



Judicial Council Minutes

March 20, 2025

9:00 a.m.

Room 230, MN Judicial Center and via Zoom

The Judicial Council met on Thursday March 20, 2025, in St. Paul, Minnesota and via Zoom. Tenth Judicial District Administrator Sarah Lindahl-Pfieffer was not in attendance.

1. Decision Item: Approval of Draft February 20, 2025, Meeting Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the draft February 20, 2025, Meeting Minutes, as submitted. The motion prevailed.

Council Action

The Judicial Council approved the February 20, 2025, Meeting Minutes, as submitted.

2. Decision Item: Approval of Consent Agenda

At the July 2024 Judicial Council meeting, the Council adopted statewide default hearing settings for all criminal and non-criminal hearings. The Council also adopted a deviation process that starts with a local deviation proposal, followed by review and approval by the Chief Judge and District Administrator, then by the Executive Committee with representation from all ten judicial districts, and then by the Judicial Council through a Consent Agenda.

The March Consent Agenda contained two deviation recommendations from the Executive Committee, which was listed on Appendix A of the Judicial Council Agenda.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion prevailed.

Council Action

The Judicial Council approved the Consent Agenda.

3. Discussion Item: Statewide Fixed Assets and Physical Inventory Audit

Jamie Majerus, Branch Audit Manager, State Court Administration, presented the Statewide Fixed Assets and Physical Inventory Audit. The audit found that the Judicial Branch's internal controls were generally adequate to ensure that they safeguarded assets, produced reliable financial information, and complied with related legal requirements and judicial policies; however, the office had internal control weaknesses and instances of non-compliance.

The report contained three findings and two written observations. Findings are related to major weaknesses and internal control issues; observations are considered not major and are related to internal control processes that need improvement.

The Chief Justice requested that district court chief judges determine who is responsible for fixed assets and ensure staff is properly tagging and managing fixed assets in accordance with policy.

4. Discussion Item: Performance Measures Report

Jennifer Ogunleye, Judicial Research Analyst, Strategy, Performance, and Projects Office Division, provided a statewide summary of performance measures including the statewide time to disposition, the statewide clearance rates, the statewide age of pending cases, the statewide length of time to permanency and adoption, and the statewide race data collection rates.

Each district and the appellate courts reported on individual performance measure results.

5. Discussion Item: Second Quarter Financial Projection

Dan Ostdiek, Director, Finance Division, State Court Administration, presented the Second Quarter Financial Projection.

6. Discussion Item: Judicial Council Policy 903, Treatment Court Key Results and Measures

Judge Joseph Buelte, Treatment Court Initiative (TCI) Chair, and Liz Willey, Treatment Court Research and Evaluation Specialist, Strategy, Performance, and Projects Office, State Court Administration, provided an update on the Treatment Court Performance Measure Pilot and introduced proposed Judicial Council Policy 903, Treatment Court Key Results and Measures.

Judicial Council approved TCI's plan to pilot performance measures in fiscal year 2025 at the January 2024 Judicial Council meeting. The final performance measures included graduation and retention rates, sobriety rates, and recidivism rates.

The Council will revisit the topic at the April 2025 meeting to approve Judicial Council Policy 903, Treatment Court Key Results and Measures, which will be implemented in

fiscal year 2026. Results from the fiscal year 2025 treatment court performance measures pilot will be included in the fall 2025 performance measures report to Judicial Council.

7. Decision Item: Proposed Revisions to Judicial Council Policy 523, Storage of Captured Records of Court Proceedings and Judicial Council Policy 523.1, Capturing the Record of Court Proceedings – Back Up Recordings and Redundant Storage

Shelley Ellefson, Third Judicial District Administrator, returned for a decision on proposed revisions to Judicial Council Policy 523, Storage of Captured Records of Court Proceedings and Judicial Council Policy 523.1, Capturing the Record of Court Proceedings – Back Up Recordings and Redundant Storage.

Proposed revisions included updating Judicial Council Policy 523, Storage of Captured Records of Court Proceedings and Judicial Council Policy 523.1, Capturing the Record of Court Proceedings to clarify that log notes/tags are not required for Child Support Magistrate (CSM) hearings.

A motion was made and seconded to approve proposed revisions to Judicial Council Policy 523, Storage of Captured Records of Court Proceedings and Judicial Council Policy 523.1, Capturing the Record of Court Proceedings – Back Up Recordings and Redundant Storage. The motion prevailed.

Council Action

The Judicial Council approved proposed revisions to Judicial Council Policy 523, Storage of Captured Records of Court Proceedings and Judicial Council Policy 523.1, Capturing the Record of Court Proceedings – Back Up Recordings and Redundant Storage.

8. Discussion Item: Formation of the Statewide Safety and Security Committee

Jennifer Super, Emergency Manager, State Court Administration, provided information on the Formation of the Safety, Security, and Emergency Preparedness Advisory Group. The advisory group would support the State Court Administrator's Office on matters related to personal safety, workplace safety, physical security, and emergency management in addition to improving related policies, procedures, and practices branch-wide.

The proposed advisory group members would be appointed by the State Court Administrator and include representatives from all ten judicial districts, state court administration, the appellate courts, the Minnesota District Judges Security Committee, and union representatives.

A discussion ensued. There was general agreement that it would be beneficial to have a centralized advisory group or committee to provide support and facilitate information

sharing to judges and staff statewide. There was disagreement on the advisory group's membership and appointment process. A suggestion was made to have each district and appellate courts select its members, the Minnesota District Judges Association select its member, and State Court Administration select the remaining members.

The topic will return to Judicial Council for a decision at the April 2025 meeting.

9. Other Business

a. Legislative Update

Jeff Shorba, State Court Administrator, provided a Legislative Update.

b. Immigration Enforcement

Jeff Shorba, State Court Administrator, announced that guidance on immigration enforcement would be shared with districts soon.

c. Preparing for FY28-29

Jeff Shorba, State Court Administrator, suggested that Judicial Council consider establishing a committee to evaluate court operations in anticipation of the projected FY28-29 \$6 billion budget deficit. This topic will be added to the April 2025 Judicial Council agenda.

10. Executive Session

A motion was made and seconded to go into Executive Session. The motion prevailed.

Following discussion, a motion was made and seconded to exit Executive Session. The motion prevailed.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned.