

**Juvenile Court Improvement Program Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes – June 8, 2020  
Via WebEx**

Juvenile & Family Court Programs Division – Oregon Room  
1133 Chemeketa Street NE, Salem, OR 97301  
1:30 PM – 4:00 PM

<b>COMMITTEE MEMBERS</b>			
√	Hon. Lindsay Partridge, Marion County Circuit Court	√	Hon. Eva Temple, Umatilla and Morrow Counties Circuit Court
√	Hon. Rebecca A. Duncan, Oregon Supreme Court	√	Hon. Amy Holmes Hehn, Multnomah County Circuit Court
√	Hon. Norm Hill, Polk County Circuit Court	√	Hon. Karen Ostrye, Hood River County Circuit Court
	Lacey Andresen, Deputy Director, DHS		Mandy Augsburg, President, Marion Polk Foster Parent Association, Foster Parent
√	Mark Hardin, Retired Director, Child Welfare Center on Children & the Law, American Bar Association		Nathan Schwab, Oregon Foster Youth Connection, Former Foster Youth
	Darin Mancuso, Foster Care Ombudsman, Governor's Advocacy Office	√	Shaney Starr, Oregon Casa Network & Casa of Marion County
	Gail Schelle, Adoptions Program Manager, DHS		Debra Gilmore, Oregon Casa Network
√	Keren Farkas, Deputy General Counsel, Office of Public Defense Services	√	Joanne Southey, Deputy Chief Counsel, Civil Enforcement Division, DOJ
√	Amy Miller, Executive Director YRJ		Daniel Schneider, Training Specialist, Child Welfare Partnership, Center for Improvement of Child & Family Services
√	Tom Maxwell, TCA Douglas County Circuit Court		
<b>INTERESTED PARTIES</b>			
	Adam Becenti, Director of the Office of Tribal Affairs, DHS		Deborah Lounge, ODE
	Joni Gilles, ODE (Presenter)		Kathy Steiner, DHS
<b>JFCPD STAFF</b>			
√	Leola McKenzie, Director, JFCPD		Megan Hassen, Senior Juvenile Law Analyst, JFCPD
√	Shary Mason, Model Court & Training Analyst, JFCPD/CRB	√	Yousef Allouzi, Data Analyst, JFCPD
√	Amy Benedum, JFCPD Program Analyst	√	Michelle Markson, Management Assistant, JFCPD

**I. Welcome & Introductions – Hon. Lindsay Partridge**

This meeting was held virtually via Web-Ex.

**II. Approval of Minutes from March 9, 2020 Meeting** – Hon. Lindsay Partridge

Approved.

**III. Reports:**

a. OJD Business Process for Assigning Case Numbers – Leola McKenzie

The work group has a meeting scheduled to finalize the business process. Court staff training is scheduled for July 16<sup>th</sup> and implementation is set for August 1, 2020.

b. 2020 Through the Eyes of a Child Conference Planning – Leola McKenzie

This year's Through the Eyes of a Child, "Eyes", conference will be a one-day live webinar on Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020. The webinar will be interactive, and judges will be able to break out into small groups for discussions. Topics will include an appellate update, reasonable efforts, and remote hearings. Rebecca Jones Gaston, Child Welfare Director will provide an update on DHS. There will also be several informal discussions VIB's style, (Visions, Initiatives and Barriers), to participate in at the conference.

c. 2020 Model Court Summit Planning – Leola McKenzie

The Model Court Summit will be held on Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 the day after the "Eyes" conference which is the usual practice. Planning for the Summit is ongoing and Shary Mason is leading the planning committee. This year's focus will be on ICWA. Shary hopes to be able to bring in several members of different tribes as presenters.

**IV. Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)**

a. Quarterly Statistical Reports – Yousef Allouzi

The 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020 statistics are published and are available to all for review. Yousef Allouzi discussed the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter numbers and explained that the quarter will most likely show the largest impact for the year, as it contains pre and post COVID 19 data. He further stated that there are distinct differences between the counties that are conducting hearings remotely compared to counties that are not holding proceedings remotely. Amy Miller mentioned that pre COVID, their attorney caseload was approximately 80 cases per attorney and now it averages 100. She reported that cases are coming in but there is no movement.

Yousef reported that the number of TPR petitions are down 20% from 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2019 and down 16% from the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2019. The OJD timely disposition standard, which is 98% of TPR cases resolved within 270 days, is down 3% at 73%. The time to TPR within 270 days is still up 5%, from the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2019. The time to TPR within 182 days is down 7%; 43% of the TPR cases that were not resolved within 182 days were also not resolved within 270 days. Based on these statistics, the median days from the dependency petition being filed and the termination or relinquishment of parent rights was down 39 days.

JCIP has added a new quarterly report entitled, "Juvenile Time in Care". The report is comprised of statewide data shown on the Summary Sheet and information that is received from the DHS data share, which shows the reason a child leaves care and the average number of days that a child spends in care. If a child is never brought into care and is given an at home placement, then

that data will not show up on the report. A detail report providing a list of cases for each county is available upon request.

b. County Adoption Timelines Data – Shary Mason

Shary Mason discussed the County Adoption Timelines Report. The target is 59.5% of children will have their adoptions finalized within 12 months of becoming legally free. Shary provided a report showing the percentages for all counties in Oregon. Shary pointed out that Multnomah is close at 58%, however other counties such as Jackson (22%) and Marion (36%) are not close to the statewide target. The AC members discussed specific barriers that these counties are facing. Judge Partridge commented that the children in Marion County that are free for adoption seem to be the difficult ones where placement cannot be found. He suggests that maybe more judicial oversight of these cases would help eliminate the barrier. Judge Holmes Hehn asked if other judges are receiving the adoption sheets / checklist. It appears not all judges receive information in a timely manner, or at all.

Gail Schelle explained that DHS now has an additional staff person (who is on a job rotation), assisting with the processing of adoption paperwork. Gail requested information on which courts are receiving the data sheets and which courts are not receiving them. Gail will investigate the problem and report back to the committee.

Shary reported that she is working with Gail on a webinar geared for judges that will explain the adoption process and what they should look for when tracking adoptions. The webinar is scheduled to be held on June 25<sup>th</sup>. Judge Holmes Hehn asked if a child is free for adoption does there need to be a concurrent plan and reasonable efforts? Shary explained that once the plan is changed to adoption there is no requirement for a concurrent plan, but reasonable efforts are required. It was mentioned that the JCIP forms are confusing. Shary clarified by stating that once the plan is changed from reunification there is no requirement for a concurrent plan. Shary will be discussing the confusion with the Forms Committee.

**IV. Discussion Topics:**

Each committee member was asked to respond to the following questions:

Covid-19 and juvenile dependency cases – What is going well? It would be even better if....

- i. Remote Court Proceedings
- ii. Remote CRB Reviews
- iii. Parent/Child Visitation & reunification services
- iv. Permanency for children

What key strategies should JCIP be engaged in as we move forward with a “new normal”?

Issues and strategies discussed included:

- OJD staff have all moved quickly to find a solution for conducting remote hearings. There are many details that are being worked out to provide the best possible court system during the pandemic.
- The committee discussed contested hearings and the fact that they cannot be held remotely.
- Concerns over health issues have limited our best advocacy strategies.

- There is a need to develop more uniform safety procedures across the state.
- Engagement of litigants is a priority.
- OJD and DHS need to ensure that all parties have access to court hearings by ensuring that parents and children have phone and/or video access.
- There is a lack of consistency between jurisdictions as to what types of hearings are being held.
- Parent/child video contact has increased and should continue even if in person visitations resume.
- Courts should take a more systemic approach to what types of cases can be settled out of court.
- Stipulated judgments should be encouraged.
- Recognizing and thanking foster parents is important.
- Parents and children need more engagement with staff.
- Increase virtual training opportunities.
- Length of court hearings has doubled.
- Training on WebEx expectations is needed.
- People and courts are not always practicing social distancing.

**V. JCIP 2020 Advisory Committee Meeting Dates**

September 14, 2020

December 14, 2020

**VI. Next Meeting:** Tuesday, September 14, 2020, 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.