

KENTUCKY JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON  
**MENTAL HEALTH**



| <b>Kentucky Judicial Commission on Mental Health Meeting Minutes</b> |  |
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| <b>Meeting Date, Time</b>  | December 5, 2024; 10:00-3:00 PM ET   |
| <b>Meeting Location</b>  | Administrative Office of the Courts<br>1001 Vandelay Drive<br>Frankfort, KY 40601                    |
| <b>Virtual Option</b>  | The meeting was also offered virtually through Zoom; a recording can be found <a href="#">here</a> . |

| <b>Attendees</b>          |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Name</b>               | <b>Organization</b>  |
| Crystal Adams             | Director, Division of Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities                                |
| Hon. Denise Brown         | Family Court Judge   |
| Hon. Stephanie Burke      | District Judge   |
| Hon. Wes Butler (Zoom)    | Attorney for Kentucky Hospital Association   |
| Matthew Cole              | Commissioner of the Department of Vehicle Registration,<br>Kentucky Department of Transportation |
| Hon. Robert B. Conley     | Justice, Kentucky Supreme Court  |
| Hon. J. Foster Cotthoff   | District Judge   |
| Lisa Dejacco Crutcher     | Executive Director/CEO, Catholic Charities of Louisville   |
| Margaret Forsee           | Owen County Circuit Court Clerk, President of Kentucky<br>Circuit Court Clerk Association        |
| Becky Frost (Zoom)        | Western State Hospital   |
| Chris Griffith            | Christian Appalachian Project  |
| Erica Hargis              | Division of Probation and Parole   |
| Hon. Tanisha A. Hickerson | District Court Judge   |
| Hon. Yvette Hourigan      | Kentucky Lawyer Assistance Program, Kentucky Bar<br>Association                                  |
| Van Ingram                | Executive Director of Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy                                     |
| Dr. Lindsey Jasinski      | Eastern State Hospital, University of Kentucky   |
| Hon. Lisa Jones           | Judge, Kentucky Court of Appeals   |
| Rabbi Shlomo Litvin       | Chabad of the Bluegrass  |

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| Amy Luttrell               | CEO, Goodwill  |
| Hon. Melissa Murphy (Zoom) | District Court Judge   |
| Hon. Damon Preston         | Department of Public Advocacy  |
| Hon. Zach Ramsey           | Director, Administrative office of the Courts  |
| Brenda Rosen               | CSW, Executive Director of National Association of Social Workers Kentucky                             |
| Thomas B. Stephens         | President and CEO of Kentucky Association of Health Plans  |
| Hon. John Lindsay Tackett  | District Judge   |
| Hon. Stacy Tapke (Zoom)    | Past President of the County Attorney's Association  |
| Hon. Larry Thompson        | Kentucky Court of Appeals  |
| Hon. Jordan Dallas Turner  | Boone County Attorney, Kentucky County Attorneys Association   |
| Hon. Marcus Vanover        | Family Court   |
| Tom Vicini (Zoom)          | Executive Director, UNITE  |
| Dr. John J. Wernert        | Norton Healthcare  |
| Dr. Vestena Robbins        | Senior Executive Advisor, Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental, & Intellectual Disabilities |
| Silas Session              | Delegate—Whitney P. Allen, Jr.   |
| David Trimble (Zoom)       | Delegate — Phillip Burnette, Jr.   |
| Hon. Mona Womack (Zoom)    | Delegate — Keith Jackson   |
| Denise Durbin (Zoom)       | Delegate — Russell Coleman   |
| Hon. Wes Duke (Zoom)       | Delegate — Eric Friedlander  |
| Dominic English            | Delegate — Becky Frost   |
| Nanci J. Howard            | Delegate—Cora McNabb   |
| Jennifer Bishop            | Delegate—Becky Frost   |
| Christina Weeter           | Delegate—Kelly Foster  |
| Brandi Hon                 | Delegate- Ashli Watts  |
| Dr. David Susman (Zoom)    | Delegate- Katie Marks  |
|                            |  |

**Agenda**

- I. *In Her Shoes* Domestic Violence Simulation**
- II. Registration and Lunch**
- III. Welcome and Commission Updates**
- IV. Committee and Workgroup Updates**
- V. Closing Remarks**
- VI. Adjourn**

### ***In Her Shoes Domestic Violence Simulation***

The Kentucky Judicial Commission on Mental Health (KJCMH) convened at 10:00 AM EST on December 5, 2024, at the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) in Frankfort, Kentucky. The meeting began with the *In Her Shoes* Domestic Violence Simulation, led by Dorislee Gilbert, Assistant Jefferson County Attorney.

This simulation, based on the experiences of real survivors, allows participants to step into the roles of various characters that are experiencing abusive and controlling relationships. It is supported by the KJCMH Domestic Violence Workgroup. The Honorable Denise Brown, lead of the KJCMH Domestic Violence Workgroup, welcomed participants and provided a brief overview of the simulation. Judge Brown then introduced Dorislee Gilbert, who provided detailed instructions for the activity. Approximately 22 participants engaged in the simulation.

Following the simulation, the group debriefed and shared their reflections. Many themes emerged from the discussion. Participants noted the stigma and shame that often prevent individuals from seeking support from their communities. They also highlighted the intersection of obstacles, such as racism, cultural barriers, and disability bias, which can compound the challenges individuals face. Additionally, the significant role children play in these situations was discussed, particularly how they are often weaponized to assign blame.

Lastly, Dorislee concluded the simulation with a brief presentation on ways to support survivors of domestic violence. She provided the group with important messages to convey when supporting individuals facing domestic violence.

### **Welcome and Commission Updates**

Honorable Larry Thompson, Chief Judge, Kentucky Court of Appeals, welcomed the commission members and thanked the commission members for being present. Chief Judge Thompson referenced commission materials, which included a copy of the agenda and meeting minutes from the September KJCMH Quarterly meeting.

Chief Judge Thompson acknowledged how, in September, Justice Lambert was elected to serve as Chief Justice of the Kentucky Supreme Court and announced her investiture on January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Justice Robert Conley was introduced as the new Deputy Chief Justice and Chair of the commission. Due to her new duties as Chief Justice, Chief Justice Lambert is stepping down as chair, but will remain involved in the commission.

Chief Judge Thompson highlighted the commission's key accomplishments in 2024. Seth's Law, addressing guardianship and competency, passed unanimously and has been

instrumental in driving system change. The findings from the town hall listening tour earlier in the year helped guide the commission's efforts. Additionally, seven Recovery-Oriented System of Care Summits, attended by over 1,000 individuals, addressed the barriers identified in the listening tour report. The commission also made significant strides in community mapping, becoming the first state to complete statewide system mapping for juvenile justice, child welfare, and criminal justice. Local community mapping events are ongoing, with plans scheduled through 2025.

Zach Ramsey, the new Director of AOC, was introduced to the commission. He brings extensive experience in technology solutions for state healthcare programs. Zach Ramsey shared his excitement to be a part of this important work. Senator Westerfield was also recognized for his 12 years of service in the Kentucky Legislature, his work on juvenile justice reform, and his ongoing contributions to the commission as he transitions to private practice.

The commission's legislative recommendations for 2025 focus on the rights of parents with disabilities. Proposed amendments to KRS 199.471 and KRS 625.090 aim to prevent disability-based discrimination in adoption and termination proceedings while requiring reasonable accommodations tailored to parents' disabilities. Senator Brandon Storm will sponsor this legislation, and a bill drafter has been assigned. Chief Judge Thompson announced that a book titled *A Celebration of Family Stories: Stories of Parents with Disabilities*, edited by Dave Matheis with an introduction by Jason Jones, was given to each commission member and it is included with their other meeting materials.

Before reporting on committee and workgroup updates, Chief Judge Thompson acknowledged the vacancy left by Judge Kevin Mullins' passing, ~~with~~ a moment of silence held in his memory.

## **Committee and Workgroup Updates**

### **I. Treatment and Access Committee**

A. The Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Workgroup update was provided by Crystal Adams, Director of the Division of Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities at the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Crystal reported that the workgroup has met twice since the last quarterly meeting. The group began with creating two training sessions on intellectual and developmental disabilities for court personnel and how to communicate. The workgroup invited representatives from the Addiction Recovery Care of Kentucky to discuss intellectual and developmental disabilities in the context of diversion programs. Additionally, the group received a data report from the AOC on disability and special education. Crystal also provided updates on autism initiatives in the courts, noting that two

trainings focused on autism self-advocates are nearing completion. Once finalized, the group will continue to explore other training opportunities. The workgroup plans to deliver a presentation on parental rights for individuals with disabilities during the next quarter, aligning with the legislative recommendation currently under review.

B. Judge Stephanie Burke, 30th Judicial District, presented the Court Responses Workgroup update. She reported that the workgroup met twice since the last quarterly meeting and convened with the interagency advisory group to solidify plans for ongoing collaboration. Key topics discussed included an update on SB 90 and progress on Behavioral Health Liaison (BHL) initiatives. The group also addressed barriers associated with Casey's Law, focusing on strategies to overcome these challenges effectively. Additional areas of focus included the impact of driver's license suspensions on individuals with mental health and substance use issues, as well as the feasibility of implementing a statewide amnesty docket.

C. Wes Butler, Attorney for the Kentucky Hospital Association, provided updates on the Strengthening Communities Workgroup. Wes reported that the workgroup has met three times since the last quarterly meeting. Efforts have centered on improving access to behavioral health and other health services in Kentucky jails and schools. The workgroup received a presentation from the Division of Budgets and Financial Management, which offered insights into Medicaid providers and their role in addressing the needs of justice-involved youth from a school's perspective. Additionally, the group heard a presentation from the Kenton County Detention Center on jail screenings and mental health assessments. The workgroup plans to review the jail survey in collaboration with the Prearrest and Diversion Workgroup. They also heard a presentation on Quick Response Teams (QRTs) and discussed the value of these initiatives. Moving forward, the workgroup will focus on reprioritizing its key objectives and updating its workplan. Finally, Wes extended a warm welcome to Zach Ramsey, a long-time friend, in his new role as AOC Director.

## **II. Civil and Family Justice Committee**

Judge J. Foster Cotthoff, 3rd Judicial District, provided the update for the Civil and Family Justice Committee. He expressed his gratitude to the commission support staff for their assistance throughout the year and extended holiday greetings to the group. Judge Cotthoff noted that the committee's last meeting focused on community mapping report and workgroup updates.

A. Judge Denise Brown, 30<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, reported on the Domestic Violence Workgroup. She reflected on the success of the domestic violence simulation, which

is supported by her workgroup. The Domestic Violence Workgroup consists of several subgroups, each focusing on specific initiatives. The subgroup focused on bench card and standardized training development is reviewing existing materials for judges, clerks, attorneys, and court personnel. They are working to avoid duplicating existing resources and identifying areas where additional information or revisions are needed. The subgroup also identified the need to enhance training on batterer intervention programs. The subgroup dedicated to promoting domestic violence advocacy in schools is focusing on potential legislative recommendations related to data collection on teen violence, social services research in schools, and increasing advocacy within schools. The multidisciplinary team subgroup is continuing to explore existing resources and establish connections for collaborative efforts among the various disciplinary groups relevant to this work. They heard a presentation from the Henderson County Attorney's Office about an interactive community resource page created for their county. The subgroup plans to hear from additional resource platforms and is creating a document to compare these resources.

Judge Cotthoff also commented on how prevalent the issue of domestic violence is and emphasized the important work needed to address it.

B. Judge Marcus Vanover, 28th Judicial Circuit, reported on the Dependency and Neglect Workgroup. The "Relationships Matter Part 2" training series focuses on addressing mental health issues in the court system and expanding collaboration with system partners to better address these concerns. This training will cover a variety of topics. The workgroup is also in the process of developing a bench card to help courts understand the role of treatment providers and address related barriers. The bench card will focus on various types of evaluations, counseling, and assessments, and will clarify the terminology used within the court system. The bench card has been sent to the AOC Legal Department for finalization. In addition, the workgroup is developing a best practices guide tailored specifically for Kentucky courts. They are hopeful that this guide will be ready for finalization by the next meeting. Finally, the workgroup has been focusing on enhancing trainings for court appointed counsel and has already had three training sessions, with additional sessions planned for the spring.

C. Stacy Tapke, Kenton County Attorney, provided reports for the Guardianship and Commitment Workgroups. For the Guardianship Workgroup, there was a presentation from the Department of Transportation on the restoration of driver's licenses. The discussion focused on the AOC-798 form, which pertains to full restoration of rights and is now available on the Kentucky Court of Justice website. Stacy also shared that she was invited to present to the judiciary on the issues the Guardianship Workgroup has been reviewing.

Regarding the Commitment Workgroup, Stacy reported that the group is addressing situations involving Mental Inquest Warrants (MIW) and is working to ensure individuals receive the necessary mental health treatment. In the new year, the Commitment and Guardianship Workgroup will return to holding one meeting per month to focus on these issues.

### **III. Criminal Justice Committee**

Judge John Tackett, 22nd Judicial District, provided an update on the Criminal Justice Committee and expressed his gratitude to the workgroups for their efforts. He acknowledged the absence of Judge Maier, the committee chair. Judge Tackett also shared his condolences for the loss of Judge Mullins, a respected member of the commission. He reported on the attendance at the previous criminal justice committee meeting and expressed hope for increased engagement moving forward.

A. Dr. Koleen Slusher, Director of the Kentucky Correctional Psychiatric Center (KCPC), was unable to be present to report on the Competency Workgroup. Judge Tackett reported on her behalf, noting that Dr. Slusher shared her sentiment regarding the reduction in the KCPC waitlist numbers. He referenced the quarterly report materials provided to the group. Judge Tackett also discussed the implementation of Seth's Law, highlighting related action items, including the development of flexible orders, messaging, and the creation of educational materials for these orders. The workgroup plans to conduct a final review of the forms in upcoming meetings to prepare them for finalization.

B. Steve Shannon, Executive Director of KARP, Inc., was unable to attend. Judge Tackett provided the Prearrest and Diversion Workgroup update. The workgroup continues to explore the role of police social workers in Kentucky and is drafting a white paper advocating for their integration alongside enhanced jail services in the state. Members have also been kept informed about the status of the jail survey and plan to review and provide feedback during future meetings. In recent meetings, the group received a presentation from the Department of Medicaid Services on crisis continuum models and a presentation from River Valley Behavioral Health on crisis collaboration and residential crisis programs.

C. Judge Lisa Jones, 1st Appellate District, Division 2, Kentucky Court of Appeals, provided the Juvenile Justice Workgroup update. She expressed her thanks to Dr. Slusher for making KCPC available and accessible to judges for their questions. The workgroup has divided into subgroups, with the Mapping Subgroup focusing on priorities identified during the 2023 juvenile justice system review. This subgroup received a presentation from the University of Connecticut on their mobile response

model and discussed its potential applicability to Kentucky. One of the primary barriers identified was the challenge of addressing transportation gaps in the juvenile justice system. The Legislative Subgroup is currently examining juvenile competency standards and the minimum age of criminal responsibility. This quarter, the subgroup has engaged with experts in these fields, inviting them to present on these topics. Highlights include a data presentation from the AOC and the Department of Public Advocacy (DPA) on juveniles in the justice system. Moving forward, the subgroup anticipates a presentation from Dr. Kavanaugh on adolescent brain development to strengthen understanding on their legislative proposals.

D. Erica Hargis, Director of the Division of Probation and Parole at the Department of Corrections, provided the update for the Reentry Workgroup. The workgroup has met twice and is still narrowing its focus. As the newest workgroup at the commission, they are currently looking at resources available upon release, housing gaps, and access to medical records. During their last meeting, they heard a presentation from Dr. Rebecca Asher, which highlighted some of the gaps and barriers in working with these populations. These insights have been invaluable to the workgroup's efforts. The group is also collaborating with the Prearrest and Diversion Workgroup to review the jail survey and obtain tangible results from their work. While attendance has been strong, they continue to invite more participation.

### **Closing Remarks**

Chief Judge Thompson expressed gratitude to all chairs and members, noting the significant contributions of over 400 participants across workgroups. Meeting dates for 2025 were shared. Appreciation was extended for the In Her Shoes Domestic Violence Simulation. Lastly, facility tours the EmPATH Psychiatric Unit were encouraged.

The next commission meeting will be March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at the Administrative Office of the Courts. The meeting adjourned with a wish for safe travels and happy holidays.

Contact information: [JCMH@kycourts.net](mailto:JCMH@kycourts.net).

Webpage: [Kentucky Judicial Commission on Mental Health – Kentucky Court of Justice \(kycourts.gov\)](http://kycourts.gov)

The commission adjourned at 3:00 PM ET.

### **Additional Information**

#### **Noncommission Members and Public in attendance:**

| Name | Organization |
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| Abbie Martin                              | NASW-KY                              |
| Courtney Maynard (Zoom)                   | Executive Director, Operation UNITE  |
| Jerod Metz                                | Boone County Attorney Office         |
|   |                                      |
| <b>KJCMH Support Staff in attendance:</b> |                                      |
| <b>Name</b>                               | <b>Department</b>                    |
| Jason McGinnis                            | Deputy Director                      |
| Jacindia Rowe                             | Kentucky Supreme Court               |
| Hon. Angela Darcy                         | Pretrial                             |
| Hon. Robert Michael Pack                  | Pretrial                             |
| Michelle Sawyers                          | Family and Juvenile Services         |
| Shawna Mitchell                           | Judicial Commission on Mental Health |
| Hon. Maria Macaluso                       | Judicial Commission on Mental Health |
| Jim Hoffman                               | Communications                       |
| Jason Dufek                               | Pretrial                             |
| Debbie Hall                               | Specialty Courts                     |
| Jennifer Van Ort-Hazzard                  | Judicial Commission on Mental Health |
| Rebecca Hisel                             | Judicial Commission on Mental Health |
| Elizabeth Nichols                         | Specialty Courts                     |
| Audrey Collins                            | Specialty Courts                     |
| Ashley Clark                              | Family and Juvenile Services         |
| Billy Ousley                              | Specialty Courts                     |
| Nadalie Hardwick                          | Family and Juvenile Services         |
| Tina Morrow                               | Office of Statewide Programs         |
| Ian Shepherd                              | Office of Statewide Programs         |
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