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April 2022 Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 14, Issue 2



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Register Now For Our Required Annual Training

The Commission will hold its 2022 annual training in June this year.

This year, our training will focus on the revised reimbursement request forms and the updated Standards E and F form. When registering, the available dates/times for your county will appear. If your county is unable to attend the date(s) provided, please select the option for "Individual Training" and a Commission staffer will contact you.



Questions may be directed to the [Commission's Information Inbox](#).

[Click here to register](#)

Revised Juvenile Training Standard Takes Effect

The Commission has spent the last few months contacting attorneys who appear to need additional training to retain their juvenile delinquency qualifications.

During the audits of the first quarter of 2022 (requests are due May 15), your reimbursement request auditor will now inform you of any attorneys not qualified to handle juvenile delinquency cases (per our records) under the new standards that went into effect this past September. After this final notice, if the attorney continues to receive juvenile delinquency cases in your county and is not qualified by the time we review the second quarter's reimbursement request (due August 14), the attorney's juvenile work will be considered non-reimbursable. As always, using an unqualified attorney on an ongoing basis violates the county's comprehensive plan and can jeopardize the county's eligibility for reimbursement.



As you may recall, the Commission amended its Juvenile Delinquency Qualifications in September of 2021. Specifically, the Commission approved the Public Defender Council's request to require attorneys qualified to represent juveniles in delinquency cases based upon their adult criminal experience to also complete at least six hours of training in a juvenile delinquency practice course approved by the Commission.

The standard now also allows an attorney to become qualified for Level 1-4 felony juvenile delinquency cases if the attorney has two years of experience and has completed a single felony or juvenile trial and also a trial practice course. Questions about the revised standards and requirements may be directed to [Derrick Mason](#) or [Jennifer Pinkston](#)

[Click here to read the revised Standard E](#)

New Federal Reimbursement to Counties Continues to Gain Momentum Statewide

The federal government recently announced that it made public defense expenses in Children in Need of Services and Termination of Parental Rights cases eligible for Title IV-E grant reimbursement.



The Commission is pleased to announce that it has reached an agreement with the Indiana Department of Child Services finalizing the methodology and giving permission to the Commission to pass federal funds through to **all Indiana counties**.

Counties that are receiving 40% reimbursement from the Commission for its public defense expenses were first made eligible and have already begun receiving these new, additional funds. Please direct questions to [Stephanie Lalani](#).

[Click here to read a memo with the details of this funding opportunity](#)

Governor Appoints New Commission Member



The Commission is very grateful to former State Senator Richard Bray for his years of service. Senator Bray notified Governor Eric Holcomb that he would prefer not to serve another term, and the Governor has appointed Attorney Samantha DeWester to a 4-year term on the Commission.

Ms. DeWester comes with extensive experience in Indiana's legal community, and we welcome her!

[Click here to learn more about Commission Member Samantha DeWester](#)

First Multi-County, Regional Public Defense Office Established in West Central Indiana

The Commission is very excited to announce that Indiana's first Regional Public Defender Office is taking shape.

Encouraging the regionalization of public defense services, where appropriate, has been a policy goal of the Commission for several years. It was a key recommendation of the Task Force on Public Defense, and the statute was amended to authorize regionalization beyond county lines in 2019 in a bill authored by State Senator R. Michael Young.

The newly formed West Central Indiana Public Defender Office (WCIPDO) is seeking

its first Chief Public Defender.

The office will serve Vermillion, Parke and Fountain Counties with an office located in Vermillion County.

Photo Credit: Chris Flook, Ball State University



[Click here to view the Job Description for the Chief PD of WCIPDO](#)

Commission Appoints Executive Director



At the recent March Quarterly Meeting, the Commission appointed Attorney Derrick Mason as its Executive Director, effective immediately.

Mr. Mason has served on the staff since 2014, and has been the staff lead under prior titles since 2016. His duties will remain the same, but this title change is in recognition of his years of meritorious service and is intended to clarify his role.

He holds a finance degree from the Kelley School of Business and received his law degree from the Maurer School of Law. He worked for the Monroe County Public Defender Office for seven years. Previously, he practiced civil law at a firm in Lake County and for the Monroe County Department of Child Services.

Derrick is a native of Blackford County and currently resides in Indianapolis.

Planning Begins for 2023 Legislative Session

The Commission anticipates the 2023 Legislative Session, when the next State Budget will be crafted, to be critical for our goal of securing the funds and statutory authority to reimburse for misdemeanor expenses.



We anticipate that our legislative agenda may include additional items, and the Commission will have a robust discussion at its next quarterly meeting in June. If you have any comments about the Commission's legislative or policy priorities, please contact [Andrew Cullen](#).

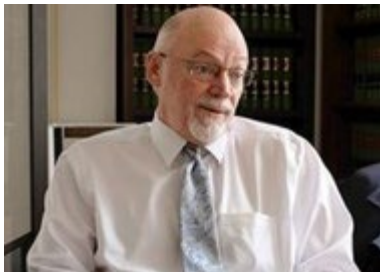
Commission Staff & Founder in the News

Dr. Torrin Liddell, the Commission's Research & Statistics Analyst, recently participated in a panel discussion organized by the Indigent Defense Research Association to discuss attorney compensation in public defense systems. He presented the results of the Commission's study on attorney overhead in Indiana and, in collaboration with the presenters from other state agencies, discussed data and advocacy related to the underpayment of attorneys in various public defense systems.



Derrick Mason, the Commission's Executive Director, will be a panelist at the American Bar Association's Public Defense Summit on Friday, April 22, to discuss best practices in compensation for contract attorneys and assigned counsel.

[Click here to learn more about the Summit](#)



Larry Landis, the Founder of the Commission, recently gave an extensive interview to the Public Defenseless Podcast with Hunter Parnell.

It is a very interesting and informative discussion about systemic issues in Indiana's criminal justice system.

[Click here to listen to the podcast featuring Larry Landis](#)

Justice Reinvestment Advisory Councils to be Established in Each Indiana County

Legislation approved last year established a local Justice Reinvestment Advisory Council (Local JRAC) in each county [[IC 33-38-9.5-4](#)].

The membership includes the Chief Public Defender (if one exists) or a public defender appointed by the authority that makes employment decisions if no chief exists.

Local JRACs are required to:

- promote the use of evidence-based and best practices in the areas of community-based sentencing alternatives and recidivism reduction
- review, evaluate, and make recommendations about local practices (community-based corrections and jail overcrowding)
- compile reports as directed by the State JRAC
- communicate with the State JRAC to establish and implement best practices and to ensure consistent collection and reporting of data

If you have questions about these local boards, please contact [Andrew Cullen](#). Mr. Cullen is also available to assist with any policy planning for the Local JRACs.

The Indiana Office of Court Services has established a very useful website with information regarding these boards. Click the button below to visit that website.

[Click here to learn more about these new county boards.](#)

PD Board Spotlight: Managing Caseloads

One of the primary reasons for the creation of the Commission was to develop standards to reduce the likelihood of a public defender being assigned too many cases.

Together, the Indiana Rules of Professional Conduct (specifically Rule 1.16) and the Commission's Standard K recognize this critical issue and provide direction to attorneys.

Click the button below to read the full article. [Contact us](#) if you would like to discuss this issue.

[Board Spotlight: Standard K for Board Members](#)

Funding Still Available for At-Risk Youth Projects

Proposals are still being evaluated, on a rolling basis, for projects designed to impact "At-Risk Youth and Families."

The primary goals of these projects are: (1) to create long-term improvements in systems that serve Indiana at-risk youth and families involved with Indiana's family/child welfare system, the juvenile delinquency system, or both, and (2) to create system improvements that proactively prevent such involvements.

If you have any questions about this request for proposals, contact [Derrick Mason](#) or [Torrin Liddell](#).



[Click here to read the Request for Proposals](#)

March Commission Meeting Draft Minutes

[Click here to read the draft minutes from the prior Commission Meeting](#)

2020-2021 Fiscal Year Commission Annual Report

[Click here to read the Commission's latest Annual Report](#)

Public Defense Employment Opportunities

[Click here for a list of current Public Defense Employment Opportunities](#)

Remaining 2022 Commission Meetings & Reimbursement Request Due Dates

<i>Quarter</i>	<i>Reimbursement Req Due</i>	<i>Commission Meeting</i>
1Q	Sun, May 15	Wed, June 15
2Q	Mon, Aug 14	Wed, Sept 21
3Q	Mon, Nov. 14	Wed, Dec. 14

Commission meetings begin at 2 p.m. Eastern and comply with the Indiana Open Door Law ([IC § 5-14-1.5](#)). Meetings are held at the Commission Office (309 W. Washington Street, Suite 501, Indianapolis, IN, 46204) unless otherwise stated on the meeting notice and agenda. The public is invited to attend in person or via electronic means permitted under [IC § 5-14-1.5-3.6](#) excluding any Executive Sessions that may be scheduled as permitted under [IC § 5-14-1.5-6.1](#). To view the Commission's Electronic Meeting Policy, [click here](#).

Notice of Executive Sessions & meetings will be posted at the entrance to the Commission Office (309 W. Washington Street, Suite 501, Indianapolis, IN, 46204) and will be posted on [the front page of the Commission's website under "News & Announcements"](#) at least 48 hours in advance. Meeting materials and agendas will be posted at least 24 hours in advance.

If you have any questions about the Commission meetings, [contact Derrick Mason](#).

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