

JOHN W. LARSON  
District Judge Montana  
September 6, 2005

Judge Larson urges the adoption of the AJS's proposed language for pro se or self-represented litigants and/or similar amendments to the comments to Rule 2.04 Impartiality and Fairness. He sees a need to respond to the ever-growing number of self-represented litigants. Judge Larson states that "hiding behind formality and confusing procedures will only diminish the important role courts need to exercise in resolving disputes." He strongly recommends these amendments to Rules 2.05, 2.09, 2.13 and their comments stated in the full text of this comment.

Judge Larson urges the Commission to exclude drug court communication between team members from the provision on ex parte communication. He notes that the on-going exchange of information about individuals in the drug court is done in the context of an agreed-upon team protocol which includes the judge, prosecutor, defense counsel, probation officer, treatment providers, school and police liaisons as well as other community support groups and families and that the drug courts have met with success in their goals.