

# Justice Reinvestment Advisory Council

## Meeting Minutes

### January 31, 2025

The Justice Reinvestment Advisory Council met on January 31, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. - 10:55 a.m. in the Capital Center in Indianapolis. Justice Christopher Goff chaired the meeting.

**1. Members present.** The following members attended the meeting:

- Christine Blessinger, designee for commissioner of the Indiana Department of Correction
- Chris Biehn, designee for chief administrative officer of Office of Judicial Administration
- Judge Mark Spitzer, designee for president of Indiana Judges Association (video)
- Sydney Moulton, proxy for president and CEO of Indiana Council of Community Mental Health Centers
- Devon McDonald, executive director of Indiana Criminal Justice Institute
- Chris Naylor, executive director of Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council
- Kellie Bittorf, president of Indiana Association of Community Corrections Act Counties
- Angela Morris, president of Probation Officers Professional Association of Indiana
- Camden Murrell, proxy for executive director of Association of Indiana Counties
- Andrew Cullen, proxy for chair of Indiana Commission on Court Appointed Attorneys
- Steve McCaffrey, president and CEO of Mental Health America of Indiana
- Bernice Corley, executive director of Indiana Public Defender Council (video)
- Rebecca Buhner, interim director of Division of Mental Health and Addiction
- Michael Biberstein, proxy for president of Indiana Sheriffs' Association
- Sen. Brett Clark, proxy for chair of the Senate Corrections and Criminal Law Committee.

**2. Members absent.** The following members did not attend the meeting:

- Rep. Wendy McNamara, chair of House Courts and Criminal Code Committee
- Rep. Mitch Gore, ranking minority member of House Courts and Criminal Code Committee
- Sen. Rodney Pol, ranking minority member of Senate Corrections and Criminal Law Committee
- Daniel Glass, designee for State Budget Director
- Governor's designee

3. **Guests.** The following attended the meeting as guests: Lora Moeller, Jamie Bergacs, Kevin Riley, Zach Johnson, and Shelby Bear, Indiana Office of Court Services; Angie Hensley and Elizabeth Jenkinson, Office of Judicial Administration; Lucas Harvey, Indiana House of Representatives; Lloyd Arnold, Angie Estes, Liz Darlage, and Samantha Moore, Indiana Department of Correction; Carolyn Travis, Indiana Senate; Lindsey Villalpando, Probation Officers Professional Association of Indiana.
4. **Staff.** Jennifer Bauer, Catheryne Pully, Michelle Goodman, David Sexton, Reilly Sommers, and Georgia McCart attended as staff from the Office of Court Services.
5. **Welcome and introductions.** Justice Goff welcomed new members to the meeting.
6. **Approval of minutes.** The December 20, 2024, meeting minutes were approved by consent.
7. **Workgroup Reports.**
  - a) **Local JRAC Workgroup.** Chris Biehn reported the following:
    - i. Technical assistance through the Center for Effective Public Policy—several counties have on-going assistance; Decatur County submitted a new request; the contract with CEPP was renewed for six months to align with the fiscal calendar.
    - ii. Local JRAC Annual Reports—the survey for the 2024 report will be finalized at the February meeting; reports are due by March 31. Bernice Corley moved to approve the survey and Kellie Bittorf seconded. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.
  - b) **JRAC Reports Workgroup.** Michelle Goodman reported the following:
    - i. Judicial LIT—the report from locals is due by May 1 and the JRAC report to the legislature is due by July 1.
    - ii. Indigency Survey—IOCS sent to all judicial officers on January 17; 220 responses so far.
    - iii. SEA 9 electronic monitoring reports—Q3 report is being finalized; Q4 reports due by February 14 and 48 counties have submitted; workgroup will present Q3, Q4, and Annual Report for approval at next meeting.
  - c) **Disparate Outcomes Workgroup.** Bernice Corley reported that the workgroup met with Dr. Lowder on January 17. Dr. Lowder and her team have been meeting with the state's Management and Performance Hub and other statewide agency data contacts to create a plan for developing MPH's capacity to collect required data, calculate, and report on the metrics. MPH will focus on building a statewide infrastructure for metrics reporting, but Marion County will serve as the first pilot county to facilitate quality control of data and metrics reporting.

Dr. Lowder and her team are also in the process of linking Relative Disadvantage Tool responses to jail and court data to begin to track individual case outcomes for individuals who were assessed. In addition, Dr. Rucker (UNC-Chapel Hill) and Dr. Lowder presented the survey objectives. The work group will review the survey at the February meeting.

- d) Data Workgroup.** Justice Goff reported that IOCS staff are putting together the Data Workgroup and will schedule a meeting once the member list is finalized.

## **8. Member Updates.**

- a) Indiana Judges Association.** Judge Spitzer reported that Chief Justice Rush gave her State of the Judiciary address to the General Assembly on January 29. IJA hosted a reception for legislators before the address at the Statehouse. IJA is watching the legislative session and following HB 1059 on warrants and SB 324 on bail.

- b) Commission on Court Appointed Attorneys.** Andrew Cullen reported that the commission is watching HB 1049 on public service attorney scholarships as it moves through the legislature.

- c) Association of Indiana Counties.** Camden Murrell reported that AIC's Legislative Conference is scheduled for February 4-5 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Indianapolis.

- d) Senate Corrections and Criminal Law Committee.** Sen. Clark reported that the committee passed SB 218 on electronic monitoring at the January 29 meeting. SB 219 on trespass and SB 312 on exceptions to paraphernalia statutes also passed out of the committee. He also asked for member feedback on HB 1107 on funding for family recovery courts.

- e) Indiana Department of Correction.** Chris Blessinger introduced Lloyd Arnold as DOC's new commissioner. Ms. Blessinger also announced that DOC has a new leadership team. Liz Darlage reported that DOC's community supervision grant applications will be available on February 3 on a new platform. The grant application due date is April 11.

- f) Indiana Association of Community Corrections Act Counties.** Kellie Bittorf reported that the IACCAC spring conference is scheduled for April 9-11 at the French Lick conference center. She also reported that IACCAC is following SB 368 on community corrections programs and SB 218 on electronic monitoring. IACCAC is working with POPAI to plan for the summer assembly.

- g) Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council.** Chris Naylor reported that IPAC is watching bills on local funding for the criminal justice system. He also reported that several prosecutors are interested in IU McKinney Law School's Rural Justice Initiative.

- h) Indiana Sheriffs' Association.** Michael Biberstein reported that ISA is watching the legislative session.

- i) Indiana Criminal Justice Institute.** Devon McDonald reported that the CJI/JRAC annual report went out on time in December. He also reported that his last day with

CJI is February 7, and the new executive director has not been named. Justice Goff thanked Mr. McDonald for his long-time service to CJI and JRAC.

**j) Office of Judicial Administration.** Angie Hensley reported the following:

**Federal Grants**—The federal executive order that impacted some federal grants was rescinded. The Justice Partners Addiction Response grant is not being interrupted. OJA received \$3M for the current federal fiscal year from DMHA. The total award was cut over \$600K. However, OJA was granted a no-cost extension for the previous year's grant, so counties can use those funds through September 2025.

**State Grants**—IOCS 2026 Grant applications for Problem-Solving Courts and Pretrial grants will open February 2- April 12, 2025, through eCivis, the State's new grant management system. Applications can be accessed through the State Budget Agency Grants Management website under Grant Opportunities. A separate detailed budget will be required and uploaded as part of the application. SBA training sessions on the new grant management system are planned for mid-February and early March and will be recorded. The Chief Justice has requested an additional \$1.5M for PSC grants as part of the Supreme Court budget. Court A&D Grants and Scholarships have been transitioned to the eCivis system and are available through the SBA website.

Chris Biehn reported that volunteers are still needed for the new Data Workgroup.

**k) Probation Officers Professional Association.** Angela Morris reported that POPAI's management institute is scheduled for March 12-14. POPAI also has a sex offender assessment training scheduled on the same days. Twenty-seven counties will participate in this training.

**l) Mental Health America of Indiana.** Steve McCaffrey reported that MHAI's Hoosier Idol event is scheduled for April 9 at the Indiana Roof Ballroom.

**m) Indiana Council of Community Mental Health Centers.** Sydney Moulton reported that the pilot for Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics launched on January 1, 2025. ICCMHC is also following the legislative session. In addition, she reported that ICCMHC's Zoe Fantz and OJA's Brittany Kelly will be the keynote speakers at the NAMI Conference.

**n) Division of Mental Health and Addiction.** Becky Buhner reported that DMHA started using the eCivis grant management system last year. She also reported that the new pilot for Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics started on January 1. The pilot is going well and collecting data. Ms. Buhner noted that the pilot allows for transparency and evidence-based practices.

- 9. Next Meeting Date.** The next Council meeting is scheduled for February 28, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in the South Tower of the Capital Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Bauer  
Office of Court Services