



Judicial Council Minutes

March 16, 2023

9:00 a.m.

Room 230, MN Judicial Center and via Zoom

The Judicial Council met on Thursday, March 16, 2023, in Room 230 of the Minnesota Judicial Center and via Zoom.

Fifth Judicial District Assistant Chief Judge Darci Bentz attended for Chief Judge Greg Anderson.

1. Approval of Draft February 16, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Amendments to the draft February 16, 2023, Meeting Minutes were suggested.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes, as amended. The motion prevailed.

Council Action

The Judicial Council approved the February 16, 2023, Meeting Minutes, as amended.

2. Discussion Item: Current COVID-19 Data

Jennifer Super, Emergency Management Analyst, State Court Administration, presented the current COVID data.

3. Discussion Item: Performance Measures Report

Ellen Bendewald, Strategic Planning and Projects Office, State Court Administration, provided the statewide performance measures update. Highlights included:

1. The statewide time to disposition goal was met in family cases and nearly met in Major Civil cases.
2. The statewide time to disposition goal for Major Criminal, Juvenile Delinquency, and Minor Criminal cases have improved over 2021.
3. All case groups except Probate/Mental Health maintained Clearance Rates at or above 100% in 2022.

4. The Major Criminal Clearance Rate increased the most of any case group in 2022 over 2021.
5. There were modest improvements in the Statewide Age of Pending Cases in Major Criminal, Minor Criminal, and Juvenile Delinquency compared to 2021.
6. The Statewide Length of Time to Permanency and Adoption improved in 2022, reversing a seven-year downward trend, but results are far from goal.
7. Major Criminal is the only case group meeting the minimum Statewide Race Data Collection goal.

Ms. Bendewald reported on efforts to address the criminal backlog. She noted that steady progress has been made, but most districts are not on track to meet the June 2023 goal. It was noted that at least 56 counties have cleared their backlog. It was also noted that 33 courts are planning case resolution events. Planning is underway on collaboration across county and district lines. A data dashboard is under development to report on cases scheduled, resolved, and eliminated from the backlog related to these events.

The ten judicial districts and the appellate courts reported on individual results. Common successful strategies were reported by the districts:

1. Positive results from hosting case resolution events.
2. Continuing cooperation and support from justice partners.
3. Increased attention to specificity in scheduling orders.
4. Specialized calendars for old criminal cases.
5. Use of stricter continuance policies and practices.

4. Discussion Item: Other Business

a. Minn. Laws 2023, Chapter 12

Karen Jaszewski, Senior Staff Attorney, State Court Administration, reported that, as a result of passage of the new law governing voting rights for those convicted of a felony, effective July 1, 2023, there is a need to update the standard felony conditions in MNCIS. Currently, under Judicial Council Policy 522; Standard Conditions of Probation, and the appended Standards Conditions, condition 10 states:

Do not register to vote or vote until discharged from probation and your civil rights are fully restored.

In response to requests from several judges, State Court Administration plans to change the language in MNCIS to state:

Do not register to vote or vote until July 1, 2023. On that date, you have the right to register to vote and to vote during any time you are not incarcerated for this offense.

A discussion ensued. It was agreed that the change should be made immediately and that a decision on whether, after July 1, 2023, there is a need to retain a specific condition dealing with the right to vote, will be made at the April Judicial Council meeting.

b. Legislative Update

Meetings held with legislators and the status of the Judicial Branch Policy bills were reviewed.

c. Planning for Justice Day Open House

The Council discussed the logistics of the Minnesota Justice Day Open House.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned.