



Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
Race, Equity, Inclusion, and Access Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 7, 2025 // 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.
Meeting location Virtual (Zoom)

Co-Chairs Justice Rebecca Dallet and Judge Jon Richards

Subcommittee Members Present:	Justice Rebecca Dallet, Ashley Billig, Rebecca Matoska-Mentink, Judge Jon Richards, Judge Elliott Levine, Jane Graham-Jennings, Evan Goyke, Judge Neal “Chip” Nielsen, Michael Blauw, Judge Mary Triggiano, Judge Carl Ashley, Jerome Dillard, Judge Emily Lonergan
Subcommittee Members Not Present:	Sheriff Tammy Sternard, Jennifer Bias, Kelli Thompson
DOJ Staff:	Ryan Anderson, Lara Kenny, Sabrina Gentile, Mike Austin, Katie Snell, Mark Rather
Others:	Tyler Brandt, Susan Lund

Welcome and Opening Comments

Subcommittee Co–Chair Justice Dallet welcomed members to the meeting at 12:15 p.m. Quorum was present.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve April 3, 2025, REIA Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Judge Carl Ashley and seconded by Chip Nielsen to approve the April 3, 2025, REIA Subcommittee Meeting Minutes.
The motion passed on a voice vote.

Driver’s License Failure to Pay Forfeiture Suspensions

Mike Austin and Susan Lund updated the subcommittee on the memo that was prepared, with the assistance of a working group, that includes potential legislative language to eliminate driver’s license (DL) suspension as a debt collection method for failure to pay forfeiture (FPF) citations. DL suspension for FPF citations is more common in municipal courts instead of circuit courts, and this is the most common reason by far for license suspension year after year. This method as a debt collection tool for not paying fines on time disproportionately affects the low-income population. Research shows that DL suspension has no effect on improving debt collection; instead, it just makes it difficult for people to drive to work legally. The proposal simultaneously includes the elimination of debt-based warrants to avoid a potential consequence of courts incarcerating people instead of suspending DLs. When asked if adding the debt-based warrant element would hinder the ability to build support for the proposal, Lund explained that incarcerating people costs money, so logically, eliminating FPF-based DL

suspensions and warrants would save municipalities and counties money by reducing unnecessary incarceration, time in court, and law enforcement time/personnel bandwidth. Lund also added there are other options for debt collection such as garnishing wages and state debt collection (SDC).

Judge Ashley asked specifically about Milwaukee's role in using DL suspension as a debt collection method, and Lund responded that Milwaukee has highest rates of DL suspensions for FPF citations. The subcommittee agreed that Wisconsin should increase education efforts on this topic.

Cost benefit analysis showed DL suspensions were not an effective debt collection method and that SDC is significantly more effective. The few instances when SDC is not effective were largely due to the significant financial instability of the people involved; those individuals were unable to pay, regardless of the debt collection method.

When asked about the possibility of remedying this DL suspension issue retroactively, Lund stated that ongoing payments to reinstate DLs or other related fines would cease, and any FPF-related DL suspensions would be reinstated. Lund also provided an interactive map regarding details of these efforts across the country (<https://www.freetodrive.org/>).

Ashley Billig asked if the memo data takes into account an individual's driving history (e.g., previous driving safety issues), and Lund responded that the data focused exclusively on the DL suspensions initiated by FPF citations.

Tyler Brandt added that the Chief Judges' Subcommittee on Jail for Nonpayment of Legal Financial Obligations issued a final report and recommendations in 2019 (<https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:da99c7a6-544a-4381-86c6-70fad2cad86c#pageNum=1>), recommending SDC as the most appropriate solution. Circuit courts have an automatic interface system to easily refer cases to SDC, however municipal courts do not have this system in place, creating a barrier to regular and consistent use of SDC across court levels. This can be remedied by municipalities creating and maintaining relationships with SDC.

Lund opined that legislatures would be open to this proposal for financial efficiency reasons, both allowing people to maintain transportation to work, eliminating unnecessary spending, and transitioning to more efficient debt collection methods.

Justice Dallet added that if Wisconsin continues to use incarceration as a debt collection method, even if the government collects \$50/day in reclaimed debt, it costs more to incarcerate a person for a day, resulting in net zero gain in government costs. Also, this results in job loss for people due to incarceration and therefore can pay even less towards their debt.

Judge Ashley asked about next steps for this proposal, and Mike Austin explained that the proposal will be heard by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC), and if approved, then submitted for legislative review. Lund also added that if this proposal moves forward, she would be able to stay involved as new procedures/systems were implemented in Wisconsin.

Justice Dallet asked for a motion regarding DL suspension due to FPF.

Motion to Approve Driver's License Suspensions due to Failure to Pay Forfeitures

The Race Equity, Inclusion and Access Subcommittee recommends that the State CJCC approve a motion to support the elimination of court authority to order Failure to Pay Forfeiture/Failure to Pay Juvenile Forfeiture driver's license suspensions. In addition, the group recommends consideration of eliminating court authority to impose warrants/imprisonment based on nonpayment of civil forfeiture debt. Data similarly demonstrates that using warrants and incarceration to collect outstanding forfeiture debt is harmful, costly, and counterproductive.

Motion was made by Judge Ashley and seconded by Judge Triggiano to send the proposal to the CJCC for support. The motion passed by voice vote.

Upon approval, the State CJCC will forward this motion to the to the Governor and the Wisconsin Legislature.

Juror Pay Proposal Updates

Judge Richards updated the subcommittee on the current proposal to increase juror compensation in Wisconsin to \$80/day and \$40/half-day, and the state budget. This proposal has already been approved for support by this subcommittee and was paused for future action due to other more urgent budget factors.

Common Ground (CG) is interested in juror diversity and are meeting with stakeholders and subcommittee members to discuss. CG is a healthcare cooperative and has a history of addressing other social issues such as absentee landlords in Milwaukee County. They have local staying power to move juror diversity efforts forward, and while they haven't adopted the subcommittee's proposal, they are working amongst themselves on this topic.

Guilty Plea Colloquy Discussion

Judge Richards updated the subcommittee on the latest developments on a report regarding people with disabilities and/or neurodivergence and how to ensure they can understand court processes, specifically pleas. The subcommittee has been waiting on this report, but now the project has been abandoned due to federal funding cuts/issues. Even though all the work has already been completed and the final report has been prepared, the project's funding was cut before final approval could be obtained. This issue is tabled until the next meeting.

Judge Levine added that La Crosse recently worked with the Fairness Project, focusing on effective communication. Specifically, they highlighted that this issue is not about how to

address neurodivergence or disabilities, it instead focuses on “assessing a person’s capability to understand” and emphasizing those skills for judges and other court/legal roles.

Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) Program Report

Ashley Billig presented the findings of the 2025 TAD Program Report

(https://www.wisdoj.gov/Documents/2025%20TAD%20Report_04%2014%202025.pdf).

Recidivism statistics for both treatment courts and diversion programs show wide disparities between recidivism rates of graduates compared to rates of people terminated from treatment courts or diversion programs.

Cost Benefit results:

- For every \$1 in TAD funding spent:
 - Treatment courts – approximately \$5.15 – \$5.92 is saved.
 - Diversion programs – approximately \$9.18 – \$9.12 is saved.

Billig also demonstrated use of the newly-developed and publicly available TAD Dashboard

(<https://www.wisdoj.gov/Pages/DataAndStatistics/treatment-alternatives-and-diversion-data.aspx>).

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Motion was made by Judge Levine and seconded by Justice Dallet to adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed on a voice vote.

The next meeting will be October 16, 2025.

The meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.