

Interstate Commission for Juveniles

Racial Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee Meeting Minutes



March 28, 2023
2:00 p.m. ET
Via Zoom

Voting Members in Attendance:

1. Sherry Jones (MD), Commissioner, Chair
2. Francis “Mike” Casey (DE), Commissioner, Vice Chair
3. Michael Farmer (CA), Designee
4. Tasha Hunt (CT) Commissioner
5. Jessica Wald (ND), Designee
6. Felicia Dauway (SC), Designee
7. Casey Gerber (WI), Commissioner

Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

1. April Simmons (IN)
2. Stephen Jenkins (LA)

Members Not in Attendance:

1. Guillermo Viera Rosa (CA), Commissioner
2. Becki Moore (MA), Commissioner
3. Jessica Nash (RI), Commissioner
4. Richetta Johnson (VA)

Guests in Attendance:

1. Stephen Horton (NC), ICJ Rules Committee Chair
2. Caitlyn Bickford (NH), ICJ Rules Committee Vice Chair
3. Sherri Springate (KY)

National Office Staff & Legal Counsel in Attendance:

1. MaryLee Underwood, Executive Director
2. Amanee Cabbagestalk, Training and Administrative Specialist

Call to Order

Chair Jones (MD) called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. ET.

Roll Call

Director Underwood called the roll and a quorum was established.

Agenda

T. Hunt (CT) made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. F. Casey (DE) seconded. The motion carried.

Minutes

J. Wald (ND) made a motion to approve the Racial Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee's January 17, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. F. Casey (DE) seconded. The motion carried.

Discussion

ICJ Rule 4-104 Amendment Proposal Submission

- Racial DEI Committee Chair Jones (MD) thanked Racial DEI Committee for their feedback and thanked Rules Committee Chair S. Horton (NC) and Vice Chair Caitlyn Bickford (NH) for attending the meeting to hear the discussion and provide additional insight related to the proposed amendment to Rule 4-104.
- Racial DEI Committee Vice Chair F. Casey (DE) reported that he, Chair Jones, and the work team reviewed comments made by the Rules Committee and made edits to the proposal, as the original proposal was not recommended for adoption by the Rules Committee.
 - Original Proposal:
 - 5. Supervision shall be accepted when:
 - a. There is no legal guardian remaining in the sending state with whom the juvenile may reside and
 - b. One of the following applies:
 - i. There is a legal guardian residing in the receiving state with whom the juvenile may reside or
 - ii. The legal guardian/custodial agency has approved an alternative residence.
 - Edited Proposal:
 - 5. Supervision shall be accepted when:
 - a. There is no legal guardian remaining in the sending state who is able to provide a suitable and safe living environment for the juvenile as determined by the sending state, and
 - b. One of the following applies:
 - i. There is a legal guardian residing in the receiving state with whom the juvenile may reside, or
 - ii. An alternative residence has been identified and approved in the receiving state.
- J. Wald (ND), member of the work team, added that the proposal was developed in response to data which reflected racial discrepancies in acceptance of ICJ cases. She noted that family relationships are not defined exclusively by blood relationships in some communities, especially in Black, Latinx, and Native American communities.
- F. Casey (DE) stated that the goal of the proposal is to have more equitable results across the board.
- T. Hunt (CT) asked how the edited proposal differed from the original and both were shared on screen side-by-side.
- F. Casey (DE) stated that he felt the proposal was on the right path for an amended rule.

- S. Horton (NC), Rules Committee Chair, thanked the Racial DEI Committee for inviting him and taking on this complex topic. He stated that he wants to make sure that the proposal addresses the gap in the rule, but it should not be too detailed to avoid the risk of leaving specific scenarios out.
- S. Horton (NC) added that some Rules Committee members expressed concerns that the proposal would shift too much authority to the sending state, noting that the receiving state has always been primarily responsible for determining suitability based on the home evaluation..
- Rules Committee Vice Chair C. Bickford (NH) and Rules Committee member M. Farmer (CA) echoed Rules Committee Chair S. Horton’s (NC) comments.
- Racial DEI Committee Chair S. Jones (MD) referenced previous discussions in the Ad Hoc Committee on Racial Justice regarding cultural differences with suitability when completing home evaluations.
- **J. Wald (ND) made a motion to endorse the proposed rule amendment and continue with the submission to the Rules Committee. T. Hunt (CT) seconded. The motion carried.**

Review Workplan for 2023

- Racial DEI Committee Chair Jones (MD) reviewed the work plan for the upcoming year and stated that the committee is on the right track.

Form Best Practice Work Team

- The committee members listed below volunteered to serve on the Work Team to develop best practices related to home evaluations and mandatory acceptance.
 - F. Casey (DE)
 - A. Simmons (IN)
 - S. Jenkins (LA)
 - J. Wald (ND)
- Anyone else who is interested should contact Chair Jones (MD) or Amanee Cabbagestalk at the National Office.

Old Business

- Chair Jones (MD) reminded members to continue to send pertinent resources related to the work of the committee to Amanee Cabbagestalk to include in the monthly “ICJ Updates” newsletter.

New Business

There was no new business.

Adjourn

Chair Jones (MD) adjourned by acclamation without objection at 3:03 p.m. ET.