

User Experience in Utah State Courts

2023-2024

By Verenice Ramirez

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Executive Summary

Over the course of the year-long Judicial Innovation Fellowship at the Utah State Courts Self-Help Center, the JIF fellow led and supported key projects focused on enhancing user experience (UX) and improving service delivery within the court system. These initiatives were made possible through collaboration with dedicated partners, including the law library staff, the self-help center team, court clerks, the IT team at the court, and legal aid organizations. Together, we worked to address challenges faced by self-represented patrons and improve the accessibility and usability of court tools and resources.

This report summarizes the major initiatives, research, and design work completed, along with recommendations for future improvements.

Key Accomplishments:

- **Building Archetypes:** The fellow conducted user research across seven sites in four judicial districts, and interviewed court staff, attorneys, and community workers. The fellow tracked user journeys to develop detailed user archetypes that identify the needs and behaviors of court patrons, particularly self-represented individuals, who comprise a significant portion of court users.
- **Certificate of Service Redesign:** The fellow redesigned the certificate of service section to improve usability and ensure greater accuracy. After validating the design through user testing, the fellow presented it to court committees, where it was approved. The redesigned section is now set to be implemented in future forms, aiming to enhance accuracy and reduce errors in form submissions.
- **MyPaperwork - Guided Interview for Divorce Enhancement:** The fellow provided design feedback and developed screens for the guided interview system MyPaperwork, the upcoming replacement for the current Online Court Assistance Program, OCAP. The new platform is set to launch by the end of 2024, and will offer a significantly improved user interface and better support for self-represented individuals navigating the divorce process.
- **Divorce Process Flowchart Redesign:** The fellow identified that the original divorce process flowchart lacked clarity and did not effectively indicate which steps required user action on the court's platform. To address this, the fellow redesigned the flowchart to serve as both a standalone guide and a resource aligned with MyPaperwork user touch points. The new flowchart provides a clear, step-by-step guide that sets realistic expectations for court patrons. It will be launched on the court's Divorce Webpage alongside the MyPaperwork divorce interview, creating a cohesive and user-friendly experience for individuals navigating the court filing process.
- **Policy Change Through Design:** The fellow proposed a redesign of the caption and signature sections on court forms, focusing initially on eviction forms but

applicable to all civil cases. These sections presented significant usability issues, which the fellow identified through user feedback and testing. Based on these findings, the fellow submitted a request to amend Rule 10 of the Utah Rules of Civil Procedure to improve form clarity and usability. Although time constraints prevented me from completing the full implementation, the fellow laid the groundwork for future adoption, emphasizing the importance of standardizing document formatting across the state to enhance form navigation.

Suggestions for Further Consideration

These suggestions aim to build on the progress achieved during this fellowship, addressing both immediate usability issues and longer-term structural improvements. The fellow focuses on accessibility, collaboration, and standardization so the court can continue evolving to meet the needs of all users. Those suggestions include:

- Enhance the court's website by improving search functionality and updating the contact and address pages.
- Simplify self-help web pages, especially those related to divorce, to reduce information overload.
- Expand collaboration with legal aid organizations to maintain user-centered design practices.
- Continue efforts to standardize court documents and advocate for the proposed changes to URCP Rule 10.
- Enhance internal support for digital transformation to build staff skills in user-centered design, accessibility, and digital tools.

The achievements within the year mark a step toward creating a more user-friendly and efficient court system. The work completed during this fellowship laid a strong foundation for continued improvements, ensuring that the court remains responsive to the needs of its users, particularly those who are self-represented.

About the Project

This report presents the outcomes of a year-long collaboration between the Utah State Courts Self-Help Center and the Judicial Innovation Fellowship (JIF) at Georgetown University Law Center. JIF is a fellowship for technology industry professionals to transform justice across state, local, territorial, and tribal courts.

The Utah State Courts Self-Help Center, notably Nathanael Player and Jonathan Mark, proposed a project to have a user experience (UX) designer provide feedback and support for the tools and resources built for court patrons.

The project's scope included a range of activities from user research and design work to the implementation and testing of new designs. The aim was to create more supportive, accessible material for court users, addressing both digital and physical touch points within the court system.

In one year, the fellow had the privilege and challenge to develop and implement user-centered practices for court tools and resources across different points of user engagement. The fellow mainly worked on guided interviews, form formats, and UX needs awareness in the courts. Aside from presenting the results in this report, the fellow created a UX manual synthesizing the project achievements and providing guidance on continuing user-centered practices in the future. This document is the culmination of that work, capturing the impact of these initiatives and a foundation for future improvements.

About the Author

Verenice Ramirez is a UX designer with a bachelor's in art history and sociology from University of California, Berkeley. She has a varied background with experience primarily in justice and law-related areas and was the Judicial Innovation Fellow placed in the Utah State Courts Self-Help Center.

Introduction

This report outlines the key projects and initiatives undertaken during the author's Judicial Innovation Fellowship placement at the Utah State Courts Self-Help Center. The fellowship focuses on improving user experience and service delivery within the court system, particularly for self-represented individuals.

The following sections provide a comprehensive overview of the research methods employed, the leading projects completed, and the strategic recommendations developed throughout the fellowship:

Methodology: This section describes the research approaches used, including user interviews, usability testing, and stakeholder engagement.

Key Accomplishments: This section details the major projects, including user archetype development, form redesigns, digital tool enhancements, and policy change proposals.

Additional Suggestions: This section offers suggestions for further improvements and long-term strategies to advance innovation within the court system.

Conclusion: This section summarizes the fellowship's impact and identifies follow-up steps for enhancing court user experience.

Methodology

The methodology employed throughout this fellowship was comprehensive and multifaceted, aiming to gain a holistic understanding of the court system from various perspectives. The fellow conducted research at seven sites in four judicial districts, involving both qualitative and observational approaches. In-depth interviews were conducted with court clerks, judges, law library staff, and attorneys of the Self-Help Center, providing valuable insights into the operational challenges and user experiences within the court system.

During the research phase, focused on building user archetypes, the fellow deliberately decided to refrain from directly interviewing court patrons due to the sensitive and high-stress nature of their court interactions. This decision was guided by ethical considerations, ensuring that the research did not impose additional emotional or psychological burdens on individuals already facing significant stress. Instead, insights were gathered from court staff and community workers who interact regularly with patrons, informing the development of these archetypes.

In the later stages of the project, particularly during usability testing, the fellow directly engaged with court patrons while also involving participants from outside the court system who reflect the general public. At this stage, the engagement was ethically appropriate, as the testing process focused on usability rather than sensitive case details, minimizing stress for participants. Initially, participants received court swag and snacks as a token of appreciation. As the testing process became more complex and time-intensive, compensation was introduced in the form of \$10 gift cards to a local grocery store. This approach ensured the feedback was robust and representative, leading to more effective, user-centered outcomes.

Various UX methodologies were employed, including A/B testing and user interviews. The Maze platform was utilized for controlled testing, allowing for a rigorous assessment of design choices. This methodological approach ensured that the design interventions were grounded in empirical evidence and best practices, ultimately leading to more effective and user-friendly outcomes.

Project 1: Building Archetypes

Understanding court users' diverse needs and behaviors was essential for creating compelling, user-centered solutions. To achieve this, the fellow focused on developing user archetypes that could serve as a foundation for all subsequent design and policy work during the fellowship. The archetypes reflect the real-world challenges faced by various court patrons and stakeholders, providing a structured way to address their needs and improve their interactions with the court system.

Tracking User Journeys

In addition to interviews, the fellow tracked user journeys to understand how patrons engage with the court system at various touchpoints. Crucial pain points highlighted issues where to improve the user experience of court engagement. Mapping these journeys provided a comprehensive view of the user experience within the court system and informed the development of user archetypes.

Findings and Archetype Development

The insights gathered from interviews and user journey tracking informed the creation of detailed user archetypes. By developing archetypes that reflect the real-world challenges faced by this crucial user group, the project laid a critical foundation for subsequent design and service improvement initiatives.

Defining the Archetypes

The following archetypes represent different court user groups, each with unique needs, characteristics, and interactions with the system:

- **Emily Anderson, Age 29:** A soon-to-be single mother seeking a divorce. She needs a quick, straightforward divorce process, manageable financial costs, and custody of her children. Emily has limited time, resources, and access to technology, making the legal process particularly challenging for her.
- **David Johnson, Age 66:** A senior man facing eviction from his rural rental. His primary concerns are understanding the legal documents he received and finding support to avoid displacement. David feels overwhelmed by the paperwork and is unsure how to proceed, hoping that explaining his situation will result in leniency from the court.
- **Sofia Martinez, Age 55:** A Spanish-speaking woman seeking support after experiencing abuse. She relies on a community-based organization for assistance due to her discomfort with self-help tools and limited literacy. Sofia needs a safe, guided process to obtain a protective order and divorce, with thorough explanations at each step.

Insights Gained from Archetypes

These archetypes revealed the diverse and complex challenges different user groups face in the court system.

Emily Anderson underscores the need for simplified, mobile-accessible tools and services that accommodate individuals with limited time, financial resources, and technological access. Her situation taught the court that self-help services must be more streamlined, with clear instructions and cost-effective options.

David Johnson's archetype highlighted gaps in understanding legal procedures, particularly among older adults in rural areas. His case emphasized making legal information more accessible, especially for those facing eviction. It also pointed to the need for the court to provide clear guidance, as users like David often feel overwhelmed and rely on the hope that explaining their situation will influence the court's decision. This insight demonstrated the necessity of better communication about court processes and consequences.

Sofia Martinez emphasized the need for trauma-informed, multilingual support. Her reliance on a community-based organization showed that many users depend on external support networks to navigate the legal system. This archetype taught the court the importance of collaborating with community organizations and providing services in multiple languages with culturally sensitive guidance to improve access to justice for vulnerable populations. These archetypes underscored the need for more personalized, accessible, and empathetic court services.

Application of Archetypes in Court Projects

The archetypes played a crucial role in shaping design decisions, improving service delivery, and informing policy advocacy. In designing tools like MyPaperwork, the user profiles guided the development of user-centered features. For example, Emily's archetype, representing time-constrained users with limited technological access, created a more straightforward, mobile-friendly interface. David's experiences influenced efforts to simplify legal explanations on the court's website, ensuring users understand procedures and documents more clearly. Sofia's archetype underscored the importance of providing multilingual resources and step-by-step guidance for non-English speakers and those requiring additional support.

Regarding service delivery, the archetypes helped the court refine its offerings to better cater to users' needs. Creating simpler forms, supporting those without reliable technology access, and partnering with community organizations to reach individuals like Sofia became more intentional efforts. The archetypes also shifted perspectives within the court; one staff member in a leadership position with nearly 30 years of experience shared that the presentation was impactful because it prompted her to consider, for the first time, the journey court patrons navigate when interacting with the

system. This realignment in thinking emphasized the importance of designing with empathy and user needs at the forefront, fostering a more profound commitment to accessibility and support across diverse user groups. It also drove home the importance of the JIF program: you can foster institutional change through fellowships designed to bring in new perspectives.

The archetypes also informed policy recommendations, advocating changes to address specific pain points identified during user research. Emily's case highlighted the importance of affordable and accessible divorce processes, while David's situation pointed to the need for more straightforward guidelines around eviction notices and tenant rights. Sofia's experiences emphasized the necessity of trauma-informed practices and multilingual support, prompting further staff training and collaboration with local support networks. By applying these archetypes to various design stages, service refinement, and policy advocacy, the court worked toward a more user-friendly and inclusive experience for all patrons.

See Exhibits 1a-c.

Project 2: Certificate of Service

The certificate of service is a critical component attached to many forms across various case types within the court system. Qualitative data drove the decision to redesign this attachment, gathered through interviews with court clerks. These interviews revealed a consistent issue: many patrons do not fill out the certificate of service correctly, which leads to delays and complications in case processing. This insight highlighted the need for a redesign to improve clarity and usability, ensuring that patrons could more easily understand and correctly complete this form section.

User Feedback and Key Issues

During the initial research phase, the fellow conducted user interviews to understand the challenges faced when filling out the current Certificate of Service, specifically about the requirements of the UCRP Rule 5. The feedback revealed several problems with the existing layout. For instance, an elderly man involved in an eviction case expressed frustration, stating, "These boxes are too small for me to write in. I'm old." His comment shed light on the accessibility issues of the form's design, particularly for older adults who might struggle with small text fields. (The fellow observed that elderly individuals often had trouble using computers and would likely rely on paper forms, filling them out by hand.) Additionally, many users needed clarification about which information to include in certain sections. Some patrons mistakenly placed their own details in areas meant for others' information simply because the instructions were unclear. This confusion pointed to a broader issue with the language and structure of the document, reinforcing the need for more explicit guidance and an intuitive design.

Redesign Process and Validation

The redesign process involved rethinking the layout, language, and overall presentation of the Certificate of Service to make it more user-friendly. The goal was to enhance the form's accessibility and reduce input errors by providing clearer instructions and a more intuitive design. Once the fellow completed the redesigned form, it underwent rigorous validation testing with actual court users to ensure its effectiveness. The fellow collected feedback from these tests, which were used to refine the design further, ensuring it met the needs of both patrons and court staff.

Approval and Implementation

After the validation testing, the fellow presented the redesigned certificate of service to the Stylistics Committee, the body responsible for overseeing form design within the court system. Following a thorough review, the committee approved the redesign, recognizing its potential to improve the accuracy and efficiency of form submissions. Once approved by the Stylistics Committee, the fellow prepared a detailed memo for the Forms Committee, outlining the rationale behind the redesign, the testing results, and the anticipated benefits. The Forms Committee reviewed the proposal and approved the

gradual implementation of the new design, starting with newly issued forms. This approach ensures a smooth transition while maintaining the integrity of ongoing cases.

See Exhibits 2a-b.

Project 3: MyPaperwork - Guided Interview for Divorce Initiation

The court currently utilizes the Online Court Assistance Program (OCAP) as a platform for self-represented individuals to fill out their legal documents. However, OCAP is an antiquated system that has not kept pace with modern user experience standards. In response to the need for a more user-friendly and intuitive platform, the court has developed MyPaperwork, a replacement for OCAP. MyPaperwork aims to provide a significantly improved user interface and overall experience, particularly for users navigating complex legal processes such as divorce.

Design and User Experience Enhancements

As part of the MyPaperwork initiative, this project provided valuable usability feedback on specific screens and designed additional screens to guide users through the divorce initiation process. The design emphasized clarity, support, and the setting realistic expectations at each stage of the process, addressing the complexity and emotional difficulty of the divorce process.

The guided interview format breaks down the process into manageable steps, making it easier for users to understand and complete their paperwork accurately. During user testing, one area of concern was the section requesting information about children, which users found overwhelming due to the large amount of information requested at once. Users noted needing clarification about how to proceed and found the information hard to digest.

A usability evaluation identified that the section contained too many calls to action, making navigation unclear. In response, the fellow recommended breaking this section into smaller, more manageable parts and adding an onboarding screen to prepare users for the upcoming questions. By introducing each section with clear instructions, simplifying legal jargon, providing clear instructions, and incorporating visual cues, the redesigned format aimed to reduce user anxiety, minimize errors, and create a smoother, more supportive experience for self-represented individuals.

Impact, Future Implementation, and Launch Timeline

The design improvements for MyPaperwork represent a significant advancement over the existing OCAP system, offering a more modern, accessible, and supportive platform for court users. MyPaperwork is still in development and is scheduled for launch by the end of 2024. The feedback and enhancements introduced during this fellowship—such as adding introductory screens to each section of the legal process—are expected to play a crucial role in ensuring the platform's usability and overall success.

Adding introductory sections to each part of the legal process prepares users for the types of information they will need, making complex topics like divorce, child custody, and other case information more manageable. This approach breaks down dense information into digestible parts, setting expectations upfront and reducing user confusion and frustration. These principles of usability, established in the divorce

initiation process, can be applied to future guided interviews such as name changes, child custody, and more, creating a cohesive and intuitive experience across all MyPaperwork applications.

Once fully implemented, MyPaperwork will become a vital tool for self-represented individuals, empowering them to handle their legal matters more confidently and accurately. The groundwork laid during this fellowship, including these usability enhancements, will ensure that MyPaperwork delivers a significantly improved user experience across various legal processes.

See Exhibits 3a-d.

Project 4: Divorce Flowchart

The redesign of the Divorce Process Flowchart was a crucial project aimed at improving the user experience for court patrons navigating the complex and often overwhelming divorce process. This flowchart serves as a visual guide, outlining each step of the divorce process clearly and comprehensively. The current flowchart outlines every step of the process, which can feel daunting and lacks clarity on crucial details, such as when to go to court, when to use tools like OCAP, or which steps might incur fees. The redesigned version focuses on guiding users with the most helpful information, using a simplified structure and precise visual vocabulary to emphasize steps where users can utilize the court platform. The redesign helps users understand at which step they use MyPaperwork, ensuring they are informed and prepared before, during, and after completing their paperwork and filing with the court.

Intentional Design and Visual Vocabulary

The divorce flowchart was redesigned with intentional visual vocabulary to address each step and point of contact with MyPaperwork. The flowchart guides users through the legal requirements and aligns with the stages presented in the MyPaperwork guided interview, creating a cohesive and supportive experience. By using clear visual cues, simplified language, and an intuitive layout, the flowchart helps demystify the divorce process, reducing the cognitive load on users and enabling them to proceed with greater confidence and understanding.

The flowchart employs a clean and structured design to guide users visually through the divorce process. The flowchart depicts three distinct phases, numbered and aligned vertically for clarity: Divorce Case Starts, Case May Take One of Three Paths, and Finalize divorce. The document uses bolded headers and numbered sections establishes a clear hierarchy, helping users quickly identify the stage of their process.

Arrows indicate the progression between steps, while decision points, such as the three possible case paths (default, agreement, or dispute), are visually separated for ease of understanding. Blue text links and icons referencing MyPaperwork integrate seamlessly into the flow, directing users to the appropriate digital tools. Additionally, gray icons signal cost-related steps, providing transparency about potential fees. Notes at the bottom of each section clarify requirements, ensuring users understand necessary actions at every stage.

This consistent visual vocabulary combines straightforward text, icons, and directional cues to create an intuitive guide for navigating the complex divorce process.

Impact, Integration, and Launch Timeline

The Divorce Process Flowchart is a critical tool for setting realistic expectations for court patrons, helping them to better understand the sequence of events, required

documentation, and potential outcomes. This project significantly enhances how information is communicated to users, providing a more accessible and user-friendly resource that complements the MyPaperwork platform.

The Self-Help Center has the final redesigned flowchart and will launch the updated flowchart concurrently with MyPaperwork by the end of 2024. Integrating these tools will create a seamless user experience, ensuring they are well informed and supported throughout their divorce journey. This holistic approach improves the user experience and contributes to a more efficient and effective court process.

See Exhibit 4.

Project 5: Policy Change Through Design

Ensuring clarity and consistency in court documents is vital for improving accessibility and reducing errors, particularly for self-represented individuals. One key initiative during the fellowship focused on addressing these issues through proposed amendments to UCRP Rule 10.

Rule 10 Redesign and Policy Recommendation

Effective November 1, 2023, UCRP Rule 10 mandates that all documents include a caption with the court name, action title, file number, pleading name, and the assigned judge or commissioner. Complaints must list all party names, while other pleadings need only include the first party on each side, indicating additional parties. Additionally, documents must contain detailed information about the filing attorney or party.

Despite these comprehensive guidelines, significant usability issues still need to be addressed. The court's creation of a YouTube video titled "How to Read a Court Pleading in Utah" in 2012, which has only garnered 256 views as of August 2024, underscores the persistent challenges of form comprehension and identification. The purpose of the video is to help users navigate court forms. However, the lack of views suggests that either patrons are unaware of the resource or find it insufficiently accessible. The low engagement highlights a broader issue of accessibility and comprehension for court patrons, particularly those who are self-represented, indicating the need for more integrated, user-friendly solutions.

In response to these challenges, the redesign of Rule 10 focused on enhancing the clarity and usability of court documents. The primary recommendations include:

- optimizing title placement and labeling,
- clearly marking court and case information,
- standardizing the placement of filer information.

These changes intend to make court documents more easily understandable and navigable, particularly for self-represented individuals without legal expertise to interpret complex documents.

Challenges and Future Considerations

The request to amend UCRP Rule 10 faced numerous challenges. Due to the layered approval process and time constraints, it was clear that this effort was more about planting the seed for future shifts rather than completing the entire process within the fellowship timeframe. Policy change within the court system is inherently complex and involves thorough review and input from various stakeholders at different levels.

Despite this limitation, the work completed during the fellowship laid a strong foundation for future efforts to implement these changes. The improvements in layout and the push for statewide consistency will eventually lead to a more user-friendly and

comprehensible set of regulations. The foundation is in place, and the advantages of these changes are well-defined, setting the stage for continued advocacy and the eventual adoption of the proposed policy enhancements.

The proposed redesign aligns with the requirements of Rule 10 and addresses the usability issues identified through user interviews. These changes aim to improve the overall user experience within the court system, particularly for self-represented individuals, by ensuring that documents are easily understandable and navigable.

See Exhibit 5.

Project 6: Internal Process Improvements

To enhance team communication and efficiency, our team transitioned from using Google Drive for project tracking to implementing Notion, an all-in-one workspace tool with robust project management features. This change aimed to streamline our workflow, improve collaboration, and support our evolving approach to product development for self-represented patrons. With the help of the U.S. Digital Response (USDR), we also adopted Kanban boards, design review structures, and work-tracking tools that provided a clearer picture of ongoing projects and responsibilities.

As part of this transition, a UX manual within Notion was created to document the projects and achievements during the fellowship. This manual is a comprehensive resource for the team, enabling them to review completed projects, understand best practices, and refer to the workflows established during the fellow's time with the court. The UX manual is a lasting resource for ongoing work and project management after the fellow's departure.

Process Wins

This shift from email communication and various drafts of Google Docs to Notion and Kanban boards allowed our team to understand workload management and improve tracking for developing various products. With U.S. Digital Response's (USDR) assistance, we built structured workflows that enabled team members to see at a glance what tasks were in progress, under review, or completed. For example, the tracking feature helped us monitor the progress of the forms engine—an instrumental part of our product-building process—ensuring that the team would meet vital milestones and potential bottlenecks were identified early. This systematic approach improved our ability to prioritize tasks and stay aligned on project goals, ultimately contributing to more efficient product development.

Cultural Wins

A significant cultural shift accompanied the transition to Notion, as team members began to view the resources for self-represented patrons as "products" rather than standalone tools. This shift in mindset encouraged the team to think about current updates, ongoing maintenance, and future enhancements. Notion's structured tracking and documentation allowed us to treat each update as part of a continuous improvement process, reinforcing the importance of ongoing assessment and evolution. As a result, our team adopted a more strategic approach to design reviews and future updates, leading to improved alignment and shared accountability.

Challenges and Adaptation

The transition from Google Drive to Notion presented initial challenges, as team members had to adjust to a new platform and learn how to maximize its capabilities. However, the change proved beneficial, with Notion's flexibility and organizational features greatly enhancing their ability to collaborate effectively and maintain clear

communication across all projects. By overcoming these challenges and embracing a more structured workflow, the team set a foundation for sustained process improvements and effective product management in the future.

See Exhibit 6.

Additional Suggestions

Throughout this fellowship, key insights and opportunities were identified for further improvement beyond the primary projects. These additional suggestions build upon the work already completed and guide future initiatives within the court system.

Enhance the Court's Website:

- Redesign the search engine for better usability and more relevant results.
- Update the contact and address pages by replacing the large map with a more intuitive directory or list format.

One critical area identified for improvement is the user experience on the court's website. The current search engine lacks intuitiveness, making it difficult for users—including court staff, patrons, attorneys, and legal aid organizations—to find the necessary information. A redesign of the search functionality, focusing on ease of use and relevance of results, would significantly improve accessibility for all users.

Additionally, the court's contact and address pages require significant updates. The main focus is a large, cumbersome map that opens new tabs when clicking street addresses. This map takes up valuable space with little value. A more user-friendly and intuitive layout, with a simplified directory or list format, would better serve the needs of court staff and patrons alike.

Redesign and Simplify Self-Help Web Pages:

- Break down dense information into smaller sections.
- Use visual aids and clear, step-by-step guides, especially for divorce-related content.

Feedback from users and court staff highlighted that the self-help pages, particularly those related to divorce, are text-heavy, creating a cognitive load that makes it challenging for users to navigate the information effectively. Many court patrons struggle to process the dense information, hindering their understanding of the legal process. Simplifying these pages by breaking down information into smaller, more digestible sections, incorporating visual aids, and providing apparent, step-by-step guides would significantly enhance the user experience and reduce confusion and manageability for users.

Expand Collaboration Between the Court and Legal Aid Organizations

- Strengthen partnerships for ongoing user testing and feedback.
- Ensure court materials remain user-centered and relevant.

The successful partnership established during the Certificate of Service redesign project between the court's Self-Help Center and local legal aid organizations demonstrated the

value of collaboration in user testing and feedback gathering. Expanding these partnerships would ensure that the court's materials and resources remain user-centered and continue to meet the needs of all stakeholders. Regular engagement with legal aid organizations for ongoing user testing could provide valuable insights and help maintain the relevance and effectiveness of court documents and services.

Service Design Improvements Across the Court System

- Align court departments and offices for consistent, user-friendly services.
- Adopt a service design approach to optimize all user touchpoints.

A recurring theme throughout this fellowship was the need for enhanced service design within the court system. Fostering a more robust understanding and alignment across various court departments and offices can lead to more consistent and user-friendly services. By adopting a service design approach, the court can ensure that all touchpoints—whether in-person or online—are optimized for user experience, ultimately making the court system more accessible and navigable for all users. Thanks in part to the JIF placement, the director of the Self-Help Center expressed the need for a full-time UX/front-end professional to ensure ongoing improvements and consistency in the user experience across all court services.

Support for Future Digital Transformation Initiatives

- Prioritize user-centered design in digital projects like MyPaperwork and the Divorce Process Flowchart.
- Continue iterative design and stakeholder engagement to ensure success.

As the court modernizes its digital offerings, projects like MyPaperwork and the Divorce Process Flowchart set the stage for future digital transformation efforts. The court should continue to prioritize user-centered design in all digital projects, ensuring that new platforms and tools are accessible, intuitive, and aligned with the needs of the diverse user base. Ongoing user testing, iterative design, and stakeholder engagement will be crucial to the success of these initiatives.

Conclusion

This fellowship supported meaningful improvements in user experience and process efficiency within the court system. Through user archetypes, document redesigns, streamlined tracking, and policy advocacy, court resources are more accessible and user-centered, especially for self-represented patrons. However, much of what was accomplished was made possible by the foundational work already being done by the Utah State Courts, specifically the Self-Help Center. Their commitment to improving access to justice is evident in initiatives such as creating improved guided interviews for child custody, name change, and eviction cases. Additionally, the Self-Help Center's ongoing engagement with self-represented patrons and their participation in programs like Forms Camp—a collaborative event hosted by the National Center for State Courts to simplify and improve court forms—have been instrumental in advancing user-centered practices.

While efforts like the Rule 10 amendment will need ongoing support, the work achieved during this fellowship complements and builds on the court's existing initiatives. These efforts lay a strong foundation for continued improvements, guiding the court toward a more efficient, standardized, and empathetic public service.

Acknowledgments

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Your contributions were foundational in shaping the outcomes of this fellowship and advancing these initiatives.

Exhibits

Exhibit 1a

A visual presentation of the archetypes, illustrating different user needs and behaviors for better service design.

Archetype 1

Bio:
Woman married for a few years and has 2 young children.
She has been struggling for the past couple of years with a difficult relationship with spouse and wants a divorce.
A goal is to maintain children's custody and to have a seamless process.

Behaviors:

- Has limited time, attention and resources to spend on the process.
- Has googled the process, became overwhelmed; has waited to start the process.
- Does not have easy access to a computer, and mostly uses her mobile phone.

Core Needs:


- Cares about having a speedy process in obtaining her divorce.
- Needs the process of obtaining divorce and custody to be easy to understand.
- As a future single parent, financial cost needs to be manageable.

Core Problems:

- Was not able to easily obtain 'straightforward' information online.
- Was not able to start the process using her mobile device.
- Was not able to complete service correctly to have a 'seamless' process.

User Stories:

- As a mobile user, I want to fill out my paperwork on my mobile device, so that I can go at my own pace discreetly
- As a financially limited user, I want to get pricing information right away, so that I know the cost of my divorce.
- As a first time user, I want to complete service correctly, so that case moves along correctly.



Emily Anderson
Age: 29
Education: Some college
Tech Literacy: Competent
Device: Preferred-Mobile

Exhibit 1b

A visual presentation of the archetypes, illustrating different user needs and behaviors for better service design.

Archetype 2

Bio:
Senior man in a rural area received a 'Notice to Vacate' pinned to his door. He lost his job and has not paid rent. He is close to finding a new job and wants to work something out with the landlord. His goal is to remain housed but is overwhelmed with the notice and is unsure how to move forward.

Behaviors:

- Searching for a job, I attempted to contact the landlord to explain but wasn't able to contact the landlord.
- Has limited understanding of the follow-up process, calls court to get understanding.
- Wants to acknowledge payment was late, and hopes for a second chance.

Core Needs:


- Needs to understand what the document they received means and steps to take.
- Wants support in the process of responding to the documents he received
- Needs legal support to not be displaced, but cannot afford it.

Core Problems:

- Language on Notice doesn't address important information, QR code isn't useful in low tech.
- Potential outcomes of cases are not transparent to the tenant, and can lead to more difficulties.
- Does not understand how to engage, and needs to know the steps that he can take.

User Stories:

- As a user with low tech literacy, I want to understand what the Notice means, to take appropriate steps.
- As an unemployed user, I want to keep my housing so I can avoid additional debt, securing my livelihood.



David Johnson
Age: 66
Education: High School
Tech Literacy: Low
Device: mobile/ no internet

Exhibit 1c

A visual presentation of the archetypes, illustrating different user needs and behaviors for better service design.

Archetype 3

Bio:
Spanish speaking woman in distress in need of support during traumatic experience. Does not have mental or emotional bandwidth to engage with the legal process. She asks community based organizations for help. She does not have literacy to engage with self help tools. Assisted with a bilingual case manager to help her.

Behaviors:

- She is embarrassed that it has taken her so long to decide to shift her situation.
- She needs help and only feels safe asking from her local organization.
- Nervous that she won't be able to complete her goal and feel pressured to encounter an abuser.

Core Needs:


- Needs to feel safe in order to engage with the legal system.
- Requires hand holding and being walked through the process.
- Needs thorough explanation of the process to achieve her goal of evading her abuser.

Core Problems:

- Spanish speaker; education and stress level, she needs information easy to understand.
- Materials need to be available for community health workers to guide users through the process.
- Recovering from abuse and needs support to heal and recover.

User Stories:

- As a user with low literacy, I want the Community Health Worker to understand material, so that she can help me.
- As a user in distress, I want the process to consider my need for patience and a safe space during this difficult time.



Sofia Martinez
Age: 54
Education: Some middle School
Tech Literacy: Not literate
Device: no mobile/ no internet

Exhibit 2a

A comparison of the Certificate of Service attachment, showing the original version alongside the redesigned format.

Before

Certificate of Service			
I certify that I filed with the court and am serving a copy of this Declaration of jurisdiction and grounds for divorce on the following people.			
Person's Name	Service Method	Service Address	Service Date
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Delivery <input type="checkbox"/> E-filed/MyCase <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Left at business (With person in charge or in receptacle for deliveries.) <input type="checkbox"/> Left at home (With person of suitable age and discretion residing there.)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Delivery <input type="checkbox"/> E-filed/MyCase <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Left at business (With person in charge or in receptacle for deliveries.) <input type="checkbox"/> Left at home (With person of suitable age and discretion residing there.)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Delivery <input type="checkbox"/> E-filed/MyCase <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Left at business (With person in charge or in receptacle for deliveries.) <input type="checkbox"/> Left at home (With person of suitable age and discretion residing there.)		

Date

Signature ►

Printed Name

1051FA Approved July 18,
2019 / Revised September 1, 2024

Declaration of jurisdiction and grounds for divorce

Page 3 of 3

Exhibit 2b

A comparison of the Certificate of Service attachment, showing the original version alongside the redesigned format.

After

<p>The Certificate of Service proves you gave copies of this document to everyone involved in your case. It is saying, "I gave everyone the papers they need to see." (Utah Rule of Civil Procedure 5)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Fill out the sections below: Write the information for each person you are sending a copy to. You have space to include two people and may add more pages if needed.2. Serve it: You need to give a copy of the document including the certificate of service page to the other person. Give it to them on or before the day you give the document to the court.3. File it: You need to give this document including the certificate of service page to the court. Make sure you also keep a copy for yourself.			
<p style="text-align: center;">Certificate of Service</p> <p>I confirm that I provided a copy of this Declaration of Jurisdiction and Grounds for Divorce to the following people.</p>			
I provided a copy to	I provided the copy by	I provided the copy to this address	I provided the copy on
Name of Person	[x]check one	(based on ← option checked)	Date
1.	<input type="checkbox"/> Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Delivery <input type="checkbox"/> E-filed/MyCase <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Left at business (With person in charge or in receptacle for deliveries.) <input type="checkbox"/> Left at home (With person of suitable age and discretion residing there.)		
2.	<input type="checkbox"/> Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Delivery <input type="checkbox"/> E-filed/MyCase <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Left at business (With person in charge or in receptacle for deliveries.) <input type="checkbox"/> Left at home (With person of suitable age and discretion residing there.)		
Date (when you filled this out)		Your Signature ► Your Printed Name	

Exhibit 3a

Screenshots of prototype screens used in usability testing for MyPaperwork, showcasing improvements to enhance user experience.

Welcome!

Forms


Help Welcome, User

Divorce


Welcome to the Guided Interview for Divorce.

This process may be a challenging time for you. The goal is for this process is to be straightforward


Here is what you need to know:




Purpose: This interview helps you collect and sort the information needed for your initial divorce papers.



Time Needed: You'll need at least 2 hours to finish. Don't worry; you can save your work and come back when it's convenient.



Your Privacy: We take your privacy seriously. Everything you share here is confidential and kept safe.



What Happens Next: After you finish the interview, we'll guide you on how to submit your divorce paperwork and inform you about any other steps you might need to take.

[Exit without Saving](#) [Next](#)

Exhibit 3b

Screenshots of prototype screens used in usability testing for MyPaperwork, showcasing improvements to enhance user experience.

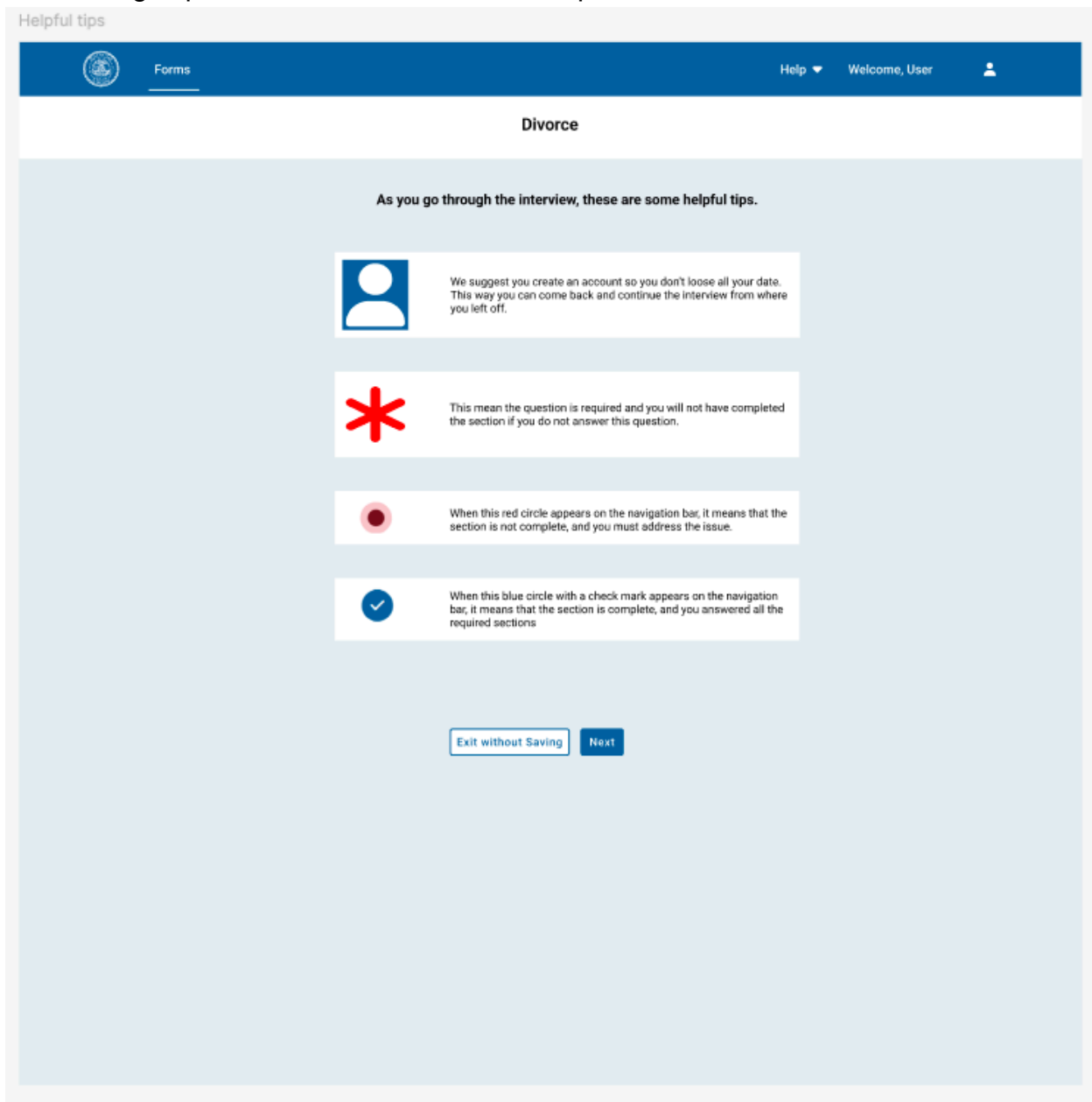





Exhibit 3c

Screenshots of prototype screens used in usability testing for MyPaperwork, showcasing improvements to enhance user experience.

Requirements for program

 Forms Help ▾ Welcome, User 

Divorce



Before we dive in, let's check if this program is the right fit for you. Please answer the following questions to ensure you can make the most out of our tool and that it meets your need .

Residency requirements

In order to get divorced in Utah you or your spouse must reside in your respective county in Utah for at least three months immediately before filing the divorce petition ([Utah Code 30-3-1](#)) If custody of a minor child is an issue, usually the child must reside with at least one of the parents in Utah for at least six months, but there are exceptions.

Have you or your spouse lived in one of the counties in Utah for the last three months (immediately prior to filing)?

☐ yes ☐ no

Children

This software can calculate child support up to six children. To calculate child support, a "child" can count as any minor children, adult children who are 18 years of age and will graduate at the normally expected time (but have not graduated yet), or incapacitated adult children between you and your spouse.

Do you have more than six children as described above?

☐ yes ☐ no



Exit without Saving

Next


Exhibit 3d

Screenshots of prototype screens used in usability testing for MyPaperwork, showcasing improvements to enhance user experience.

Requirements for program- Good to go

 Forms Help ▾ Welcome, User 

Divorce



Before we dive in, let's check if this program is the right fit for you. Please answer the following questions to ensure you can make the most out of our tool and that it meets your need .

Residency requirements

In order to get divorced in Utah you or your spouse must reside in your respective county in Utah for at least three months immediately before filing the divorce petition ([Utah Code 30-3-1](#)). If custody of a minor child is an issue, usually the child must reside with at least one of the parents in Utah for at least six months, but there are exceptions.

Have you or your spouse lived in one of the counties in Utah for the last three months (immediately prior to filing)?

☒ yes ☐ no

Children

This software can calculate child support up to six children. To calculate child support, a "child" can count as any minor children, adult children who are 18 years of age and will graduate at the normally expected time (but have not graduated yet), or incapacitated adult children between you and your spouse.

Do you have more than six children as described above?

☐ yes ☒ no

Based on your answers, this program can assist you in filing your case.

Exit without Saving

Next

Exhibit 4

The redesigned flow chart has more precise touch points with MyPaperwork to guide court patrons through the divorce process with visual organization.

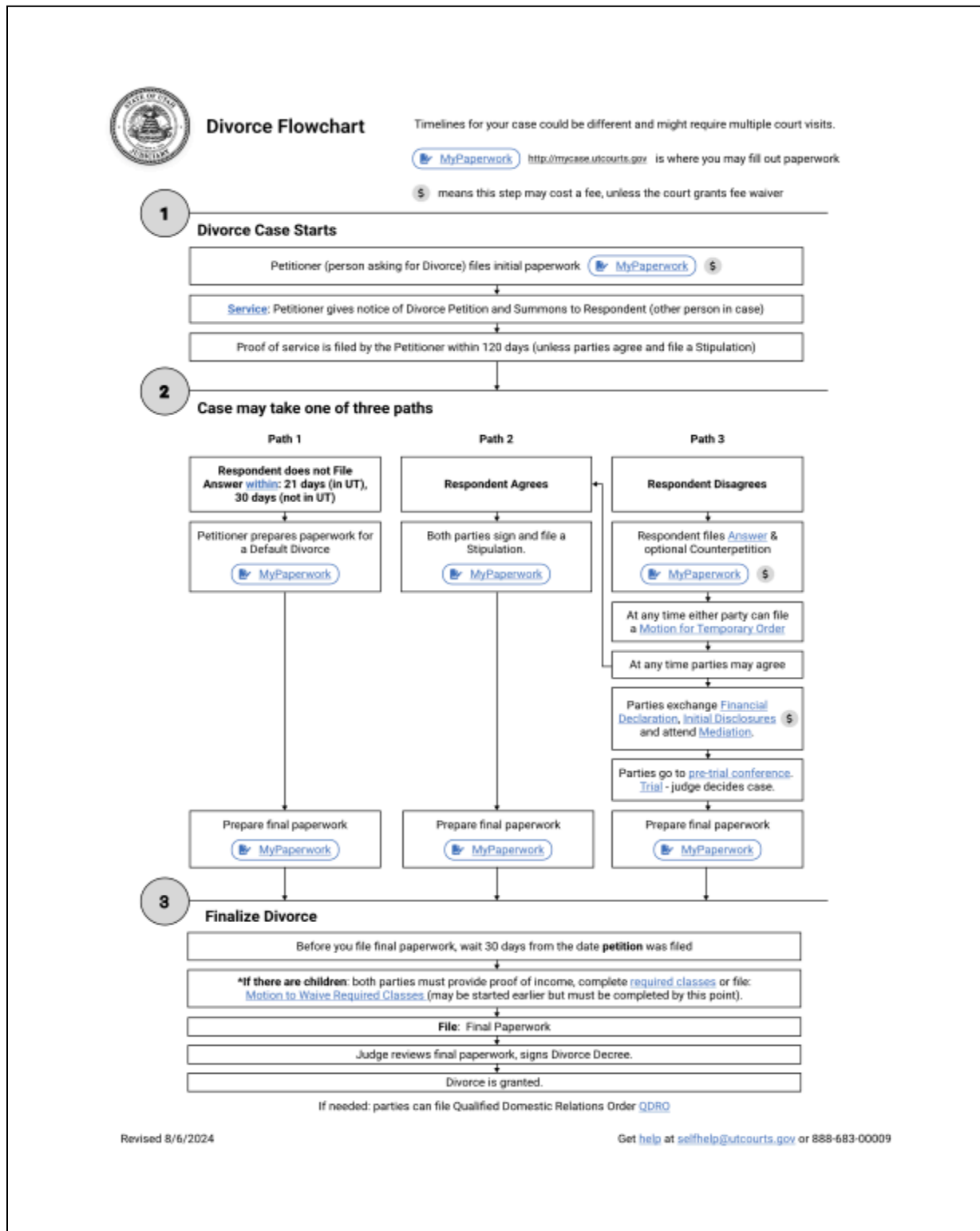


Exhibit 5

The updated caption and front page of the eviction complaint form, part of the request to amend UCRP Rule 10. Currently, it's approved by the Forms Committee and awaiting further review by an additional committee that oversees the rules.

If you do not respond to this document within applicable time limits, judgment could be entered against you as requested.

Name of Document: **COMPLAINT FOR UNLAWFUL DETAINER (EVICTION)**

Court Information: In the District Court of Utah Fourth Judicial District Utah County

137 North Freedom Blvd. Provo, UT 84601

(^This is where you file...)

Case Details:

Plaintiff: Michael Adams

vs.

Defendant: Julie Harris

Case Number: 244110000

Judge: Judy Sheindlin

Person filing this document:

Attorney for Plaintiff

Maria Rodriguez (14233)

Rodriguez Law LLP

232 Vidas St. Suite 200

Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Tel. (801) 817-58XX

mrodriguez@rlaw.com

Form# Approved Date/
Revised Date

Document Title

Page 1 of 1

Exhibit 6

A screenshot of the Notion wiki created as a UX resource for the Self-Help Center, supporting ongoing user-centered practices.

