



Youth Justice Oversight Committee

Data Work Group

Minutes from August 12, 2025 Data Work Group Meeting

The Youth Justice Oversight Committee (YJOC) Data Work Group met on August 12, 2025 from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. via Zoom. Dr. Matt Aalsma and Chris Biehn chaired the meeting.

1. Attendance

Members Present:

- Dr. Matt Aalsma, Indiana University School of Medicine, Co-Chair
- Chris Biehn, Indiana Office of Court Services, Co-Chair
- Melanie Pitstick, Marion County Juvenile Probation
- Kristi Bruther, Johnson County Juvenile Detention Center
- Kaitlyn Christian, Management Performance Hub
- Judge Sarah Mullican, Vigo Circuit/Superior Court 3
- Olga Volokhova, Indiana Youth Institute
- Traci Lane, Madison County Juvenile Probation

Members Absent:

- Corajeon Medina, Department of Child Services
- Colleen Saylor, Indiana Office of Court Services
- Morgan Leever, Indiana Department of Child Services
- Christine Reynolds, Indiana Criminal Justice Institute
- Judge Paul Felix, Indiana Court of Appeals

OJA Staff Present:

- Lisa Thompson, Indiana Office of Court Technology
- Leslie Dunn, Indiana Office of Court Services
- Nancy Wever, Indiana Office of Court Services, JDAI
- Blane Cook, Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana

Guests Present:

- Katie Schwartz, Indiana University School of Medicine

2. Approval of Minutes from July 8, 2025 Meeting

Committee members were provided with a copy of the July 8, 2025 meeting minutes prior to today's meeting. Melanie Pitstick made a motion to approve the minutes; Kristi Bruther seconded the motion. The work group members unanimously approved the July 8, 2025 meeting minutes.

3. Update on Diversion Additions to Probation Quarterly Report

Lisa Thompson shared a PowerPoint presentation outlining two definitions for new Referral Recommendation options being proposed as additions to the Probation Quarterly Report. An internal team with IOCS drafted the language, and feedback from the YJOC Data Work Group was welcomed. These definitions will be incorporated into the Probation Quarterly Report Manual to guide data entry and best practices for tracking diversion data. Lisa reminded the committee that at the last meeting, two new Referral Recommendations—Diversion by Prosecutor and Diversion by Policy—were approved. Both options can be recommended by probation upon receiving a referral. Two additional options, Diversion by Schools and Diversion by Law Enforcement, were also approved for tracking in the Referral Outcome field, bringing the total to four options. It was noted that these latter referrals may not originate with probation, and probation may not conduct a Preliminary Inquiry or recommend the diversion opportunity; however, tracking this data may be necessary for funding and general data purposes.

Kristi Bruther raised a concern regarding the language that states "the recommendation must be made after finding probable cause." She noted that only a judicial officer can find probable cause, so the language should instead say "has probable cause" or "when probable cause exists." Additionally, Chris Biehn noted that "probable cause" is not mentioned in the Diversion statute, but is referenced in the Informal Adjustment statute.

Nancy Wever pointed out that while these definitions may align with the Referral Recommendation/Preliminary Inquiry Recommendation field, different language may be necessary for the Referral Outcome field.

Melanie Pitstick asked if a Preliminary Inquiry would be required for each referral if diversion is already authorized by policy. Members expressed concern about the increased number of PIs if this were the case. Nancy clarified that best practices for completing PIs involve gathering information, completing a risk assessment, and reviewing details to inform decisions, even if a formal report isn't drafted. Lisa noted that a PI report is not completed for all referrals today; however, the Probation Quarterly Report counts all referrals received and how those referrals are disposed. The only way to dispose of a referral on the report is by providing a PI Recommendation. Diversion by Policy would operate similarly to referrals dismissed by probation or, in some jurisdictions, Informal Adjustments—where the prosecutor decides that a PI report is unnecessary. Since current practices indicate that PIs are not actually completed on all referrals, the same practice would continue for those that can be diverted under policy.

The committee discussed a possible solution of stating in the manual that a PI may not be required for these recommendations, provided the process aligns with written policy allowing probation to proceed with diversion without staffing each case with the prosecutor. Additionally, it was noted that IC 31-37-8-5(b) states that "the prosecuting attorney and the court may agree to alter the procedure described in subsection (a)," which may explain why some jurisdictions have historically resolved some referrals without a formal PI report being written.

Additional discussion addressed the definition of community supervision and why it was included in the definitions. It was explained that supervision is an option under statute but not a requirement. Also, it was noted that an Informal Adjustment requires supervision and allows clients to be referred to DCS-paid services, while diversion clients cannot be referred for DCS-paid services.

As for next steps, Lisa, Nancy, and Chris will take these comments back to the internal IOCS group and share the committee's concerns.

4. Court Data Review

Katie Schwartz presented findings on missing data and logical inconsistencies in court records, focusing exclusively on SRS data. Quest data was excluded due to the need for data harmonization before comparable analysis can be performed. She explained that in SRS counties, court data is maintained in a separate system (Odyssey) and linked to SRS records via the Referral ID. Court records are generally less complete than other data sources, and because of the limited information they contain, verifying accuracy is challenging. As a result, their analysis relied primarily on the Referral Outcome field, with the goal of trying to track the referral through court disposition.

An analysis was conducted on all Referral Outcome options – excluding "File Petition" where a court record is expected – to determine whether court data appeared where it was not anticipated. They also reviewed 34,584 records and found that 51% were linked to a court record. Of those court cases, 75% had a disposition for at least one offense, and 57% were adjudicated delinquent. Fewer than 1% of cases included information on conditions of disposition or sentencing.

The review identified inconsistencies between the Referral Outcome in OMS and the court case disposition in Odyssey. In some cases, the Referral Outcome indicated "Petition Filed," yet no corresponding court record was found, which is problematic. It was also noted that some courts appear to misuse the Referral Outcome field to record the overall case outcome instead.

The data evaluation is nearly complete, with only a few remaining areas to review, including confinement, out-of-home placement, waivers, and modifications. A formal data quality report will be prepared upon completion of the review. The next steps will be to finalize the recommendations and select pilot sites for implementation.

5. Pilot Counties Discussion

The committee discussed the selection process for five counties to participate in the pilot project, noting that there is no set plan at this stage. Members considered the importance of identifying counties that are available and willing to “champion” the process while ensuring the pilot’s findings are broadly generalizable across the state. Factors for consideration include whether the county is currently doing diversion, has a detention center, is rural or urban, and whether it is a JDAI or non-JDAI site. The group emphasized the need to recommend approaches that are realistically feasible for all counties in Indiana. It was suggested that another poll be conducted, providing details of what participation would look like, to gauge interest and commitment.

Additionally, a two-page overview report will be prepared to send to counties that volunteered to use their data so they can see what came out of the data evaluation initiative.

6. Next Meeting

The next YJOC Data Work Group meeting will be on **September 9, 2025 from 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm** via Zoom.

The next Youth Justice Oversight Committee Meeting is **October 9, 2025 at 10:00 am** at Indiana Government Center South, Conference Room A, 402 W. Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN. There will be a live webcast of this meeting available on the Youth Justice Oversight Committee website: www.in.gov/youthjustice.