

# Justice Reinvestment Advisory Council

## Meeting Minutes

### May 3, 2024

The Justice Reinvestment Advisory Council met on May 3, 2024, from 10:00 a.m.-11:40 a.m. at Capital Center in Indianapolis. Justice Christopher Goff chaired the meeting.

**1. Members present.** The following members of the Council were present:

- Bernice Corley, executive director of Indiana Public Defender Council
- Christine Blessinger, designee for the commissioner of the Indiana Department of Correction
- Chris Biehn, proxy for chief administrative officer of Office of Judicial Administration
- Steve Luce, proxy for president of Indiana Sheriffs' Association
- Judge Mark Spitzer, designee for president of Indiana Judges Association (video)
- Shelby Thomas, proxy for Governor
- Andrew Cullen, designee for chair of Indiana Public Defender Commission
- Steve McCaffrey, president and CEO of Mental Health America of Indiana
- Jade Palin, proxy for executive director of Indiana Criminal Justice Institute
- Chris Naylor, executive director of Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council
- David Bottorff, executive director of Association of Indiana Counties
- Howard Simms, designee for executive director of Division of Mental Health and Addiction
- Carolyn Travis, proxy for chair of Senate Corrections and Criminal Law Committee
- Quinlan Huntzinger, proxy for ranking minority member of Senate Corrections and Criminal Law Committee

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

- Scott Hohl, president of Indiana Association of Community Corrections Act Counties
- Lindsey Villalpando, president of Probation Officers Professional Association of Indiana
- Zoe Frantz, president and CEO of Indiana Council of Community Mental Health Centers
- Daniel Glass, designee for State Budget Director
- Rep. Wendy McNamara, chair of House Courts and Criminal Code Committee
- Rep. Mitch Gore, ranking minority member of House Courts and Criminal Code Committee

3. **Guests.** The following attended the meeting as guests: Davyd Hall from the Commission for Higher Education and Camden Murrell from the Association of Indiana Counties.
4. **Staff.** Jenny Bauer, April Dubree, Michelle Goodman, David Sexton, and Ava Hassel attended as staff from the Office of Judicial Administration.
5. **Approval of minutes.** The Advisory Council approved the minutes from the March 8, 2024, meeting on motion by Bernice Corley and second by Jade Palin. The vote was taken by roll call.
6. **Workgroup Reports.**
  - a) **Racial Equity Workgroup.** Bernice Corley reported that the workgroup met in April. Dr. Evan Lowder presented her draft report of Understanding Drivers of Racial Disparities in Criminal-Legal Processing: Progress Report on Jail Data Collection Activities. The workgroup members provided feedback to Dr. Lowder and she will update the report for review at their June meeting. Ms. Corley reported on highlights from the draft report: Vigo County had a high percentage of people complete the tool, with the tool presented as a part of the pretrial assessment process; 769 total completions in the pilot counties—Marion, Porter, Vigo; most people who completed the tool reported that they were exposed to the criminal justice system at an early age; the survey tool is confidential and researchers do not see any identifying information.
  - b) **Local JRAC Workgroup.** Chris Biehn reported that ten counties recently submitted applications for the next round of Local JRAC technical assistance. He is meeting next week with the Center for Effective Public Policy to discuss capacity to provide more technical assistance. Mr. Biehn also reported that the Annual Report form for Local JRACs asks a question related to the need for assistance. Seventy counties reported they have not developed change targets, showing that there is a need to build sustainability for technical assistance. Mr. Biehn further noted that the 2023 Annual Report went out to counties recently and 82 counties have responded so far. The council members discussed how some counties use the community corrections advisory board as the Local JRAC group. In addition, Mr. Biehn introduced Davyd Hall from the Commission for Higher Education and noted that the Commission is interested in JRACs work.
  - c) **JRAC Reports Workgroup.** Michelle Goodman reported that the 2023 Electronic Monitoring reports are all published online and the annual report was timely submitted to the legislative council. The Q1 reports are due by May 30 and 42 counties have submitted so far. The report will list the counties that do not submit their information by the deadline. Ms. Goodman also reported that SEA 179 directs JRAC to conduct a comprehensive survey of all Indiana trial courts

that make indigency determinations for purposes of appointing counsel in criminal cases. The enrolled act also directs JRAC to submit a report to the legislative council by July 1, 2025. The report must include the results of the survey, statewide policy to use in making indigency determinations, review of the law related to indigency determinations, and any recommended statutory changes. The full workgroup will convene to work on the report. In addition, Ms. Goodman reported that she is working with David Bottorff and the State Board of Accounts on the judicial local income tax reports.

**7. Indiana Evidence Based Decision Making Initiative.** Chris Biehn reported that he received feedback on the decision point narratives from the Judicial Conference Pretrial Committee, the Department of Correction, and council members. He will present the revised map at the next meeting. He also reported that IOCS plans to contract with Dr. Brad Ray for a study on outcomes from problem-solving courts and Dr. Lowder will work with ten counties to develop standards for pretrial supervision.

## **8. Member Updates.**

- a. Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council.** Chris Naylor reported that IPAC has education conferences scheduled for May and June.
- b. Mental Health America of Indiana.** Steve McCaffrey reported that May is mental health awareness month. MHA is celebrating the theme of "Hoosier Starting Point: Navigating Mental Health in Our Changing World." In addition, Monument Circle will be illuminated green between May 13-17 as part of mental health awareness month.
- c. Indiana Public Defender Commission.** Andrew Cullen reported that the Commission's name will change to "Commission on Court Appointed Attorneys" on July 1 by virtue of SEA 179. He also reported that the twelve-county misdemeanor pilot will use the new form created by OJA.
- d. Indiana Department of Correction.** Chris Blessinger reported that DOC representatives were at the IACCAC conference this week. She also reported that next week is national corrections officers and employees week.
- e. Indiana Criminal Justice Institute.** Jade Palin reported that CJI is working on grants for the Youth Justice Oversight Committee.
- f. Association of Indiana Counties.** David Bottorff reported that Indiana's primary election is next week with county races on ballots. He also reported that AIC will host conferences in June.
- g. Governor's Office.** Shelby Thomas reported that the governor's office is gathering ideas for phase two of the opioid settlement funds. She also reported that, following the success of the biennial Indiana Mental Health and Addiction Conference in 2023, the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration's Division of Mental Health and Addiction will livestream the 2024 Indiana Mental Health and Addiction Conference event titled "Power of

Peers: Recovery Through Connection" Virtual Session on May 21. DMHA and its partners will showcase how peers with lived experience provide a low-barrier access point to support, treatment, connection, and resource navigation.

- h. Indiana Sheriffs' Association.** Steve Luce reported DMHA is funding ISA's program to provide medication assisted treatment in over 40 jails. The program provides good data and has reimbursed jails for \$4M so far. Mr. Luce also reported that ISA is working with a consultant to determine the per diem cost of housing inmates and total costs for sheriffs' departments to train new deputies. ISA plans to share this information with the legislature. In addition, Mr. Luce reported that jail commanders met recently to learn about incarcerated juveniles.
  - i. Supreme Court.** Justice Goff reported that the Office of Judicial Administration is hiring a behavioral health specialist as an additional cabinet level position.
  - j. Office of Judicial Administration.** Michelle Goodman reported that IOCS is partnering with the Public Defender Commission to implement SEA 179. In addition, she reported that the Supreme Court appointed members to the new Commission on Indiana's Legal Future and named Judge Nancy Vaidik and CAO Justin Forkner as co-chairs.
- 9. Next Meeting Date.** The next Council meeting is scheduled for July 12, 2024, from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in the South Tower of the Capital Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Bauer  
Office of Court Services