as an option for employees as well as visitors in Judicial Branch facilities;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED this Administrative Order shall be effective on May 31, 2023, at 5:00pm;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED the COOP and the Roadmap are rescinded through this Administrative Order;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED masks are not required but that employees or visitors may continue to wear a mask within Judicial Branch facilities;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED teleworking will not be authorized as no emergency exists;

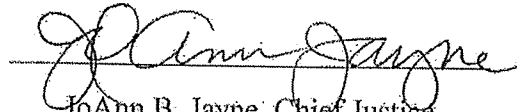
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that a copy of this Administrative Order shall be immediately distributed to all Judicial Branch employees by their supervisors;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED Administrative Order 13-2022 is withdrawn and replaced by this Administrative Order;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this order shall remain in effect until amended, withdrawn or rescinded by future order.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated this 15th day of May, 2023.


JoAnn B. Jayne, Chief Justice

JUDICIAL BRANCH OF THE NAVAJO NATION
JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF CROWNPOINT/PUEBLO PINTADO

Crownpoint District & Family Court
Post Office Box 6
Crownpoint, New Mexico 87313
PH: (505) 786-2072
FAX: (505) 786-2086
Email: nnepcourt@navajo-nsn.gov



Pueblo Pintado District & Family Circuit Court
4169A East Route 9
PMB 344
Cuba, New Mexico 87013
PH: (505) 655-3268
FAX: (505) 655-3272
Email: nnepcourt@navajo-nsn.gov

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Practitioners and Justice Partners

FROM:

Jamie & Mike

Jamie S Mike, Court Administrator

Crownpoint Judicial District and Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court

RE: Crownpoint Judicial and Pueblo Pintado Circuit Court will no longer accept electronic mail filings starting May 31, 2023 by 5 p.m.

DATE: Thursday, June 01, 2023

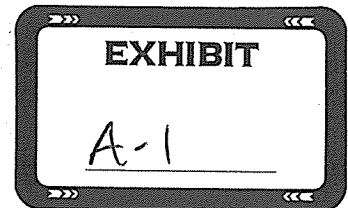
Upon Court Administrative Order 42-2023, issued by the Navajo Nation Supreme Court, Crownpoint Judicial District Court and Pueblo Pintado District Circuit Court will no longer accept filings by electronic mail beginning May 31, 2023 at 5 p.m. All filings must be filed according to applicable court rules. You will need to physically bring in your documents to the courthouse or put it in the drop box that is outside, or fax it to our district court fax # 505-786-2086. Anything filed by electronic mail will not be recognized by the court.

If you have any questions, please contact me directly by phone or e-mail @ jamie.mike@navajo-nsn.gov or call me at (928)-551-1575.

Concurred By:

[Signature]
Judge ~~Robert~~ *[Signature]* of the Navajo Nation

Cc: Judge Leonard Livingston, Crownpoint District Court & Pueblo Pintado District Circuit Court
Shawn R. Attakai, Staff Attorney, Crownpoint District Court & Pueblo Pintado District Circuit Court
Crownpoint and Pueblo Pintado District Court Clerks
Karen Francis, Acting Administrative Director of the Courts, Judicial Branch of the Navajo Nation



ALVINA EARNHART
PRESIDENT

SHAWN ATTAKAI
VICE-PRESIDENT

JULIA GUARINO
SECRETARY

RHONDA L. TUNI
TREASURER

NAVAJO NATION BAR ASSOCIATION, INC.

POST OFFICE BOX 690

WINDOW ROCK, ARIZONA 86515

(928) 871-2211

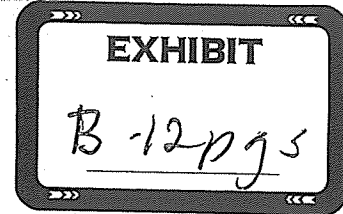
(928) 871-2229 FAX

E-MAIL: YOLANDA@NAVAJOLAW.INFO

EMAIL: AWAUNEKA@NAVAJOLAW.INFO

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT NAVAJOLAW.INFO

Window Rock District



Name of Attorney/Advocate: Tahda A. Ahtone

Mailing Address: 751 W. Colgate Dr., Tempe, Arizona 85283

Business Address:

Name of Law Firm: The Ahtone Law Firm, LLC

Office Phone Number: (828) 333-0333

E-Mail Address: tahda.ahtone@icloud.com Office Hours: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Do you have Consultation Fee: No Type of Firm: Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Civil, Transactional, Business and Non-profit Formation, Tax Exemptions, Copyright and Trademarks, Wills & Probate

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Litigation, Criminal Defense

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo, Colorado, Tonto Apache, Tohono O'odham

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Nathan S. Anderson

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 67350, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87193-7350

Business Address: 6240 Riverside Plaza LN NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87120

Name of Law Firm: Barber & Borg, LLC

Office Phone Number: (505) 884-0004 Fax Number: (505) 884-0077

E-Mail Address: nathan@barberborg.com Office Hours: M-F, 8-5

Do you have Consultation Fee: No Type of Firm: Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, Product Liability, Brain Injury, Premises Liability, Wrongful Death, Truck & Vehicle Accidents

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Child Support/Custody, Family Law, Collections, Grazing, Land Disputes, Criminal Defense, Disability/Social Security, Vehicle Repossession

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, Arizona, State & Federal, New Mexico State & Federal

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Joseph Austin

Mailing Address: 3386 W. Crestone Ct., Tucson, Arizona 85742

Business Address: 3386 W. Crestone Ct., Tucson, Arizona 85742

Name of Law Firm: The Law Office of Joseph Austin, Esq.

Office Phone Number: (520) 369-7680 Fax Number: (520) 346-6840

E-Mail Address: jaustin@austinlawfirm.org Office Hours: 8:00 am – 5:00 pm (AZ Time)

Do you have Consultation Fee: Call to Inquire Type of Firm: Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Corporate Law, Business Law, Statutory Agent Services, Family Law, Divorce, Land Disputes, Quiet Title, Probate, Criminal Defense, Repossession, Forcible Entry and Detainer/Eviction

Types of Cases Not Accepted:

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, State of New Mexico

Window Rock District (continued)

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Colin Wittman Bradley
Mailing Address: 2600 N. 44th St, Suite B101, Phoenix, Arizona 85008
Business Address: 2600 N. 44th St, Suite B101, Phoenix, Arizona 85008
Name of Law Firm: Colin Bradley Law PLLC
Office Phone Number: (602) 361-2551 **Fax Number:** (602) 361-2551
E-Mail Address: admin@cwbradleylaw.com **Office Hours:** 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday
Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private
Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Employment & General Civil Litigation
Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce & Child Custody
I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Arizona (State & Federal), Navajo Nation, Hopi, Gila River, Salt River Indian Community, Fort McDowell, Ak-Chin, White Mountain Apache & Tohono O'odham

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Forrest G. Buffington
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 67350, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87193-7350
Business Address: 6240 Riverside Plaza LN NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87120
Name of Law Firm: Barber & Borg, LLC
Office Phone Number: (505) 884-0004 **Fax Number:** (505) 884-0077
E-Mail Address: forrest@barberborg.com **Office Hours:** M-F, 8-5
Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private
Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, Product Liability, Brain Injury, Premises Liability, Wrongful Death, Truck & Vehicle Accidents
Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Child Support/Custody, Family Law, Collections, Grazing, Land Disputes, Criminal Defense, Disability/Social Security, Vehicle Repossession
I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, Arizona, State & Federal, New Mexico State & Federal, Utah State, Colorado State, Hopi & Zuni

Name of Attorney/Advocate: David Gomez
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1447, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504
Business Address: 347 E. Palace Ave., Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87504
Name of Law Firm: VanAmberg, Rogers, Yepa, Abrita, Gomez & Wilkinson, LLP
Office Phone Number: (505) 988-8979 **Fax Number:** (505) 983-7508
E-Mail Address: dgomez@nmlawgroup.com **Office Hours:** 8:30 – 5:00 M-F
Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private
Types of Cases Accepted: Indian Law, Government Relations, Education, Employment (For Employers), Business, Healthcare
Types of Cases Not Accepted: Family Law and Domestic Relations (Divorce, Custody, Child Support), Criminal Defense, Grazing, Homesite, Probate
I am licensed to practice in the following courts: New Mexico, Navajo Nation, New Mexico Federal Court

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Katherine P. LeBlanc
Mailing Address: 4801 Lang Ave. NE #110, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109
Business Address:
Name of Law Firm: Katherine P. LeBlanc, P.C.
Office Phone Number: (505) 798-2676 **Fax Number:**
E-Mail Address: kpl@katherinepleblanc.net **Office Hours:** 9 - 5
Do you have Consultation Fee: Yes, \$75 **Type of Firm:** Private
Types of Cases Accepted: Divorce, Custody, Child Support, Domestic Violence, Guardianship/Adoption, Some Criminal Law & Probate
Types of Cases Not Accepted: Land, Business, Employment
I am licensed to practice in the following courts: New Mexico & Navajo Nation

Window Rock District (continued)

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Calvin Lee

Mailing Address: 2418 E. Hwy 66 #186, Gallup, New Mexico 87301

Business Address: Same as above

Name of Law Firm: CJ Lee & Associates, P.C.

Office Phone Number: (505) 862-9837 **Fax Number:** (505) 213-0578

E-Mail Address: info@federalindianlawyer.com **Office Hours:** M – F 8 am – 5 pm

Do you have Consultation Fee: \$55 for 1st Hour **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Wrongful Death, Family Law, Complex Litigation and Federal Indian Law. Some Criminal Cases.

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Probate, Grazing, Land Dispute, Bankruptcy, SSI

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: State of New Mexico, Federal District of New Mexico, 10th Circuit, Zuni, Jicarilla, Aloma, Laguna

Name of Attorney/Advocate: William Keeler

Mailing Address: 235 W. Historic Hwy 66, Gallup, New Mexico 87301

Business Address: 235 W. Historic Hwy 66, Gallup, New Mexico 87301

Name of Law Firm: Keeler & Keeler, LLP

Office Phone Number: (505) 722-5608 **Fax Number:** (505) 722-5614

E-Mail Address: info@keelerandkeeler.com **Office Hours:** 8:30 am to 12:00 pm & 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, SS & SSI, Wrongful Death

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Wills/Probate

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: New Mexico, Navajo Nation

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Charles E. Martinez

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 732, Gilbert, Arizona 85299

Business Address: 215 N. Robson St., Mesa, Arizona 85201

Name of Law Firm: Martinez & Associates

Office Phone Number: (480) 633-7151

E-Mail Address: cemartinez1982@hotmail.com **Office Hours:** 9-5

Do you have Consultation Fee: \$100 **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Creditors Rights, Criminal, Bankruptcy

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Domestic Relations

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Arizona, Navajo Nation, Tohono O'odham, Salt River

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Michelle Redmond

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1447, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

Business Address: Same as above

Name of Law Firm: VanAmberg, Rogers, Yepa, Abrita, Gomez & Wilkinson, LLP

Office Phone Number: (505) 988-8979 **Fax Number:** (505) 983-7508

E-Mail Address: mredmond@nmllawgroup.com **Office Hours:** 8:30 – 5:30 M-F

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Indian Law, Business Law, Employment (for employers), Civil Litigation, Administrative Law, Environmental

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Family Law (Divorce, Separation, Custody, Child Support), Probate and Land Cases, Criminal Representation

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Southern Ute

Window Rock District (continued)

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Luralene D. Tapahe

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 4781, Window Rock, Arizona 86515

Business Address:

Name of Law Firm:

Office Phone Number: (253) 533-5300

E-Mail Address: tapahe@law@gmail.com **Office Hours:** 8:00 – 5:00 M-F

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Call or Text or Email

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Call or Text or Email

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Rita A. Yazzie

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 21392, Phoenix, Arizona 85036

Business Address: (Same as above)

Name of Law Firm: Law Office of Rita A. Yazzie

Office Phone Number: (602) 471-2757 **Fax Number:** Call for Fax #

E-Mail Address: Call for E-mail **Office Hours:** varies

Do you have Consultation Fee: No, but there is a time limit **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Family Law (Child Custody, Support, Visitation, paternity, divorce, guardianship, probate, adoption), land and grazing disputes, Criminal, Civil

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Employment, cases against NN, corporate, personal injury, wrongful death, repossession

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, Hualapai, Supai, San Carlos (pending), Quechan (pending), SRPMIC-Salt River

ART District

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Forrest G. Buffington

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 67350, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87193-7350

Business Address: 6240 Riverside Plaza LN NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87120

Name of Law Firm: Barber & Borg, LLC

Office Phone Number: (505) 884-0004 **Fax Number:** (505) 884-0077

E-Mail Address: forrest@barberborg.com **Office Hours:** M-F, 8-5

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, Product Liability, Brain Injury, Premises Liability, Wrongful Death, Truck & Vehicle Accidents

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Child Support/Custody, Family Law, Collections, Grazing, Land Disputes, Criminal Defense, Disability/Social Security, Vehicle Repossession

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, Arizona, State & Federal, New Mexico State & Federal, Utah State, Colorado State, Hopi & Zuni

Name of Attorney/Advocate: David Gomez

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1447, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

Business Address: 347 E. Palace Ave., Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87504

Name of Law Firm: VanAmberg, Rogers, Yepa, Abrita, Gomez & Wilkinson, LLP

Office Phone Number: (505) 988-8979 **Fax Number:** (505) 983-7508

E-Mail Address: dgomez@nmlawgroup.com **Office Hours:** 8:30 – 5:00 M-F

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Indian Law, Government Relations, Education, Employment (For Employers), Business, Healthcare

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Family Law and Domestic Relations (Divorce, Custody, Child Support), Criminal Defense, Grazing, Homesite, Probate

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: New Mexico, Navajo Nation, New Mexico Federal Court

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Michelle Redmond

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1447, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

Business Address: Same as above

Name of Law Firm: VanAmberg, Rogers, Yepa, Abrita, Gomez & Wilkinson, LLP

Office Phone Number: (505) 988-8979 **Fax Number:** (505) 983-7508

E-Mail Address: mredmond@nmlawgroup.com **Office Hours:** 8:30 – 5:30 M-F

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Indian Law, Business Law, Employment (for employers), Civil Litigation, Administrative Law, Environmental

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Family Law (Divorce, Separation, Custody, Child Support), Probate and Land Cases, Criminal Representation

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Southern Ute

Chinle District

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Nathan S. Anderson

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 67350, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87193-7350

Business Address: 6240 Riverside Plaza LN NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87120

Name of Law Firm: Barber & Borg, LLC

Office Phone Number: (505) 884-0004 **Fax Number:** (505) 884-0077

E-Mail Address: nathan@barberborg.com **Office Hours:** M-F, 8-5

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, Product Liability, Brain Injury, Premises Liability, Wrongful Death, Truck & Vehicle Accidents

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Child Support/Custody, Family Law, Collections, Grazing, Land Disputes, Criminal Defense, Disability/Social Security, Vehicle Repossession

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, Arizona, State & Federal, New Mexico State & Federal

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Colin Wittman Bradley

Mailing Address: 2600 N. 44th St, Suite B101, Phoenix, Arizona 85008

Business Address: 2600 N. 44th St, Suite B101, Phoenix, Arizona 85008

Name of Law Firm: Colin Bradley Law PLLC

Office Phone Number: (602) 361-2551 **Fax Number:** (602) 361-2551

E-Mail Address: admin@cwbradleylaw.com **Office Hours:** 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Employment & General Civil Litigation

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce & Child Custody

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Arizona (State & Federal), Navajo Nation, Hopi, Gila River, Salt River Indian Community, Fort McDowell, Ak-Chin, White Mountain Apache & Tohono O'odham

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Forrest G. Buffington

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 67350, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87193-7350

Business Address: 6240 Riverside Plaza LN NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87120

Name of Law Firm: Barber & Borg, LLC

Office Phone Number: (505) 884-0004 **Fax Number:** (505) 884-0077

E-Mail Address: forrest@barberborg.com **Office Hours:** M-F, 8-5

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, Product Liability, Brain Injury, Premises Liability, Wrongful Death, Truck & Vehicle Accidents

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Child Support/Custody, Family Law, Collections, Grazing, Land Disputes, Criminal Defense, Disability/Social Security, Vehicle Repossession

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, Arizona, State & Federal, New Mexico State & Federal, Utah State, Colorado State, Hopi & Zuni

Name of Attorney/Advocate: William Keeler

Mailing Address: 235 W. Historic Hwy 66, Gallup, New Mexico 87301

Business Address: 235 W. Historic Hwy 66, Gallup, New Mexico 87301

Name of Law Firm: Keeler & Keeler, LLP

Office Phone Number: (505) 722-5608 **Fax Number:** (505) 722-5614

E-Mail Address: info@keelerandkeeler.com **Office Hours:** 8:30 am to 12:00 pm & 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, SS & SSI, Wrongful Death

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Wills/Probate

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: New Mexico, Navajo Nation

Crownpoint District

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Nathan S. Anderson

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 67350, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87193-7350

Business Address: 6240 Riverside Plaza LN NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87120

Name of Law Firm: Barber & Borg, LLC

Office Phone Number: (505) 884-0004 **Fax Number:** (505) 884-0077

E-Mail Address: nathan@barberborg.com **Office Hours:** M-F, 8-5

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, Product Liability, Brain Injury, Premises Liability, Wrongful Death, Truck & Vehicle Accidents

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Child Support/Custody, Family Law, Collections, Grazing, Land Disputes, Criminal Defense, Disability/Social Security, Vehicle Repossession

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, Arizona, State & Federal, New Mexico State & Federal

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Forrest G. Buffington

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 67350, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87193-7350

Business Address: 6240 Riverside Plaza LN NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87120

Name of Law Firm: Barber & Borg, LLC

Office Phone Number: (505) 884-0004 **Fax Number:** (505) 884-0077

E-Mail Address: forrest@barberborg.com **Office Hours:** M-F, 8-5

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, Product Liability, Brain Injury, Premises Liability, Wrongful Death, Truck & Vehicle Accidents

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Child Support/Custody, Family Law, Collections, Grazing, Land Disputes, Criminal Defense, Disability/Social Security, Vehicle Repossession

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, Arizona, State & Federal, New Mexico State & Federal, Utah State, Colorado State, Hopi & Zuni

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Joseph C. Hibbard

Mailing Address: 1406 Red Rock, Gallup, New Mexico 87301

Business Address: 1406 Red Rock, Gallup, New Mexico 87301

Name of Law Firm: Joseph C. Hibbard, Esq.

Office Phone Number: (505) 488-8365 **Fax Number:** (505) 726-9111

E-Mail Address: nmjoe0@yahoo.com **Office Hours:** By Appointment

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Family Law including Divorce, Custody, Child Support, Domestic Violence, Select Criminal Defense

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Personal Injury

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation

Name of Attorney/Advocate: William Keeler

Mailing Address: 235 W. Historic Hwy 66, Gallup, New Mexico 87301

Business Address: 235 W. Historic Hwy 66, Gallup, New Mexico 87301

Name of Law Firm: Keeler & Keeler, LLP

Office Phone Number: (505) 722-5608 **Fax Number:** (505) 722-5614

E-Mail Address: info@keelerandkeeler.com **Office Hours:** 8:30 am to 12:00 pm & 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, SS & SSI, Wrongful Death

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Wills/Probate

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: New Mexico, Navajo Nation

Kayenta District

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Nathan S. Anderson

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 67350, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87193-7350

Business Address: 6240 Riverside Plaza LN NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87120

Name of Law Firm: Barber & Borg, LLC

Office Phone Number: (505) 884-0004 **Fax Number:** (505) 884-0077

E-Mail Address: nathan@barberborg.com **Office Hours:** M-F, 8-5

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, Product Liability, Brain Injury, Premises Liability, Wrongful Death, Truck & Vehicle Accidents

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Child Support/Custody, Family Law, Collections, Grazing, Land Disputes, Criminal Defense, Disability/Social Security, Vehicle Repossession

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, Arizona, State & Federal, New Mexico State & Federal

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Joseph Austin

Mailing Address: 3386 W. Crestone Ct., Tucson, Arizona 85742

Business Address: 3386 W. Crestone Ct., Tucson, Arizona 85742

Name of Law Firm: The Law Office of Joseph Austin, Esq.

Office Phone Number: (520) 369-7680 **Fax Number:** (520) 346-6840

E-Mail Address: jaustin@austinlawfirm.org **Office Hours:** 8:00 am – 5:00 pm (AZ Time)

Do you have Consultation Fee: Call to Inquire **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Corporate Law, Business Law, Statutory Agent Services, Family Law, Divorce, Land Disputes, Quiet Title, Probate, Criminal Defense, Repossession, Forcible Entry and Detainer/Eviction

Types of Cases Not Accepted:

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, State of New Mexico

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Forrest G. Buffington

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 67350, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87193-7350

Business Address: 6240 Riverside Plaza LN NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87120

Name of Law Firm: Barber & Borg, LLC

Office Phone Number: (505) 884-0004 **Fax Number:** (505) 884-0077

E-Mail Address: forrest@barberborg.com **Office Hours:** M-F, 8-5

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, Product Liability, Brain Injury, Premises Liability, Wrongful Death, Truck & Vehicle Accidents

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Child Support/Custody, Family Law, Collections, Grazing, Land Disputes, Criminal Defense, Disability/Social Security, Vehicle Repossession

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, Arizona, State & Federal, New Mexico State & Federal, Utah State, Colorado State, Hopi & Zuni

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Dr. James D. Nez

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1604, Kayenta, Arizona 86033

Business Address: P.O. Box 1604, Kayenta, Arizona 86033

Name of Law Firm: Nahata Legal Counsel

Office Phone Number: (928) 297-2552 **Cellphone:** (928) 429-0359 **Fax Number:** (928) 484-6400

E-Mail Address: james_nez@yahoo.com **Office Hours:** 10:00 am – 3:00 pm M-F

Do you have Consultation Fee: Yes, \$150 pro rated 1 hour **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Family law and civil case including dissolution of marriage, guardianship, establishment of paternity, child custody, child support, visitation, validation of traditional and common law marriage, children's cases, adoption, and other case related to domestic relations.

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Criminal Cases

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation

Shiprock District

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Nathan S. Anderson

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 67350, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87193-7350

Business Address: 6240 Riverside Plaza LN NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87120

Name of Law Firm: Barber & Borg, LLC

Office Phone Number: (505) 884-0004 **Fax Number:** (505) 884-0077

E-Mail Address: nathan@barberborg.com **Office Hours:** M-F, 8-5

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, Product Liability, Brain Injury, Premises Liability, Wrongful Death, Truck & Vehicle Accidents

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Child Support/Custody, Family Law, Collections, Grazing, Land Disputes, Criminal Defense, Disability/Social Security, Vehicle Repossession

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, Arizona, State & Federal, New Mexico State & Federal

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Forrest G. Buffington

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 67350, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87193-7350

Business Address: 6240 Riverside Plaza LN NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87120

Name of Law Firm: Barber & Borg, LLC

Office Phone Number: (505) 884-0004 **Fax Number:** (505) 884-0077

E-Mail Address: forrest@barberborg.com **Office Hours:** M-F, 8-5

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, Product Liability, Brain Injury, Premises Liability, Wrongful Death, Truck & Vehicle Accidents

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Child Support/Custody, Family Law, Collections, Grazing, Land Disputes, Criminal Defense, Disability/Social Security, Vehicle Repossession

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, Arizona, State & Federal, New Mexico State & Federal, Utah State, Colorado State, Hopi & Zuni

Name of Attorney/Advocate: William Keeler

Mailing Address: 235 W. Historic Hwy 66, Gallup, New Mexico 87301

Business Address: 235 W. Historic Hwy 66, Gallup, New Mexico 87301

Name of Law Firm: Keeler & Keeler, LLP

Office Phone Number: (505) 722-5608 **Fax Number:** (505) 722-5614

E-Mail Address: info@keelerandkeeler.com **Office Hours:** 8:30 am to 12:00 pm & 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, SS & SSI, Wrongful Death

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce, Wills/Probate

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: New Mexico, Navajo Nation

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Angela Sanford

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1783, Shiprock, New Mexico

Business Address: Office of Public Defender, Box 1764, Shiprock, New Mexico

Name of Law Firm: Office of the Public Defender

Office Phone Number: (505) 368-1290 **Fax:** (505) 368-1291

E-Mail Address: angelaksanford@yahoo.com **Office Hours:** 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Court Appointed Criminal Cases

Types of Cases Not Accepted: We do not do civil cases

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation Courts

Shiprock District (continued)

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Keith Chee Smith

Mailing Address: 1860 Blake Street, Suite 500, Denver, CO 80202

Business Address: 1860 Blake Street, Suite 500, Denver, CO 80202

Name of Law Firm: Setter Roche Smith & Shellenberger, LLP

Office Phone Number: (303) 255-3588 **Fax:** (720) 293-9822

E-Mail Address: ksmith@setterroche.com **Office Hours:** 8:30 am – 5:00 pm (MT)

Do you have Consultation Fee: Yes, \$250.00 **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Business Matters, Contract Review, Employment Matters (for businesses), Quiet Title/Probate, Civil Cases, Will/Estate, Land Disputes, Grazing Permits, Family Law – Divorce, Child Custody, Guardianships

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Criminal Defense, Employment Matters (For Employees)

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Colorado, Federal District Court of Colorado, Navajo Nation, Ute Mountain Ute, Southern Ute

Tuba City District

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Tahda A. Ahtone

Mailing Address: 751 W. Colgate Dr., Tempe, Arizona 85283

Business Address:

Name of Law Firm: The Ahtone Law Firm, LLC

Office Phone Number: (828) 333-0333

E-Mail Address: tahda.ahitone@icloud.com **Office Hours:** 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Civil, Transactional, Business and Non-profit Formation, Tax Exemptions, Copyright and Trademarks, Wills & Probate

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Litigation, Criminal Defense

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo, Colorado, Tonto Apache, Tohono O'odham

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Joseph Austin

Mailing Address: 3386 W. Crestone Ct., Tucson, Arizona 85742

Business Address: 3386 W. Crestone Ct., Tucson, Arizona 85742

Name of Law Firm: The Law Office of Joseph Austin, Esq.

Office Phone Number: (520) 369-7680 **Fax Number:** (520) 346-6840

E-Mail Address: jaustin@austinlawfirm.org **Office Hours:** 8:00 am – 5:00 pm (AZ Time)

Do you have Consultation Fee: Call to Inquire **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Corporate Law, Business Law, Statutory Agent Services, Family Law, Divorce, Land Disputes, Quiet Title, Probate, Criminal Defense, Repossession, Forcible Entry and Detainer/Eviction

Types of Cases Not Accepted:

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo Nation, State of New Mexico

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Jason Bliss

Mailing Address: Aspey, Watkins & Diesel, P.L.L.C., 123 N. San Francisco St. Ste 300, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

Business Address: Aspey, Watkins & Diesel, P.L.L.C., 123 N. San Francisco St. Ste 300, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

Name of Law Firm: Aspey, Watkins & Diesel, P.L.L.C

Office Phone Number: (928) 774-1478 **Fax Number:** (928) 774-8404

E-Mail Address: jbliss@awdlaw.com **Office Hours:** Monday-Friday 8AM-5PM

Do you have Consultation Fee: \$350.00 **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Construction Disputes, Personal Injury, Commercial Disputes, Real Estate Disputes

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Criminal, Family, Intellectual Property

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Supreme Court of Navajo Nation, US Court Appeals Ninth Circuit State of Arizona Courts, and Hopi Tribal Court

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Colin Wittman Bradley

Mailing Address: 2600 N. 44th St, Suite B101, Phoenix, Arizona 85008

Business Address: 2600 N. 44th St, Suite B101, Phoenix, Arizona 85008

Name of Law Firm: Colin Bradley Law PLLC

Office Phone Number: (602) 361-2551 **Fax Number:** (602) 361-2551

E-Mail Address: admin@cwbradleylaw.com **Office Hours:** 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday

Do you have Consultation Fee: No **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Personal Injury, Employment & General Civil Litigation

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Divorce & Child Custody

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Arizona (State & Federal), Navajo Nation, Hopi, Gila River, Salt River Indian Community, Fort McDowell, Ak-Chin, White Mountain Apache & Tohono O'odham

Tuba City District (continued)

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Howard Brown

Mailing Address: Aspey, Watkins & Diesel, P.L.L.C., 123 N. San Francisco St. Ste 300, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

Business Address: Aspey, Watkins & Diesel, P.L.L.C., 123 N. San Francisco St. Ste 300, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

Name of Law Firm: Aspey, Watkins & Diesel, P.L.L.C

Office Phone Number: (928) 774-1478 **Fax Number:** (928) 774-8404

E-Mail Address: hbrown@awdlaw.com **Office Hours:** Monday-Friday 8am-5pm

Do you have Consultation Fee: \$300/hr **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Employment Law, Corporate Counseling

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Probate, Criminal, Family Law, Real Estate, Property Disputes, Personal Injury

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: AZ State Courts, Navajo Nation Tribal Court, Hopi Tribal Court, Gila Tribal Court

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Scott J. Hergenroether

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 3700, Cottonwood, Arizona 86326

Business Address: 702 N. Beaver Street, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

Name of Law Firm: H + M Law, PLLC

Office Phone Number: (928) 554-2070 **Fax Number:** (928) 554-2071

E-Mail Address: court@hmlawfirmaz.com **Office Hours:** M-F 8am-5pm

Do you have Consultation Fee: **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted:

Types of Cases Not Accepted:

I am licensed to practice in the following courts:

Name of Attorney/Advocate: Charles E. Martinez

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 732, Gilbert, Arizona 85299

Business Address: 215 N. Robson St., Mesa, Arizona 85201

Name of Law Firm: Martinez & Associates

Office Phone Number: (480) 633-7151 **Fax Number:** (480) 545-4461

E-Mail Address: cemartinez1982@hotmail.com **Office Hours:** 9 - 5

Do you have Consultation Fee: \$100 **Type of Firm:** Private

Types of Cases Accepted: Creditors Rights, Criminal, Employment, Personal Injury

Types of Cases Not Accepted: Domestic Relations

I am licensed to practice in the following courts: Navajo, San Carlos, Tohono O'Odham Nation

2023 NNBA Annual Bar Conference Announcement (Window Rock District Group #2)

From: Yolanda Wauneka (yolanda@navajolaw.info)

To: smetoxen@gmail.com; lmallette@nndoj.org; WRobinson@da.state.nm.us; harrice@nndoj.org;
long_lawrence@yahoo.com; mrodis@nndoj.org; glord@jillgrantlaw.com; chood@dnalegalservices.org;
calvin@federalindianlawyer.com; Joe.Keene@sackstierney.com; rneswood@gmail.com;
bernadinem25@gmail.com; richienezsr@gmail.com; rdickes@xmission.com; lindarileyjames@lindarileyjames.com;
billkeeler@keelerandkeeler.com; levonhenry@navajo-nsn.gov; aquinn@nndoj.org; ddeschine@nndoj.org;
Klowell@navajo-nsn.gov; ehernes@swlaw.com; lavernetjohnson1@gmail.com; jmccray@southernmute-nsn.gov;
misra.sumi@gmail.com; mdotson@nng.org; kpl@katherinepleblanc.net; lavernehgarnenez@hotmail.com;
bnucci@swlaw.com; bcchambers@nndoj.org; arashm@ntua.com; lgrant@dnalegalservices.org;
lbecenti@gmail.com; Guarino.julia@gmail.com; dmcpaul@nndoj.org; mplatero@nndoj.org;
erika.pirotte@gmail.com; janenez@navajo-nsn.gov; pjohnson@dnalegalservices.org; ramosjaviern@yahoo.com;
tli@milawfirm.net

Cc: alexandriawauneka@gmail.com

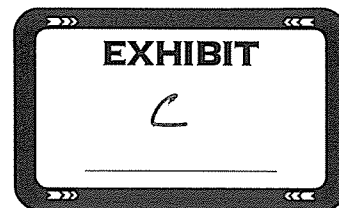
Date: Monday, June 12, 2023 at 04:02 PM EDT

Good Afternoon,

It has come to our attention that there were a few individuals that had, unfortunately, caught COVID-19 at our annual conference. We would like to notify all attendees to please if you have the time, get tested for COVID-19. We will be getting ourselves tested this afternoon. If you have any questions, please let us know. Thank you for your time!

--

Warm regards,
Yolanda Wauneka Executive Director
Post Office Box 690
Window Rock, Arizona 86515
928-871-2215/2211 F 928-871-2229
yolanda@navajolaw.info
website: navajolaw.info



Navajo Nation Bar Office closed till future notice due to COVID (Window Rock Group #2)

From: Yolanda Wauneka (yolanda@navajolaw.info)

To: smetoxen@gmail.com; lmallette@nndoj.org; WRobinson@da.state.nm.us; harrice@nndoj.org;
long_lawrence@yahoo.com; mrodis@nndoj.org; glord@jillgrantlaw.com; chood@dnalegalservices.org;
calvin@federalindianlawyer.com; Joe.Keene@sackstierney.com; rneswood@gmail.com;
bernadinem25@gmail.com; richienezsr@gmail.com; rdickes@xmission.com; lindarileyjames@lindarileyjames.com;
billkeeler@keelerandkeeler.com; levonhenry@navajo-nsn.gov; aquinn@nndoj.org; ddeschine@nndoj.org;
Klowell@navajo-nsn.gov; ehernes@swlaw.com; lavernetjohnson1@gmail.com; jmccray@southernute-nsn.gov;
misra.sumi@gmail.com; mdotson@nng.org; kpl@katherinepleblanc.net; lavernehgarnenez@hotmail.com;
bnucci@swlaw.com; bcchambers@nndoj.org; arashm@ntua.com; lgrant@dnalegalservices.org;
lbecenti@gmail.com; Guarino.julia@gmail.com; dmcpaul@nndoj.org; mplaterto@nndoj.org;
erika.pirotte@gmail.com; janenez@navajo-nsn.gov; pjohanson@dnalegalservices.org; ramosjavierrg@yahoo.com;
tli@milawfirm.net

Cc: alexandriawauneka@gmail.com

Date: Wednesday, June 14, 2023 at 01:17 PM EDT

Good morning all, with everything that has been happening with the Covid outbreak at the Annual Bar Conference, we just got word that people who attended the swearing-in on June 12 are coming down with Covid. The NNBA staff decided to close the office in St. Michaels and work from home for a while till this illness stops spreading. If you need anything from the NNBA office, please call the NNBA office first and we will help you as much as we can. We will let you know when we return to the office.

--
Warm regards,
Yolanda Wauneka Executive Director
Post Office Box 690
Window Rock, Arizona 86515
928-871-2215/2211 F 928-871-2229
yolanda@navajolaw.info
website: navajolaw.info



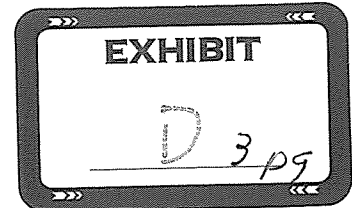
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From: Reliable Translations Inc. (jamesm@rtitrans.com)

To: kpl@katherinepleblanc.net

Date: Tuesday, February 7, 2023 at 10:06 AM EST

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Sincerely,

James Marmolejo
Sales & Marketing Director
Reliable Translations, Inc.
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121 W. Lexington Dr. Ste L106D
Glendale, CA 91203
Email: jamesm@rtitrans.com
Phone: 818-484-8673 Ext. 700
Mobile: 805-630-6773
www.ReliableTranslations.com

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CONTACT US

Phone: [\(818\) 484-8673](tel:(818)484-8673)

Email: jamesm@rtitrans.com



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Our mailing address is:

Reliable Translations, Inc.

121 W. Lexington Drive, Suite L106D

Glendale, CA 91203

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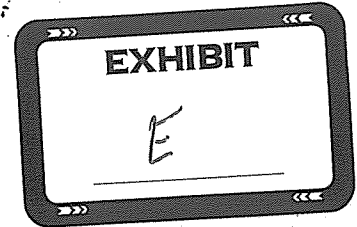
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IN THE FAMILY COURT OF THE NAVAJO NATION
JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF

Vs. Petitioner,

Respondent.

NO:



NOTICE OF PRE-TRIAL CONFERENCE
(Tele-conference hearing)

TO: _____

AND TO: _____

YOU are hereby notified that the above-entitled matter has been scheduled and will be heard on the 18th day of April, 2023, at the hour of 2:00 p.m.

The hearing will be a Telephonic hearing and You will need to call the _____ at (928) _____ a day prior to the hearing to get a telephone number and ID number for you to call in for your hearing.

As Parties of Record, each of you are required to be present at the time set with such evidence and witnesses as may be necessary for the hearing of said cause of action. Failure to appear may cause the court to enter Judgment against you.

Dated this 6th day of March, 2023

CLERK, Family Court of the Navajo Nation

*****CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE*****

I have on this 6th day March, 2023, mailed a copy of this notice to all parties listed above, via US regular mail.

CLERK, Family Court of the Navajo Nation

IN THE FAMILY COURT OF THE NAVAJO NATION
JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF _____

Petitioner,

AND CONCERNING:

NOTICE OF
PRE-TRIAL CONFERENCE

Respondent.

TO: _____

AND _____

EXHIBIT

E-1

You, and each of you are hereby NOTIFIED that the above-entitled matter has been scheduled and will be heard **BY TELECONFERENCE ON:**

Date: December 19, 2022 at 1:15 P.M. MST

As Counsel of Record, you and each of you, are required to notify your clients and be present **BY TELEPHONE** at the time set with such evidence and witnesses as may be necessary for the hearing of said cause of action. Counsel and parties representing themselves should call the Court at _____ at least **15** minutes before your hearing for further instructions on how to join the teleconference. **Parties represented by counsel should first contact their counsel for instructions before calling the Court.**

Dated: December 2, 2022

Court Clerk,

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I have on this 2nd day of December, 2022, routed copies of the above Notice of Hearing via email to the parties and/or counsel listed above at the email/regular mail addresses. Mailed to the parties without email addresses to their mailing addresses.

Court Clerk,

Attorneys and Advocates Authorized to Practice in the Fort McDowell Tribal Court

This is a list of individuals that are authorized to practice before the Tribal Court of the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation pursuant to Section 1-25 of the Fort McDowell Law and Order Code.

The Tribal Court does **NOT** recommend or suggest one advocate or attorney over any other. **Selection of an advocate or attorney is a personal choice.**

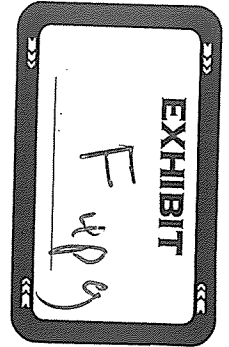
The Tribal Court in no manner guarantees that these individuals are accepting cases at this time or makes any representation or guarantee about the quality of legal services each individual might provide.

The people listed below are those authorized to practice before the Tribal Court, but any attorney in good standing who is licensed to practice law in the United States may be able to represent you, if you so choose to have a licensed attorney represent you and they are not listed on this list, they can apply by filing an application to practice with the tribal court (applications can be obtained through the clerk's office)

A Tribal Advocate is an Indian person who is **NOT** a licensed attorney but who believes he/she has adequate knowledge of tribal law to defend a person against criminal or civil complaints. **Any person who retains the services of a non-attorney tribal advocate does so at his/her own risk regarding the competence of the advocate.**

LIST OF ATTORNEY'S

Gregg Woodnick, PLLC Law Office of Gregg Woodnick 1747 E. Morten Ave. # 205 Phoenix, AZ 85020 (602) 449-7980	Theodore A. Julian Jr Burch and Cracchiolo, PA P.O. Box 16882 Phoenix, AZ 85011-6882 (602) 234-8780 (602) 850-9780 FAX
Pernell W. McGuire, Esq. Aspey, Watkins & Diesel, PLLC 123 N. San Francisco Street, Suite 300 Flagstaff, AZ 86001 (928) 774-1478 (928) 774-8404-Fax	Sterling R. Threet Sterling R. Threet, Attorney at Law 1855 E. Southern Avenue, Suite 103 Mesa, AZ 85204 (480) 926-0500 (480) 926-0800-Fax
David R. Mika Phillips and Associates, P.C. 3030 N. 3rd Street, # 1101 (602) 258-8900 (602) 266-5400-Fax	Thomas M. Corea Corea & Adams LLP 325 N. St. Paul Street, Suite 4150 Dallas, TX 75201 (214) 953-3900 (214) 953-3901-Fax
Edmund F. Richardson Robbins & Green, P.A. 3300 N. Central Avenue, #1800 Phoenix, AZ 85012 (602) 248-7600 (602) 266-5369-Fax	D. Marlane Porter Porter Law Group 4445 E. Holmes Avenue, Suite 103 Mesa, AZ 85206 (480) 464-7024 (480) 464-5743-Fax



Randall J. Craig 9449 N. 90 th Street, Suite 212 Scottsdale, AZ 85258-0001 (480) 767-0400 (480) 767-0401-Fax	Tait D. Elkie 13034 N. Verde River Drive Fountain Hills, AZ 85268 (480) 626-7070 (480) 626-2244 Fax
Kevin P. Nelson 2525 E. Camelback Road, 3 rd Floor Phoenix, AZ 95016-4237 (602) 225-6000 (602) 255-0103-Fax	Erin E. Byrnes Udall Law Firm LLP 4600 E. Washington Street, Ste. 300 Phoenix, AZ 85034 (602) 606-2111 (520-792-3426-Fax
James P. Curran Jones Skelton and Hochuli PLC 2901 N. Central Avenue, Suite 800 Phoenix, AZ 85102 (602) 263-1700 (602) 651-7599-Fax	A.J. Mitchell Law Office of AJ Mitchell, PLC 14555 N. Scottsdale Road, #170 Scottsdale, AZ 85254 (480) 595-6800 (480) 595-6933 FAX
Alan T. Spragins 16810 Ave of the Fountain, Suite 222 Fountain Hills, AZ 85268 (480) 776-0303	James E. Shively Poli and Ball PLC 2999 N. 44 th Street, Suite 500 Phoenix, AZ 85018-7252 (602) 840-1400
Alexander B. Ritchie Titla and Parsi PLLC P.O. Box 1143 Globe, AZ 85002-1143 (928) 425-8137 (928) 425-9048-Fax	Jo Ellen Vork Law Office of Jo Ellen Vork 60 Rio Salado Parkway, Suite 900 Tempe, AZ 85281-0001 (602) 670-1340 (602) 366-5601-Fax
Daniel B. Treon Treon and Shook, PLLC 2700 N. Central Avenue, Suite 1000 Phoenix, AZ 85004-1148 (602) 265-7100	Alex Lane Law Offices of Lane & Hegland, PLC 10429 S. 51 st Street, Suite 215 Phoenix, AZ 85044-5237 (480) 776-5757
Shannon Burns SRPMIC Legal Services 10005 E. Osborn Road Scottsdale, AZ 85256 (480) 362-7740	Dominic Gomez Taylor & Gomez LLP 2600 N. 44 th St., Suite B-101 Phoenix, AZ 85008 (602) 394-8930 dg@taylorgomezlaw.com
Howard Shanker The Shanker Law Firm 700 E. Baseline Road, Bldg. B Tempe, AZ 85281-0001 (480) 838-9300	Jonathan Hupp Law Offices of Lane & Hegland, PLC 10429 S. 51 st Street, Suite 215 Phoenix, AZ 85044-5237 (480) 776-5757
Joy A. Garvey Kelhoffer Manolio and Firestone PLC 9300 E. Raintree Drive, Suite 120 Scottsdale, AZ 85260 (480) 222-9100 (482) 222-9106-Fax	William W. Black 5225 N. Central Ave., Ste. 101 Phoenix, AZ 85012-1400 (602) 274-7000

Kenneth Januszewski Burch and Cracchiolo 702 E. Osborn Phoenix, AZ 85014 (602) 234-8799 (602) 320-7797-Fax	Don C. Stevens II, Esq Law offices of Mary Brooksby, PLLC 3636 N. Central Avenue, Suite 820 Phoenix, AZ 85012 (602) 200-5803
Brian Utsey, Esq 21001 N. Tatum Blvd., Suite 1630-132 Phoenix, AZ 85050-4242 (480) 538-5024	Cody Weagant Wallace Volkmer and Weagant PLLC P.O. Box 12363 Casa Grande, AZ 85130-0609 (520) 518-5168
Ronald W. Meyer 3636 N. Central Avenue, Suite 700 Phoenix, AZ 85012 (602) 279-1663	Keith R. Nelson Riggs Ellsworth and Porter PLC 21321 E. Ocotillo Road B105 Queen Creek, AZ 85142-7584 (480) 539-9400
Charles E. Martinez Martinez and Associates P.O. Box 732 Gilbert, AZ 85299-0732 (480) 633-7151	Stacey L. Heard Heard Law Firm PLLC 2733 N. Power Road, Ste. 102-450 Mesa, AZ 85215-1763 (480) 984-3041
James L. Heard III Heard Law Firm PLLC 2733 N. Power Road, Suite 102-450 Mesa, AZ 85215-1763 (480) 980-7982	Steven W. Zachary 625 N. Gilbert Road, Suite 201 Gilbert, AZ 85234-4724 (480) 389-3533
Tyler William Allen 13034 N. Verde River Drive Fountain Hills, AZ 85268 (480) 626-7070 (480) 626-2244 Fax	Robyn L. Interpreter Montgomery & Interpreter, PLLC 4835 E. Cactus Road, Suite 210 Scottsdale, AZ 85254 (480) 513-6825 (480) 513-6948-FAX
William Cronin Lerner and Rowe Law Group 4647 N. 32nd Street, Suite 185 Phoenix, AZ 85018 (602) 667-7777 (602) 677-8183-FAX	Anthony T. King Snell and Wilmer 400 E. Van Buren Phoenix, AZ 85004-2202 (602) 382-6513
Jess A. Larona Lorina Mead PLC 2111 E. Highland Avenue, Suite 431 Phoenix, AZ 85016-4735 (602) 385-6818 (602) 385-6824-FAX	Kenneth Bemis 637 N. Third Ave Phoenix, AZ 85003 (602) 253-9450 (602) 256-9774-FAX
Michael Berg 16810 Ave. of the Fountains, Suite 200 Fountain Hills, AZ 85268 (480) 776-0260 (877) 789-5092-FAX	Matt O Brown 950 W. Elliot Road, Suite 107 Tempe, AZ 85284 (480) 299-2093 (480) 855-2347-FAX
Michael Harper 111 W. Cedar Lane, Suite C Payson, AZ 85541 (928) 474-9230 (928) 474-2445-FAX	Ray Schumacher 1761 E. McNair Drive, Suite 103 Tempe, AZ 85283 (480) 456-9120 (480) 838-5322-FAX

Sonia Martinez Law Office of Sonia Martinez 207 N. Gilbert Road, Ste. 001 Gilbert, AZ 85234-5804 480-352-5886 480-553-8071-Fax	Linnette Flanigan 6909 E. Greenway Parkway #200 Scottsdale, AZ 85254 (480) 477-5269 (480) 477-5268-Fax
Elizabeth Harris-Wylde Wylde Law Group, PLLC 3295 N. Drinkwater Blvd. # 3 Scottsdale, AZ 85251 (602) 423-8196 (480) 945-9181 FAX	

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LIST OF ADVOCATES

David Antone 11438 E. Osborn Road Scottsdale, AZ 85256 (480) 200-6555	Rhyne Dosela 288 W. Ruiz Canyon Road Globe, AZ 85501 (928) 978-3669
Sylvester Jones 16310 N. Captain Coffee Road Fort McDowell, AZ 85264 (480) 836-7361	Debbie Ochoa-Mercado P.O. Box 994 Sacaton, AZ 85147 (602) 616-0405 (520) 562-1985-FAX
Richard Perry P.O. Box 1362 Maricopa, AZ 85139 (520) 568-4019	Jimmie Richardson-Packhorse Sr P.O. Box 1142 Maricopa, AZ 85139 (602) 300-0192
Yolanda Stacey 10005 E. Osborn Road Scottsdale, AZ 85256 (480) 850-8135 (480) 850-7338-FAX	Sandra Rambler P.O. Box 278 Bylas, AZ 85530 (928) 200-1093
Carol Gatewood-Kasey P.O. Box 2600 Whiteriver, AZ 85941 (928) 338-9457 (928) 338-9538-FAX	