



# Judicial Council Minutes

February 20, 2025

9:00 a.m.

Room 230, MN Judicial Center and via Zoom

The Judicial Council met on Thursday February 20, 2025, in St. Paul, Minnesota and via Zoom. First Judicial District Assistant Chief Judge Christopher Lehmann attended the meeting for Chief Judge Lennon. Eighth Judicial District Assistant Chief Judge Rodney Hanson attended the meeting for Chief Judge Beckman. Supreme Court Justice Anne McKeig, Court of Appeals Chief Judge Frisch, and Second Judicial District Judge Brown were not in attendance.

## 1. Decision Item: Approval of Draft January 16, 2025, Meeting Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the draft January 16, 2025, Meeting Minutes, as submitted. The motion prevailed.

### Council Action

The Judicial Council approved the January 16, 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 February Consent Agenda contained one deviation recommendation 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. Decision Item: Judicial Council Policy 309, Judicial Leave

Chief Justice Natalie E. Hudson, Craig Gustafson, Director, Legal Counsel Division, State Court Administration, and Liz Halet, Legal Counsel Division, State Court Administration, returned to Judicial Council for a decision on proposed revisions to Judicial Council Policy 309, Judicial Leave.

Proposed revisions included renaming the policy to the “Judicial Leave and Flexibility Policy” and adding a new paragraph G that allows the chief judge in a judicial district to approve a judge’s request to conduct remote proceedings from outside the state of Minnesota in limited and exceptional circumstances for up to 21 work days per fiscal year. A suggestion was made to explore the possibility of expanding the policy to include U.S. territories and work conducted outside of the United States.

A motion was made and seconded to approve proposed revisions to Judicial Council Policy 309, Judicial Leave. The motion prevailed.

**Council Action**

The Judicial Council approved proposed revisions to Judicial Council Policy 309, Judicial Leave.

**4. Discussion Item: Quality Court Workplace Survey Results**

Aaron Lauer, Policy & Planning Consultant, Strategy, Performance, and Projects Office, State Court Administration, and Kirsten Maiko, Research Analyst, Strategy, Performance, and Projects Office, State Court Administration, presented the Quality Court Workplace Survey (QCWS) Results. The 2024 QCWS results showed generally high engagement and workplace satisfaction for both employees and judges and justices.

Results also showed that employees experienced further improvement on their ratings since 2021, indicating that recent workplace initiatives, specifically those focused on workload, have had a positive effect. While judges and justices maintained high ratings for many survey items, they also experienced an unprecedented decrease in many ratings since 2021, indicating that most employees are experiencing their workplace more positively than most judges and justices for the first time in the survey’s history. The QCWS team will conduct statewide and local action planning in spring 2025 and share action plans with Judicial Council in the summer of 2025.

**5. Discussion 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, presented 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. It was noted that these policies were created to ensure court records can be easily obtained. It was also noted that since CSM hearing records can be easily obtained without log notes/tags, the proposed revisions would help reduce administrative burden on court staff.

The topic will return for a decision at the March Judicial Council meeting.

## **6. Discussion Item: Artificial Intelligence Response Committee Update**

Judge Stoney Hiljus, Chair, Artificial Intelligence Response (AIR) Committee, and Jason Betz, Director, Information Technology Division, State Court Administration, provided an AIR Committee Update.

The AIR Committee develops governance and guidance for branch use of artificial intelligence (AI), coordinates AI activities within the branch, and provides regular reports and updates to Judicial Council. The AIR Committee created an AI Intake Form to solicit AI questions and ideas from judicial officers and staff. A suggestion was submitted to explore AI Assisted Notetaking which is an AI tool used to summarize meetings. It was noted that rules and policies would need to be updated to address AI recordings created through AI Assisted Notetaking.

The AIR Committee proposed evaluating and updating the Judicial Branch's record retention policy or the Artificial Intelligence policy to provide a retention policy for AI recordings and allowing the Information Technology Division to review AI Assisted Notetaking tools to determine the best tool for the Branch based on functionality, cost, and cybersecurity risk.

A motion was made to approve supporting the AIR Committee's proposal to work with the Legal Counsel Division on evaluating and updating relevant Judicial Branch policies and explore AI Assisted Notetaking tools. The motion prevailed.

### **Council Action**

The Judicial Council approved supporting the AIR Committee's proposal to work with the Legal Counsel Division on evaluating and updating relevant Branch policies and explore AI Assisted Notetaking tools.

The AIR Committee will return to Judicial Council at a later date for an update and decision.

## **7. Other Business**

### **a. Legislative Update**

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

**8. 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.