

**SHEBOYGAN COUNTY PROGRAM WORKSHEET**  
February 16, 2005

Department: Family Court Commissioner – 190

Date: March <sup>22</sup> 11, 2005

Program	Description	Mandated	Priority	Service Level Required	2004 Actual Expense	2005 Budgeted Expense	2005 Budgeted Grants/Fees Revenue	2005 Tax Levy
<b>Court Related Activities</b>	Assists in the administration of the court system by conducting juvenile, criminal, divorce, paternity, mental commitment, small claims and injunction hearings.	Yes Wis. Stats. 48,51,55,757, 767,799,813,880 938,970	1	100%	\$218,717.12	\$228,864.00	\$26,530.00 (excluding tax levy)	\$201,309.00
<b>Mediation</b>	Divorced or divorcing parents meet with a trained mediator to try to resolve custody and placement disputes without the necessity of court proceedings.	Yes Wis. Stat. sec. 767.11	2	100%	\$35,980.82	\$39,859.00	\$25,000.00	\$14,859.00
<b>Remember the Children</b>	Program to educate parents going through a divorce regarding how to minimize the effects of divorce on children. Parents pay a fee to attend the program.	No (but see Wis. Stat. sec. 767.115)	3	N/A	\$6,094.26	\$6,325.00	\$7,350.00	N/A

**SHEBOYGAN COUNTY PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**February 16, 2005**

- A. **INSTRUCTIONS:** For each program, list the Scheduled Review Date, the Department, the Department Mission Statement and the Program Title at the top of the page, and answer the following questions for each program. The overall response for each program should be no greater than two (2) pages in length.

**SCHEDULED REVIEW DATE:** March 22, 2005

**DEPARTMENT:** Family Court Commissioner - 190

**DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT:**

The Court Commissioner's Office aids the Sheboygan County Circuit Court and, thereby, the citizens of Sheboygan County by making the dispute resolution system more efficient. Cases referred by the Circuit Court are to be dealt with quickly and fairly, whether through contested hearings or cooperatively through mediation.

**PROGRAM:** Court Related Activities (1)

**1. Describe the program, its purpose and goals.**

The purpose of Court Related Activities is to assist in the administration of the court system. This is usually done by conducting preliminary matters in certain court proceedings. These include temporary order hearings in divorces; probable cause hearings in mental commitments; and bail hearings and initial appearances in traffic, small claims, ordinance, paternity and juvenile court cases. The Assistant Court Commissioner also serves the courts by researching complex legal issues and advising the judges regarding how the law should be applied in particular situations.

In addition to preliminary matters, this office helps the circuit courts by rendering final decisions in stipulated divorces, domestic abuse and harassment injunction hearings and most small claims cases.

The goal of the program is to complete 100% of the assigned tasks in a timely and correct manner.

**2. Who is the program intended to serve? How many are served?**

The program is intended to serve the Sheboygan County Circuit Court and, thereby, the citizens of Sheboygan County. In 2004, this program served several thousand citizens. The work completed includes the following:

- 180 Injunction Hearings
- 154 Paternity Pre-Trial Conferences or Initial Appearances
- 157 Chapter 51 Probable Cause Hearings
- 250 Temporary Hearings in divorce cases
- 174 Stipulated Divorce Hearings
- 601 Small Claims Pre-Trial Conferences
- 129 Small Claims Hearings
- 254 Days on which Bail Hearings were conducted (multiple hearings each day)
- 231 Days on which Initial Appearances were held in ordinance cases (multiple hearings each day)
- 159 Weddings
- Numerous research projects assigned by Circuit Court Judges

**3. Are the program benefits long-lasting and essential to the service populations?**

Yes. All services provided by this program are mandated by State law and are essential to maintaining the rights of Sheboygan County's citizens.

**4. Is this program directly or indirectly related to or does it support any other program in this department or another department? If so, how?**

This program supports the Sheboygan County Circuit Court, and by extension, the citizens of Sheboygan County.

**5. How does this program make the department or county government more effective or efficient, including any intergovernmental relationship?**

This program enables the Sheboygan County Circuit Court Judges to manage their calendars efficiently thereby ensuring all cases are litigated in a timely manner consistent with federal, state, and local law.

**6. How do you determine/measure if this program has been effectively provided and implemented?**

The Court Commissioner is appointed annually. Each year, the Sheboygan County Administrative Coordinator and Law Committee review the Commissioner's performance. The Circuit Court Judges and the State of Wisconsin Court System also review it. If performance is unsatisfactory, the appointment may be terminated.

7. **Could the county cost-effectively subcontract this program?**  
No.
8. **State the numerical ranking of this program compared to all programs in your department and briefly explain.**  
This program ranks first out of three programs because it is the largest program and mandated by state law.
9. **Are there current alternatives to this program available in the community? Can this program be provided through alternative arrangements with other providers?**  
No.
10. **If this program were eliminated, what would be the ramifications for the County (i.e., added risk, liability or legal issues)?**  
If this program were eliminated, the Sheboygan County Circuit Court as currently staffed would not be able to ensure all cases are litigated in a timely manner consistent with federal, state, and local law.
11. **What is the program impact and effectiveness related to the program cost? (Provide data if available.)**  
In 2004 this program cost \$218,717.12. The program is mandated by state law and has always received positive performance appraisals.
12. **Is this program currently duplicated by another county department or provider in the community?**  
No.

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**SCHEDULED REVIEW DATE: March 22, 2005**

**DEPARTMENT: Family Court Commissioner - 190**

**DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT:**

The Court Commissioner's Office aids the Sheboygan County Circuit Court and, thereby, the citizens of Sheboygan County by making the dispute resolution system more efficient. Cases referred by the Circuit Court are to be dealt with quickly and fairly, whether through contested hearings or cooperatively through mediation.

**PROGRAM: Mediation (2)**

**1. Describe the program, its purpose and goals.**

The purpose of mediation is to provide divorced or divorcing parents with a trained mediator to attempt to resolve custody and placement disputes.

The goal of the program is to avoid litigating custody and placement issues whenever possible. This keeps those issues from clogging the Circuit Court. In addition, unlike litigation, mediation provides a forum for parents to work out issues collaboratively thereby enabling them to work together more easily in the future for the sake of their children.

**2. Who is the program intended to serve? How many are served?**

This program serves divorced and divorcing parents with custody and placement disputes. In 2004, 253 couples (506 people) were referred to mediation.

**3. Are the program benefits long-lasting and essential to the service populations?**

Yes. The services provided by this program are mandated by State law and are essential to maintaining civility between parents.

**4. Is this program directly or indirectly related to or does it support any other program in this department or another department? If so, how?**

This program eliminates the need for many custody and placement issues to be litigated in Sheboygan County Circuit Court.

**5. How does this program make the department or county government more effective or efficient, including any intergovernmental relationship?**

This program eliminates the need for many custody and placement issues to be litigated in Sheboygan County Circuit Court. That enables the Circuit Court to ensure other cases are litigated in a timely manner consistent with federal, state, and local law.

**6. How do you determine/measure if this program has been effectively provided and implemented?**

Each time a couple is referred to mediation, the mediator must provide a written response to the Court regarding the outcome of mediation. The County subcontracts with three mediators. Each of their contracts is reviewed annually by the Court Commissioner. If a mediator's performance is not satisfactory, his or her contract can be terminated.

**7. Could the county cost-effectively subcontract this program?**

Not Applicable. The County does subcontract this program.

**8. State the numerical ranking of this program compared to all programs in your department and briefly explain.**

This program ranks second out of three programs because it is mandated by state law, and is the second largest program in the department.

**9. Are there current alternatives to this program available in the community? Can this program be provided through alternative arrangements with other providers?**

Yes, by contracting with different mediators. However, the level and quality of services may not be maintained. In addition, it is now known how many additional trained mediators are available in Sheboygan County. The County could also bring mediation services in-house.

10. **If this program were eliminated, what would be the ramifications for the County (i.e., added risk, liability or legal issues)?**

If this program were eliminated, Sheboygan County would not be in compliance with state law.

11. **What is the program impact and effectiveness related to the program cost? (Provide data if available.)**

In 2004 this program cost \$35,980.00. However, the program also generates revenue. In 2004, this program generated \$35,070.00 in revenue. The program is mandated by state law and has always received positive performance appraisals.

12. **Is this program currently duplicated by another county department or provider in the community?**

No.

FOLDER: CNTY PROG EVALUATION AND PRIORITY PROCESS  
FILE: PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

**SHEBOYGAN COUNTY PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**February 16, 2005**

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**PROGRAM: Remember the Children (3)**

**1. Describe the program, its purpose and goals.**

The purpose of Remember the Children is to educate parents going through a divorce about the effects of divorce on children and the ways to minimize those effects.

The goal of the program is to minimize the negative effects of divorce on children by encouraging parents to work together to resolve custody and placement issues whenever possible.

**2. Who is the program intended to serve? How many are served?**

This program serves couples going through a divorce who also have children under the age of 16. In 2004, 403 people attended the Remember the Children program.

**3. Are the program benefits long-lasting and essential to the service populations?**

Yes. The services provided by this program are essential to fostering civility between divorcing parents.

**4. Is this program directly or indirectly related to or does it support any other program in this department or another department? If so, how?**

This program eliminates the need for many custody and placement issues to be litigated in Sheboygan County Circuit Court.

**5. How does this program make the department or county government more effective or efficient, including any intergovernmental relationship?**

This program eliminates the need for many custody and placement issues to be litigated in Sheboygan County Circuit Court thereby enabling the Circuit Court to ensure other cases are litigated in a timely manner consistent with federal, state, and local law.

**6. How do you determine/measure if this program has been effectively provided and implemented?**

We occasionally survey people who have attended the class. Survey results have been overwhelmingly positive.

**7. Could the county cost-effectively subcontract this program?**

Not Applicable. The County does subcontract this program.

**8. State the numerical ranking of this program compared to all programs in your department and briefly explain.**

This program ranks third out of three programs because it is not mandated by state law.

**9. Are there current alternatives to this program available in the community? Can this program be provided through alternative arrangements with other providers?**

Yes, by contracting with different instructors. However, the program is currently self-funded. In addition, the level and quality of services may not be maintained. It is also unknown if any other instructors are available in Sheboygan County.

**10. If this program were eliminated, what would be the ramifications for the County (i.e., added risk, liability or legal issues)?**

If this program were eliminated, custody and placement disputes that need to be handled in the Sheboygan County Circuit Court would likely increase. The number of mediation referrals would also likely increase.

11. **What is the program impact and effectiveness related to the program cost? (Provide data if available.)**

In 2004 this program cost \$6,094.26. However, the program also generates revenue. In 2004, this program generated \$13,250.00 in revenue. The program is currently self-funded and has always received positive performance appraisals.

12. **Is this program currently duplicated by another county department or provider in the community?**

No.

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