WEBSITES OF INTEREST

Video Training Materials on Procedural Fairness
proceduralfairnessguide.org

The National Center for State Courts has produced four videos that can be used in training programs for judges and court personnel about procedural fairness. The videos explore how procedural fairness principles may best be deployed in situations faced by judges and court staff. Four video scenarios are provided, and each one includes discussion questions and links to additional materials about the topic.

The four video scenarios are:

- **The Multitasking Judge** (5:18): A judge conducting a hearing on whether to modify a no-contact order in a pending domestic-violence case also signs a stack of routine orders during the hearing.

- **The Counter Clerk and the Upset Litigant** (2:42): A mother who has just received a court order taking away her children comes to the clerk’s front counter for information. The clerk may—or may not—be able to help.

- **The Criminal First-Appearance Docket** (3:04): A judge must process more than 100 defendants making their first court appearances in criminal cases.

- **The Computerized Judge** (9:15): A judge hearing a proceeding to terminate a mother’s parental rights sits in a modern courtroom where he accesses the court file on one computer, the court calendar on an iPad, and texts about emergency warrants on an iPhone. This leads to a motion for mistrial based on the judge’s inattention.

These video segments can be used as part of a training program on procedural fairness. Or individual judges may want to take a look and consider the issues raised.

For judges or court staff who may be leading a training program in this area, the National Center for State Courts has also produced a guide to each scenario for discussion leaders. Those guides provide additional background about each scenario; they can be accessed with a password that can be requested.

Psychology Law Evidence Database
psychologylawevidence.com

The field of psychology and law is vast, which makes it hard to find research that’s relevant when you want to check into something. Psychology professors at two universities have started a new website designed to provide access to selected current research in the field. The materials are intended for the general public, practitioners, legal professionals, researchers, and policy makers.

The website is comprehensive, continuously updated, and freely available. The team conducts monthly searches for new research in 53 different areas, including topics such as child witnesses, confessions, domestic violence, eyewitnesses, family law, juvenile offenders, predictors of violent behavior, procedural justice, risk assessment, and sexual offending. As this list indicates, a great deal of material of interest to judges can be found.

Before an article or other resource is included in the database, it is reviewed by an expert reviewer and one of the database coordinators. The database coordinators say that the goal of the project is to help those seeking knowledge in this area save time and money while “obtaining the best available research evidence on topics in psychology and law.” Each article is reviewed based on several criteria, including the strength of the methodology used, conceptual strength of the paper, and quality of the writing. A summary of information about the article is included in the database, along with a link to the article (the full text if it’s available on the web or, if not, where to purchase it). The database presently covers materials from 2010 to the present.

As the site is new, there may be only a few articles in some areas. But the site team is working hard on ensuring all relevant research is posted to the database and providing updates on their progress along the way. Over time, this promises to be a valuable tool.

The project was developed and is maintained by three coordinators: Dr. Alana N. Cook, a psychologist and an adjunct faculty member at Simon Fraser University; Dr. Ron Roesch, a psychology professor at Simon Fraser University; and Dr. Patricia Zapf, a psychology professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. The project is supported by the Mental Health, Law, and Policy Institute at Simon Fraser University, the entity Consolidated Continuing Education & Professional Training, and the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Development of the database was supported by a grant from the Canadian Bar Association, and ongoing support is provided by the American Psychology-Law Society.