

INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR JUVENILES

Rules Committee Meeting Minutes

April 15, 2026

2:00 p.m. EDT

Via Zoom



Preliminary Business

Call to Order

Rules Committee Chair J. Hawkins (MO) called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. EDT.

Roll Call

Director Underwood called the roll, and a quorum was established.

Commissioners/Designees in Attendance:

1. Julie Hawkins (MO), Commissioner, Chair
2. Natalie Dalton (VA), Commissioner, Vice Chair
3. Judy Miller (AR), Designee
4. Howard Wykes (AZ), Designee
5. Caitlyn Bickford (NH), Commissioner
6. Dawn Bailey (WA), Designee
7. Casey Gerber (WI), Commissioner

Additional State ICJ Personnel in Attendance:

1. Nita Wright (IN)
2. Ben Franks (VT)

Commissioners/Designees Not in Attendance:

1. Rebecca Moore (MA), Commissioner
2. Tracy Hudrlik (MN), Commissioner
3. Stephen Horton (NC), Commissioner
4. Daryl Liedecke (TX), Designee
5. Trissie Casanova (VT), Designee
6. Jedd Pelander (WA), Commissioner

National Office and Legal Counsel Staff in Attendance:

1. MaryLee Underwood, Executive Director
2. Jenny Adkins, Director of Operations, Rules and Compliance
3. Amanee Cabbagestalk, Training and Development Manager
4. Joe Johnson, Technology Systems Manager
5. Kirsten Wade, Logistics and Administrative Specialist

C. Bickford (NH) made a motion to approve the agenda, as amended. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

J. Miller (AR) made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting on January 21, 2026. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

Unfinished Business

Approve Rules Calendar

- Chair J. Hawkins (MO) presented the 2026 – 2027 Rules Calendar. Two versions were presented to represent the two potential 2027 Annual Business Meeting (ABM) dates that were being considered.
- **H. Wykes (AZ) made a motion to approve the appropriate Rules Calendar and post it once the 2027 ABM dates are finalized. The motion passed.**

Review overdue home evaluation report research and brainstorm next steps

- Chair J. Hawkins (MO) provided context about previous decisions and mentioned that research using UNITY data had been conducted to examine the frequency and reasons for late home evaluations.
- J. Adkins presented a report on home evaluation compliance, finding that 87% of reports were submitted within the required timeframe, with 14 states below the 85% compliance rate threshold. The analysis revealed that most overdue reports were only slightly delayed, and only 14% of overdue cases had a communicated reason for lateness, which were categorized as “family-based” or “state-based.”
- J. Adkins presented recommendations for sending states:
 - Confirm that the family’s contact information is correct before submitting the referral to the receiving state. If possible, require family to sign affidavit verifying address and phone numbers.
 - Assist youth/family with contacting the receiving state officer so the home evaluation appointment can be scheduled quickly.
 - Ensure the family understands requirements of supervision and interstate compact transfer to mitigate resistance and non-cooperation.
- J. Adkins presented recommendations for receiving states:
 - Review state policies and procedures and consider:
 - Reviewing protocol for case assignments and initial contact with family
 - ICJ office follow-up with assigned local officer within 5 days of case assignment
 - Clarifying whether youth must be present for home evaluation
 - Requiring field staff complete and submit home evaluation report in 30 days
 - Address UNITY training issues
 - Provide UNITY training site access to new users to practice proper case processing
 - If ICJ office knows that the report is complete, process case to ensure timely submission rather than waiting for user to push buttons
 - Create or request training resources to address areas of confusion
 - Monitor upcoming home evaluation due dates using the Pending Home Evaluation Report in Tableau. Make contact early and often to ensure field staff are on track to meet deadlines.
 - Communicate lateness prior to or on due date – in the absence of a uniform mechanism, utilize the Case Communications feature which provides a time-stamped record.
 - Identify and address administrative oversight issues, such as assigning cases late and staff missed case reassignments due to staff turnover.
- J. Adkins presented recommendations for the Commission:

- Technology Committee: Operationalize a uniform way (potentially a new Event in UNITY or task in Home Evaluation task) for the receiving state to provide an explanation of delay to the sending state for conformity with [Rule 4-102\(4\)](#), [Sending and Receiving Referrals](#).
- Technology Committee: Consider providing a standardized list of reasons for delays, while retaining an option to add “other” with a free-text field.
- Update or create new training materials to address common reasons for overdue home evaluations, such as a checklist for sending and receiving state officers.
- Chair J. Hawkins (MO) asked members for suggestions on how to address family-based issues on both the sending and receiving sides.
- Members discussed recommendations, including creating a standardized list of delay reasons, updating training materials, and implementing a uniform communication process between states.
- Vice Chair N. Dalton (VA) suggested providing guidance to staff on appropriate supervision practices.
- C. Bickford (NH) proposed implementing a case manager statement similar to Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) requests to confirm family communication and cooperation.
- Chair J. Hawkins (MO) asked members for suggestions on how to address state-based issues.
- Members explored creating standardized resources and checklists to help struggling offices maintain compliance with these processes.
- D. Bailey (WA) shared Washington's approach of using different timelines and communication methods for UNITY and non-UNITY users.
- Members debated whether to pursue a rule change allowing receiving states to request extensions for home evaluations, with H. Wykes (AZ) and N. Dalton (VA) suggesting trying targeted training and education first before considering rule amendments.
- Members agreed to focus on developing targeted intervention resources rather than immediate rule changes.
- J. Adkins stated that the [Performance Measurement Assessment Toolkit](#) on the Commission’s website already contains home evaluation training resources that could be expanded.
- Director Underwood stated that the Training Committee is working on two training sessions related to home evaluations.

New Business

Review Best Interest Issues

- Chair J. Hawkins (MO) stated that this topic will be discussed at the next meeting.

Next Steps

- J. Miller (AR) raised concerns about issues in UNITY and the rules regarding home evaluations in intrastate relocation cases, noting a lack of mechanism for the compact office to approve or deny cases in such situations.
- Chair J. Hawkins acknowledged the issue and mentioned that it may be discussed at the executive level and in future Rules Committee meetings.
- The next Rules Committee meeting was scheduled for May 20, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. EDT.

Adjourn

Chair Hawkins (MO) adjourned the meeting by acclamation without objection at 3:01 p.m. EDT.