

# Meeting of the Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice

Wednesday, December 18, 2019, Noon – 1:15 p.m. ET

Webinar

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## SUMMARY

The **Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice (FACJJ)** held a quarterly meeting via webinar on Wednesday, December 18, 2019. **Elizabeth Wolfe**, *Designated Federal Official (DFO), FACJJ, and Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)*, provided staff support for the meeting.

**Caren Harp**, *OJJDP Administrator*, led and moderated the meeting. FACJJ members participated, and members of the public observed. The recording and a summary of the meeting will be available on the [FACJJ website](#) within 90 days.

The three FACJJ subcommittees – Subcommittee on Facilitating Compliance with the Juvenile Justice Reform Act, Subcommittee on Educating the Field, and Subcommittee on Special Topics – shared the current status of their recommendations for 2019, and Administrator Harp and Ms. Wolfe outlined the new process for ensuring all recommendations are included in OJJDP’s upcoming reporting to Congress.

## WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

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Elizabeth Wolfe opened the meeting, and Administrator Harp welcomed all participants and observers and reviewed the meeting agenda. The goal is for the subcommittees to submit their 2019 recommendations to OJJDP.

The following FACJJ members were in attendance:

- Judge Thomas Frawley, Missouri
- Corey Haines, Michigan
- Anthony Pierro, New Jersey
- Kathryn (Kate) Richtman, Minnesota
- Danica Rubenstein, West Virginia
- Korey Solomon, Idaho
- Joseph (Joe) Vignati, Georgia
- Tiffany Wilkerson-Franklin, Louisiana

The following OJJDP staff members supporting the FACJJ were in attendance:

- Dr. TeNeane Bradford, *Associate Administrator, State Relations and Assistance Division*

## UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR

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**Joe Vignati**, *FACJJ Chair*, expressed appreciation for the invaluable support of Administrator Harp and OJJDP staff for the work of the FACJJ and its subcommittees, as well as for the efforts of the subcommittee members. He added that he feels confident that the FACJJ will be able to make a positive impact on the field of juvenile justice, and that he looks forward to working together as a team in 2020.

## SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

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### **Subcommittee on Educating the Field**

Anthony Pierro thanked Administrator Harp and the OJJDP staff for their help and support, and subcommittee members and Mr. Vignati for their commitment and passion, which serve to reinvigorate the work.

The subcommittee developed the following mission statement to ensure it remained focused on the task at hand: “To provide easy access to juvenile justice information for professionals, families, and youth to effectively serve the unique interests of juvenile judicial systems and communities”.

The subcommittee has developed three recommendations:

1. *Create a juvenile justice primer course* that is available and easily accessible to, and provides a baseline for, new and young professionals across all roles in the juvenile justice system – including law enforcement, educators, probation officers, and community organizations.
  - a. This is enjoyable but challenging work, and a primer would allow professionals to understand the complexities of the system and give them a clear understanding of what the role is—and can be—in order to generate positive results for young people (i.e., changes that can be made, and leadership positions that can be taken).
2. *Create awareness to available, existing juvenile justice resources*. Make them easily searchable for those in the field, and make OJJDP the place to go for this information.
  - a. These resources are valuable to those in the field but are underutilized.
3. *Engage state advisory groups (SAGs) in the work of OJJDP* in a way that helps to educate them.
  - a. SAGs are the field; organically creating a knowledge base for professionals new to the system will help them to understand the value of OJJDP, the role of the SAG, and the SAG’s relationship to the community and commitment to OJJDP’s ideals.

Administrator Harp commits to bringing all three of these recommendations to fruition over time. OJJDP has a new website (<https://ojjdp.ojp.gov>) and the technology to develop a primer and a user-friendly online portal. She agrees that existing resources are not being utilized enough.

Corey Haines agreed and added that follow-through is needed. Kate Richtman noted that the underutilization of resources is a common theme across this work.

### **Subcommittee on Special Topics**

Ms. Richtman reminded the FACJJ that the goal of the subcommittee is to determine what rural communities need and identify ways OJJDP can help. As the Committee heard at its recent meeting in Kansas City, MO, rural communities struggle with issues around infrastructure, higher rates of poverty, poor access to quality health care, lower academic achievement, and a lack of employment opportunities and workforce development. The subcommittee created a survey to learn more about how to focus its recommendations. It sent the survey to nine representative jurisdictions and awaits responses. Ms. Richtman thanked Ms. Wolfe and OJJDP staff for their support in this endeavor.

The survey asks jurisdictions to rank the following issues and areas for growth by their importance:

#### Issues

- Limited access to federal and state funding
- Lack of mental health services
- Limited/lacking transportation
- Limited/lacking affordable housing
- Poor access to medical care and insurance
- Low rates of educational attainment
- High rates of substance abuse
- High rates of trauma
- High rates of unemployment/low earnings
- Limited access to technology
- Other issue \_\_\_\_\_

#### Areas for Growth

- Program development
- Sustainability planning
- Technical assistance
- Grant-writing assistance
- Information gathering and dissemination
- Access to current research and data
- Awareness of and access to funding opportunities
- Other area \_\_\_\_\_

The survey also asks respondents to supply additional information regarding the jurisdiction's challenges that could help OJJDP provide further assistance.

The subcommittee will identify themes from the survey responses and develop recommendations based on these results and on the other elements of its work. It has asked SAGs to share a representative sample of what is being said about the survey, and one clear message is that challenges exist around collaborating across counties and jurisdictions.

### **Subcommittee on Compliance with the Juvenile Justice Reform Act**

Mr. Vignati reported that Judge Hejmanowski and the subcommittee have developed detailed recommendations for consideration, which will be submitted to Administrator Harp and Ms. Wolfe very shortly for review. The recommendations focus on compliance definitions and interpretations of the Act.

## **NEXT STEPS AND ADJOURNMENT**

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OJJDP will compile the subcommittees' recommendations and provide a document to the full FACJJ for its review and vote.

Ms. Wolfe shared the following timeline:

- **December 20, 2019:** Deadline for submitting all subcommittee recommendations
- **January 2, 2020:** Ms. Wolfe to circulate a single document with all subcommittee recommendations for review prior to voting
- **January 7, 2020:** Brief FACJJ meeting to include a vote on the recommendations for use in OJJDP's reporting to Congress

Once the document is accepted, Ms. Wolfe will compile it as the official 2019 recommendations from the FACJJ to OJJDP. She will send all members an Adobe Connect invite for the January 7, 2020, meeting that will be open to the public.

The recording and a summary of the meeting will be available on the [FACJJ website](#) within 90 days.

Ms. Richtman and Ms. Wolfe will meet offline to schedule a Subcommittee on Special Topics meeting.

Mr. Vignati thanked all members and OJJDP staff for a great year, and said he looks forward to a productive 2020.

On behalf of OJJDP, and especially the State Relations and Assistance Division, Dr. Bradford wished the FACJJ happy holidays and a happy new year.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m. ET.