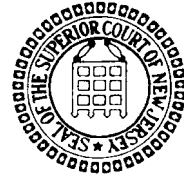


SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY

CHAMBERS OF
LAWRENCE M. LAWSON
ASSIGNMENT JUDGE



MONMOUTH COUNTY COURT HOUSE
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FREEHOLD, NEW JERSEY 07728-1266
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For immediate release: March 19, 2010

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Monmouth Vicinage Launches Self-Help Resource Center

Freehold – The Superior Court of New Jersey, Monmouth Vicinage will celebrate the opening of its Self-Help Resource Center (SHRC) on Friday, March 26, at 3 p.m. The SHRC is in Room L-45 in the lower level of the courthouse of the Monmouth Vicinage.

Recognizing the need to enhance service for a growing number of self-represented litigants, the Monmouth Vicinage established the SHRC as part of a community outreach initiative. Operating under the Office of the Ombudsman, the SHRC helps self-represented litigants to navigate the court system and improves public access to the courts.

Staff members are available to offer information on court processes and procedures, respond to questions and provide direction on forms and packets for self-represented litigants. They handle requests and inquiries on an individual basis as well as in small group settings. They cannot provide legal advice.

Trial Court Administrator Marsi L. Perkins said, “Court can be an intimidating and overwhelming place for litigants, particularly those who do not have a lawyer. The SHRC demonstrates our ongoing commitment to our community. It will enhance accessibility and knowledge, helping to strengthen the bridge between the court and the public.”

The SHRC works with Ocean-Monmouth Legal Services to conduct monthly group seminars on court-related topics, including child support, divorce, expungement of criminal records, landlord/tenant and small claims matters. Attorneys from Ocean-Monmouth Legal Services will be on-site twice per month to conduct one-on-one screenings and offer limited legal advice to litigants who are eligible for service.

Ocean-Monmouth Legal Services Deputy Director/Director of Litigation Maria La Face, Esq. said, “We are extremely excited about this new collaboration with the Superior Court in Monmouth Vicinage, as it represents an innovative way of carrying out our shared mission of creating equal access to justice for all.”

The SHRC also plans to collaborate with various community organizations to assist individuals with limited English proficiency.

For information on the SHRC, contact Ombudsman Theresa Romano at 732-677-4209.

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