SRLN 2017 Forms Competition

2017 SRLN Forms & Technology Working Group -- Best Forms Contest

The SRLN Forms & Technology Working Group held its first ever **Best Forms Contest,** taking entries in two categories, **Best Static Form** and **Best Automated Form.**

All forms must be for civil legal problems.

Submissions for **Best Static Form** was judged for:

- form design
- use of plain language
- accompanying instructions

Submissions for **Best Automated Form** was judged for:

- form design
- use of plain language
- quality of the interview (including help materials)

Announcing the winners of the SRLN Forms and Technology Working Group Forms Contest

We want to start by thanking all of those who submitted forms for our contest. We had 31 entries, 15 online forms and 16 static forms. It was a substantial process for the members of the Forms and Technology Working Group to review and judge the forms. We are pleased to announce the winners below, but first we would like to state that we found judging the forms difficult, as we had to compare short forms with long forms, forms with considerable instructions (and sometimes videos) with forms that included explanatory materials within the forms themselves, and whole packets (or two or three linked forms) with individual forms. It was often a "comparing apples to oranges" process. Furthermore, most of the people who submitted forms noted that they often had to work within a difficult local process that carried restrictions on just what they could do.

Sometimes, different members of the Working Group chose to concentrate on different features, especially when comparing the online forms built within different programs. If anything, as our SRLN leader [Katherine Alteneder](#) noted, the contest showed that process simplification would go a long way toward reducing the difficulty that self-represented litigants have when filling out court forms. Our winners do not necessarily represent those forms that required the greatest amount of work to create. What they do represent, in our opinion, are the forms we found to be the easiest to use from the self-represented litigant's viewpoint. We congratulate all the people who submitted forms for their hard efforts and their good work.

The winner of the Best Static Form is **Elsa Marshall** with [Legal Services State Support](#) in Minnesota for the [Delegation of Parental Authority form](#).

The winner of the Best Automated Form is **Jennifer Singleton** with Legal Services State Support in Minnesota for the [Motion to Modify Child Support or Spousal Maintenance form](#).

A major goal of the Working Group was to get a critical mass of forms as examples for the Forms and Technology section of SRLN.org and, thanks to all of those who submitted forms, we have achieved that goal and will be posting many of the entries to the website in the months to come.

Winners receive complimentary registration to the SRLN18 Conference.

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Topics

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