

INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR JUVENILES

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2023

12:00 p.m. ET

via Zoom



Preliminary Business

Call to Order

Commission Chair N. Belli (OR) called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. ET.

Roll Call

Director Underwood called the roll and a quorum was established.

Committee Members in Attendance:

1. Nina Belli (OR), Chair
2. Julie Hawkins (MO), Vice Chair
3. Sherry Jones (MD), Treasurer and Racial Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (RDEI) Committee Chair
4. Jacey Rader (NE), Compliance Committee Chair
5. Dale Dodd (NM), Finance Committee Chair
6. Kellianne Torres (IA), Information Technology Committee Chair
7. Stephen Horton (NC), Rules Committee Chair
8. Corrie Copeland (TN), Training, Education, and Public Relations Committee Chair
9. Caitlyn Bickford (NH), East Region Representative
10. Chuck Frieberg (SD), Midwest Region Representative
11. Felicia Dauway (SC), South Region Representative
12. Howard Wykes (AZ), West Region Representative

Committee Members Not in Attendance:

1. None

Guests in Attendance:

1. Francis "Mike" Casey (DE), Racial DEI Committee Vice-Chair

National Office Staff in Attendance:

1. MaryLee Underwood, Executive Director
2. Emma Goode, Logistics and Administrative Specialist
3. Amanee Cabbagestalk, Training and Administrative Specialist
4. Jenny Adkins, Operations and Policy Specialist
5. Joe Johnson, Systems Project Manager

Agenda

- Chair Belli (OR) explained the new agenda format to be solution-oriented with a focus on action items.

- K. Torres (IA) made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. S. Jones (MD) seconded. Chair Belli (OR) indicated the agenda was approved by unanimous consent without objection.

Minutes

- C. Frieberg (SD) made a motion to approve the September 25, 2023, minutes as presented. D. Dodd (NM) seconded. Chair Belli (OR) indicated the minutes were approved by unanimous consent without objection.

Check-ins

- Chair Belli (OR) expressed her sincere appreciation for the great work last year and that she looks forward to another accomplished year with the returning Executive Committee members.
- Chair Belli (OR) explained that this year each Executive Committee meeting will begin with a “check-in” question. For this meeting, the returning committee and region representatives shared one of their proudest accomplishments from their committees/regions last year.

Reports

Commission Chair Report *by Nina Belli (OR)*

- Commission Chair Belli (OR) provided an overview of the new *ICJ Tools for Leaders*. The tools were developed to assist the committee and region leaders.
 - The *Planning Guide for ICJ Leaders* provides helpful tips and ideas for leaders.
 - The *Annual Action Plan* template can be used to create a guide for the year. Once completed, the Action Plan will provide items to include on each month’s agenda. It can also be used to track progress throughout the year and serve as an outline for 2024 Annual Reports. Chair Belli (OR) encouraged the members to complete the template.
 - The *Solution-Focused Tools for ICJ* depicts a “Plan-Do-Study-Act” model, which can be used for implementation planning.
 - The committee agenda template is the new format for committee meeting agendas.
 - The region agenda template is the new format for region meeting agendas.
 - The *Robert’s Rules of Order Cheat Sheet* provides a quick overview of common motions and tips for leaders.
- The Victim’s Representative serves a one-year term as an ex officio member of the Executive Committee. The information was emailed last week for nomination candidates and nominations are open until December 1, 2023. During the Executive Committee December meeting, the 2024 Victim’s Representative will be elected.

Executive Director Report *by MaryLee Underwood, Executive Director*

- ICJ Executive Director MaryLee Underwood provided her report in two categories: administrative and strategic.

Administrative related to states

- Jeffery Cartmell was appointed the new Oklahoma ICJ Commissioner replacing Rachel Holt. Robert Hendryx has been reaffirmed as the Commissioner's Designee and Deputy Compact Administrator (DCA).
- The Montana Commissioner position remains vacant. A letter was mailed via the USPS to the Montana Governor. Pursuant to the [ICJ Administrative Policy 01-2015](#), within 60 days of receipt of the letter an appointment should be made. However, the letter was not received. An email was sent and re-sent without any response to date. The policy should be reviewed later this year.
- Three states have unpaid FY24 dues. One of the three states is over 120-days outstanding. The Compliance Committee Chair has been made aware and will include the matter on the agenda for their first meeting in December, unless payment is received before December 6. The National Office has had several communications with the state and they are working to resolve the matter within their procurement system.
- For the second time recently, a state requested guidance regarding a matter wherein a public defender signed the ICJ Form III on behalf of the juvenile. When the ICJ Office advised that the form must be signed by the juvenile, she was asked to appear in court to explain. Director Underwood confirmed that the ICJ Rules require signature by the juvenile, not the attorney and advised the commissioner to consult with their agency's legal counsel regarding appearing in court.

Administrative related to the National Office

Staff Planning

- Since the Annual Business Meeting (ABM), the National Office staff have worked to review and improv administrative systems. During a staff retreat, the staff participated in a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Training; reflected on last year's work; and planned for the year ahead. The new *ICJ Tools for Leaders* shared earlier emerged from the staff retreat.

New Agenda Templates

- The new solutions-oriented agenda template was designed to assist leaders in developing their meeting agendas. One of the key roles of the chairperson is to set their meeting agendas. This year the National Office staff will look to the chairpersons to develop their agendas and provide support, rather than drafting and sending to the group leader to sign off. When developing agendas, group leaders should keep in mind that agendas must be posted online at least 10 days in advance. Sending the agenda to staff at least 12 days in advance is suggested, to provide time to review and clarify before posting.
- The regional representatives met in November and discussed the new agenda format. They agreed to retain the "Hot Topics" section from the *ICJ Updates* and requested to spend a couple of minutes at Executive Committee Meetings to determine whether there are other issues that should be included in region meetings.
- Director Underwood shared Sugai's Law and suggested it may be helpful in developing agendas and managing group workloads. Sugai's Law states that for every new project or task added, 2 old ones that are no longer relevant or less effective should be removed. The rationale behind this is that new projects require twice as much time and other resources as established projects because there are more decisions to be made,

procedures to be established, action steps to take. Since many projects have been added, she encouraged Executive Committee members and staff to share ideas about what can be eliminated or simplified in the year ahead.

- Executive Committee members were encouraged to use the new *Tools for ICJ Groups*, share the tools, and provide feedback for their usefulness.

Other National Office Updates

- The Executive Committee Extended Spring Meeting has been scheduled for April 23-24, 2024. Initial plans for the first week of April were set aside due to the release of the amended ICJ Rules and UNITY changes going into effect April 1, 2024. The National Office is planning to contract with The Brown Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky. Travel days will be April 22 and April 25. J. Rader (NE) and C. Frieberg (SD) shared they will not be available for the new dates. Director Underwood will consult with Chair Belli regarding how to proceed.
- The National Office received limited submissions for the 2025 Annual Business Meeting in the Midwest Region and the search continues.
- The National Office will suggest the Executive Committee review several administrative policies in the months ahead.
- The Commission's website goes through a major platform change every 2.5 years. Migrating to the most recent released versions assures that the website security and other features are up to date with current technical standards. The update was recently completed without any interruption of service.
- Staff have reviewed insurance renewal options and made preparations for conducting open enrollment for staff benefits in late November. The medical insurance premium increased by 12% and the dental insurance premium increased by 5%, while the vision and life insurance premiums remain unchanged. The increases are consistent with industry expectations and within the budgeted amounts.
- The National Office lease will expire February 2024. Other options are being explored in the building to save costs before renewing the lease.

Advancing the Strategic Plan

- Director Underwood provided an update for each of the four Strategic Plan Priorities:
 - Priority 1:** Improve data systems for better outcomes
 - The UNITY contract expires in September 2024. The National Office is working with the vendor related to the renewal. Joe Johnson, Jenny Adkins, and MaryLee Underwood will meet with Optimum Technology in late November at the vendor's offices in Ohio regarding the contract.
 - All committees have been established. Meeting dates have been set for all committees, except one. This year, a total of 70 Compact office staff and ex officio members volunteered to serve on committees. All committees have a vice chair, except one. Chairs are encouraged to include them in the planning and to assign specific duties, like leading a subcommittee.
 - Priority 2:** Promote racial justice and leadership development

- The ACJI Leadership Implementation Academy advances leadership development. Director Underwood recently completed the course and spoke to its benefits. To date, twelve (12) ICJ leaders have expressed interest in completing the training.
- Director Underwood reported on her attendance at the Coalition of Juvenile Justice (CJJ) Racial and Ethnic Disparities Conference in October in Louisville, Kentucky. She noted three potential speakers for the ICJ Annual Business Meeting. Most interesting was a member of the CJJ's Emerging Leaders Committee who was adjudicated in North Carolina at age 11 and remained on supervision until he reached adulthood. He was transferred under the Compact to attend college out of state, and has since earned multiple degrees.

Priority 3: Address gaps in the rules and resources

- All rule-related resources must be updated soon due to the passage of the rule amendments. The National Office staff have reviewed more than 150 resources. They will make administrative updates and bring any issues to the committees as needed.
- The solution-focused concept has been applied to the rule amendment training resource. The resource provides an overview of the new rule amendments going into effect April 1, 2024 organized by the type of case rather than a chronological rule number order.

Priority 4: Leverage relationships to promote awareness and improve outcomes

- Ex Officio participation has increased with the following reported:
 - Juan Sepulveda, National Partnership for Juvenile Services (NPJS), will serve as an ex officio member of the Compliance Committee.
 - Susan Frankel, National Runaway Safeline (NRS), will serve as an ex officio member of the Training Committee.
 - The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) Ex Officio, Judge Hoffman, recently agreed to serve as a co-presenter on a workshop proposal submitted for the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) Conference in March.
- ICJ hosted a presentation by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) during the Wednesday Workshop on November 15.
- Through the partnership with the Administration for Children and Families, an ICJ proposal was approved to present at the Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Training. Jenny Adkins, Policy and Operations Specialist, and Raymundo Gallardo (UT) will lead the presentation November 29, 2023 in Bellevue, Washington.

Committees

- Chair Belli (OR) requested that each of the ICJ Standing Committees and Regions provide an update on the status of their Vice Chair/Alternate Representative, planned meeting, and any additional information they wished to share.

Compliance Committee Report *by Jacey Rader (NE)*

- Compliance Committee Chair J. Rader (NE) reported that the Compliance Committee will conduct their first meeting on December 6, 2023 @ 3:00 p.m. ET. Michael Tymkew (MI) has agreed to serve as the Vice Chair.

Finance Committee Report *by Dale Dodd (NM)*

- Finance Committee Chair D. Dodd (NM) reported that the Finance Committee will conduct their first meeting December 13, 2024. A planning meeting is scheduled for November 29, 2023. The vice chair position awaits a supervisor approval.

Information Technology Committee Report *by Kellianne Torres (IA)*

- Information Technology Committee Chair K. Torres (IA) reported that Roy Curtis (ME) will again serve as the vice chair.
- The Technology Committee met November 14, 2023. Under unfinished business, the Technology Committee rejected a recommendation by the Rules Committee last year to renumber the ICJ forms to allow each type of report to have its own unique number, i.e., the ICJ Form IX which is used for the Quarterly Progress Report (QPR); Absconder Report; Violation Report; and after April 1, 2024, the Failed Supervision Report.
- The Technology Committee approved their 2024 Objectives and meeting calendar. There will be a regional technology ambassador for each region to provide technology updates from the committee at the region meetings. Two subcommittees were established and they will begin to meet in November.
- The next meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2023.

Racial Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Report *by Mike Case (DE)*

- Racial Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (RDEI) Committee Vice Chair M. Casey (DE) reported that the RDEI Committee will conduct its first meeting January 16, 2024. He will again serve as the vice chair and Sherry Jones (MD) will serve as the committee chair.
- Discussion topics planned for the year are tribal communities and the ICJ data around violation reports to identify gaps; and develop resources.

Rules Committee Report *by Stephen Horton (NC)*

- Rules Committee Chair S. Horton (NC) reported that the Rules Committee will conduct its first meeting December 20, 2023. Caitlyn Bickford (NH) will again serve as the vice chair. The two-year calendar will be reviewed and the rule amendment training will be provided soon.

Training, Education, and Public Relations Committee Report *by Corrie Copeland (TN)*

- Training, Education, and Public Relations Committee Chair C. Copeland (TN) reported that the Training Committee will conduct first meeting December 7, 2023. Robert Heide (AK) will serve as the vice chair.

East Region Report *by Caitlyn Bickford (NH)*

- East Regional Representative C. Bickford (NH) reported that the East Region will conduct its first meeting January 11, 2024. Trissie Casanova (VT) will again serve as the alternate representative.
- The East Region will continue their discussion on non-delinquent runaways. The region plans to form a subcommittee to review the issue and provide a recommendation for a resource/plan targeted to law enforcement officers.

Midwest Region Report *by Chuck Frieberg (SD)*

- Midwest Regional Representative C. Frieberg (SD) reported that the Midwest Region will conduct its first meeting January 23, 2024. Sasaun Lane (OH) will again serve as the alternate representative.

South Region Report *by Felicia Dauway (SC)*

- South Regional Representative F. Dauway (SC) reported that the South Region will conduct its first meeting January 10, 2024. Jean Hall (FL) will again serve as the alternate representative.

West Region Report *by Howard Wykes (AZ)*

- West Regional Representative H. Wykes (AZ) reported that Maureen Clifton (WY) will again serve as the alternate representative.
- The West Region met November 8, 2023, and were the first group to use the new action-oriented agenda format.
- California, Colorado, Idaho, and Washington shared their actions and/or plans related to continued collaboration with child welfare agencies.
- A West Region Subcommittee has been tasked to review the withdrawn proposed amendment to Rule 5-103 and provide a recommendation.
- The West Region discussed the use of a travel plan detail form with returns via airlines versus ground transportation. The "Travel Plan Detail (Final Travel Plan)" is an optional task in UNITY. However, if it is not completed by the home/demanding state, the holding state is not able to generate a final travel plan to share with locals. Washington and Idaho are reviewing and may submit a UNITY enhancement request.
- The next meeting is scheduled for January 10, 2024.

Unfinished Business

Strategic Plan Review

- Chair Belli (OR) recapped on the FY2023 accomplishments and instructed the members to reflect on last year's major initiatives, discuss the following questions in a breakout group, and share with the group.
 - What new strategies were used?
 - What should be continued?
 - What else should we try?
- The breakout groups discussed independently and shared the following successful strategies and initiatives that should continue.
 - The new culture of compliance led by the Compliance Committee with the shift to the positive assistance and proactive monitoring.
 - The collaborations and connections with child welfare agencies.
 - The *Solution-Focused Tools for ICJ Groups* and the Plan-Do-Study-Act Model.
 - The UNITY enhancements rollout strategy. The 2023 rollout was smooth and the Commission members appreciated rolling out in multiple stages so as not to overwhelm ICJ Office staff.

ICJ Annual Report Collection

- Director Underwood recapped that during the collection of data to develop the *2023 ICJ Annual Report*, the National Office staff identified questions and opportunities for improvement in two areas: reporting in-state trainings and reporting returns. An overview of observations and questions were provided in a memorandum dated September 14, 2023 as outline below.

Reporting in-state trainings

- As of June 15, 2023, the total number of professionals trained in-state by ICJ Offices reported to the National Office was 170. The total increased to 1,347 after several reminders. The information is collected because the Training Requirements Policy requires states to report in-state training, as well as other requirements. This led to several questions, including:
 - What is the purpose of reporting in-state trainings?
 - How do states use this data?
 - Should it be included in ICJ annual reports?
 - Should the policy be amended?
 - If the policy is not amended, what actions should be taken to increase reporting and ensure other policy requirements are met?
- Director Underwood recommended review of the data and related policy be referred to the Training Committee.
- The Executive Committee discussed and agreed with the Executive Director's recommendation to refer the matter to the Training Committee.
- **H. Wykes (AZ) made a motion to refer Director Underwood's recommendation related to instate training reports by ICJ offices to the Training Committee to review and report. S. Horton (NC) seconded. The motion passed.**

Reporting Returns and Under Reporting Airport Surveillance

- In 2023, 2,087 returns were initiated in UNITY, of those 266 (13%) were not included in report because they were not categorized as voluntary/non-voluntary and/or by return type (runaway, escapee, etc.). Director Underwood summarized the findings and asked the following questions:
 - How do states use this data?
 - What data should be published?
 - Should data reflect only juveniles actually returned to the Home/Demanding State or should "other" scenarios also be reflected?
 - Should cases only be considered ICJ cases and/or entered into UNITY when juveniles are returned via voluntary or non-voluntary processes (outlined in Rules 6-102 thru 6-103A)?
 - What (if any) enhancements to UNITY would improve operations and/or tracking in return cases?
 - What training strategies or resources could promote consistent use of UNITY for return cases?

- Another area under reported was airport supervision. The reported data suggests airport supervision was provided in only 11 percent of cases. This figure is much lower than it was in years past. The reduction can be attributed to how cases are processed in UNITY. Completion of the “Travel Plan Detail (Final Travel Plan)” is not required. Therefore, when the home state does not enter data into this section, the state providing airport supervision is not reported. Additionally, not completing this data may result in ineffective airport supervision communications.
- Director Underwood summarized the findings and asked the following questions:
 - How do states use this data?
 - Should UNITY be enhanced to improve tracking of airport supervision?
 - Would using UNITY for communications about and confirmation of airport supervision improve operations or outcomes?
 - What training strategies or resources could promote consistent use of UNITY for documenting “Airport Supervision Requests Met”?
- Director Underwood recommended referring both issues (reporting of returns and travel plan details) to the Technology Committee for review and recommendations.
- Technology Committee Chair K. Torres (IA) commented that the Technology Committee current has a full plate. The issues could be added to a future agenda, but it would take some time for the committee to respond.
- Director Underwood also shared some interim strategies to address the returns questions until the Technology Committee would review the information:
 - A *UNITY Spotlight* article could be published to educate UNITY users about the importance of completing the optional “Travel Plan Detail (Final Travel Plan)” field.
 - In 2024, UNITY maintenance tasks conducted through the Proactive Monitoring Program will include cleaning up return cases
- C. Bickford (NH) asked whether amending UNITY to require completion of the “Travel Plan Detail (Final Travel Plan)” would resolve the issue of reporting airport surveillance. S. Horton (NC) asked if the change would require a separate task in UNITY. Joe Johnson, System Project Manager, replied that the question can only be answered after the Information Technology Committee reviews the workflow and provide a recommendation.
- The Executive Committee discussed and agreed with the Executive Director’s recommendation to refer both matters to the Information Technology Committee for consideration and recommendations.
- **C. Copeland (TN) made a motion to accept Director Underwood’s recommendation to refer the matters of the FY23 Annual Report Data related to returns and the under reporting of airport supervision to the Technology Committee. J. Hawkins (MO) seconded. The motion passed.**

“Appropriate Authority” to Initiate the Requisition Process Related to Rule 6-103(10)

- Director Underwood reported the National Office has received multiple requests for clarification of who is the “appropriate authority” to initiate a requisition in a non-voluntary return process, as described in Rule 6-103(10). Some states have expressed that the rule may be overly vague. However, ICJ Rules are often broadly constructed so

that states can establish practices consistent with their state laws and policies. The ICJ office also suggested ICJ Rules related to timelines should be extended for cases where abuse or neglect is reported because the child welfare agency was unwilling to file a requisition without first determining whether abuse or neglect occurred. Director Underwood recommended these concerns and suggestions be referred to the Rules Committee for review.

- **J. Rader (NE) made a motion to refer review of Rule 6-103(10) to the Rules Committee to discuss the ‘appropriate authority to initiate the requisition process’ in non-delinquent runaway. K. Torres (IA) seconded. The motion passed.**

New Business

Determine whether to provide additional guidance on state-submitted questions

- Director Underwood updated that a question was received from a state asking whether a Transfer of Supervision (TOS) request could be denied based solely on the lack of a signature on the travel permit form. the National Office responded that the list of required transfer referral documents provided in ICJ Rule 4-102 does not include travel permits. Therefore, the TOS should not be denied solely on the lack of a signature. Additionally, Rule 4-103 indicates the receiving states shall not delay the investigation pending receipt of additional documentation. The Executive Committee should be aware of the issue as it may arise more frequently when the amended ICJ Rule 8-101 takes effect. No recommendation was made.
- Chair Belli (OR) indicated there is no reason to believe this is a widespread issue and suggested monitoring to determine if other cases arise.
- C. Bickford (NH) asked for clarification regarding whether signature of the juvenile or the probation/parole officer was missing. J. Adkins indicated questions were asked about both. She noted UNITY allows for ICJOs to indicate they were unable to get a juvenile’s signature, but does not provide a n option for indicating they could not get the officer’s signature. However, UNITY does allow ICJOs to submit the name of the person entering the form.
- S. Horton (NC) questioned the frequency and whether regions had received feedback. He suggested that if there are limited instances, they should be handled locally through direct communications between commissioners. If commissioners are unable to resolve issues, referral to the Compliance Committee may be appropriate.
- J. Hawkins (MO) noted it is important to remember the intention behind the Compact, which is to accept transfers whenever possible. Given that most state ICJ offices are focused on this intention, she does not believe the issues will become more common.
- Chair Belli (OR) thanked Director Underwood for bringing the matter to the Executive Committee and agreed that no further action was necessary at this time.

Adjourn

Chair Belli adjourned the meeting by unanimous consent without objection at 2:11 p.m. ET.