



# **Nevada's Court Improvement Program**

## **Basic Strategic Plan FY 2010 - FY 2014**

*Supreme Court of Nevada  
Administrative Office of the Courts*



August 2009

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## *Chapter 1 – History of Nevada CIP*

The Court Improvement Program (CIP) has existed in Nevada since 1995 and is overseen by the CIP Select Committee. Grant funding is received from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF).<sup>1</sup> Since its inception, CIP has funded numerous successful pilot projects throughout the Nevada Judiciary: Children's Attorneys Project (CAP) Pro Bono Lawyer and Surrogate Education Advocacy, Children's Attorneys Project (CAP) Adoption Subsidy, Great Basin CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate), Nevada CASA Association, Inc., Northeastern Nevada CASA, Licensed Kinship Caregivers, Parent to Parent Mentoring, and the Early Representation pilot project, to name a few.

In the past, most CIP efforts focused on the development and implementation of pilot projects in individual courts. During 2003-05, CIP worked closely with the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) and other stakeholders to conduct Nevada's Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), develop its Program Improvement Plan (PIP), and conduct the CIP Re-Assessment. Over the past 12 months CIP has expanded its involvement with the judiciary with more than 40% judicial participation in a CFSR Survey developed and distributed by DCFS staff; an Associate Justice, 9 Judges and Masters, and the CIP Coordinator volunteering (court calendars permitting) in the CFSR in Nevada scheduled for August 31 through September 4, 2009; and an 82% judicial participation in a CIP Survey on representation practice in Nevada. This expansion has worked to help us plan and develop changes statewide that will significantly improve the handling of child welfare cases.

State judicial leadership was established when, in 2006, Chief Justice Robert Rose agreed to chair the Court Improvement Committee, and the Committee was brought under the auspices of the Judicial Council of the State of Nevada as a permanent Standing Committee. The Court Improvement Committee was renamed to reflect a broader scope of its mission. The Committee is now known as *Court Improvement for the Protection and Permanency of Dependent Children*.

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<sup>1</sup> For a complete history, please go to <http://www.ssa.gov/history/childb1.html>.

With the appointment of Associate Justice Nancy M. Saitta and her exemplary leadership, the Committee revamped its Mission, Purpose, and Goals Statement in 2009 to: “The Court Improvement Program (CIP) is a multidisciplinary project which seeks improvement of interrelated systems that serve children and families who enter the child welfare system. The program operates through team-oriented court and agency initiatives. The goal of the CIP is to make the systems more effective.”

To maintain focus for CIP initiatives throughout the State, three strategic plans have been developed that focus on: administration and planning (this document); education and training; and data collection, analysis, and sharing. To maximize resources and outcomes, the strategies outlined in the three strategic plans (Basic, Training, and Data) incorporate coordinated and collaborative efforts identified in the first Program Improvement Plan, the statewide Assessment and Re-Assessments, as well as other efforts initiated by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), the Judicial Council, the State's Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS), Clark and Washoe County Department of Social Services, and other entities involved in child welfare issues, both within Nevada and nationally.

A total of 21 strategies (7 for Basic), consisting of 99 activities (50 for Basic), were identified to meet the goals and objectives of CIP in Nevada, and are contained in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 delineates the collaborative efforts, performed and planned across Nevada statewide, and with our federal partners and across the nation with other CIP Coordinators, staff from the AOC, Courts, Welfare Agencies, Law Enforcement, Schools, Service Providers, CASAs, University, Bar Associations, Hospitals, Foster and Adoptive Parent and other non-profit Organizations, Service Organizations, Churches, private businesses, and Indian tribes.

## ***Chapter 2 – Strategic Plan Objectives and Strategies***

To provide structure to the CIP efforts to continue to meet and further develop its goals in Nevada, specific strategies are needed. Each strategy outlines one or more activities that, when complete, will provide a major milestone in the completion of one or more goals. The strategies have been organized into three separate strategic plans, based upon their primary intent. The three strategic plans are:

- Basic [B] (this plan) formerly referred to as Administration and Planning or [AP] (including planning required for Training and Data)
- Training [T] formerly referred to as Education and Training or [ED] and
- Data [D] formerly referred to as Data Collection, Analysis, and Sharing [DC]

### **Basic Objectives**

The Objectives of the basic component of the strategic plan are:

- To continue the positive momentum the Court Improvement for the Protection and Permanency of Dependent Children Select Committee (CIP) has generated across the state and designate other standing committees around Child Safety, Permanency, and Well Being;
- To improve the quality of representation for all parties in dependency proceedings;
- To implement a statewide strategy to provide for engagement of the courts and legal representatives in the CFSR and IV-E review processes; and
- To increase public awareness about child abuse and the rights of children and families in dependency proceedings through an outreach campaign focusing on broad initiatives, resource development, as well as local issue specific advocacy.

## **Basic Objectives, Strategies, and Activities**

### **B1: Continuing the focus of the Court Improvement Program Committee toward advancing the outcomes of safety, permanency, and well being for children and families.**

Reconstituting the Court Improvement Program Select Committee and continuing positive momentum were the key structural steps in implementing the new strategic plans. In previous years, the Committee operated with a limited mandate and without staff support for committee work, and completely relied on contracting services to accomplish specific goals and tasks. Reconstituting the Committee under new Supreme Court leadership has the advantage of raising the profile of the Committee and its membership and securing commitments from the appointed members that they are prepared to take active roles in committee work to realize the goals of the strategic plan.

Each fiscal year, the annual CIP Committee will convene at an annual planning meeting with the newly appointed committee members. Letters from the Supreme Court appointing new members will be distributed with the strategic plans and any relevant Program Instructions attached to orient new members and set the foundation for the annual updating of the strategic plans. Current membership consists of one Justice of the Supreme Court, the State Court Administrator, three District Court Judges, one rural Tribal Judge (designated to handle child abuse and neglect matters), one Assemblywoman, one Private Bar Attorney and one Children's Attorneys Project attorney, one Chief Deputy Public Defender, one Administrator from the Division of Child and Family Services, one Director from Washoe County Department of Social Services, one Director from Clark County Department of Family Services, one representative from the Office of the Attorney General, and the statewide CASA Executive Director. Additionally, the committee meetings are staffed by the CIP Coordinator and a contracted part-time CIP Assistant.

Meetings will be held quarterly whenever possible, in locations to encourage participation from all sections of the state and will be video and teleconferenced to meet that goal. Meeting announcements and committee reports will be posted to the CIP website as appropriate.

**B2: Formally establish the Court Improvement Program with adequate personnel to effectively staff the Court Improvement Committee and accomplish outreach and public education goals.**

The employment of a full-time and experienced court administrator as the Court Improvement Coordinator was a major step towards providing adequate staff support to the CIP committee and the implementation of the strategic plans. The budget also provides for an assistant for the coordinator to ensure that momentum is maintained and the outreach is comprehensive. The Court Improvement Program outreach agenda is broad-based, goal-oriented, and a primary function of CIP. To date, the CIP newsletter and list serve have not been established; however, regular articles about CIP activities are published on the Supreme Court's website. CIP began in 2009 to distribute via email information regarding conferences, research, and activities relevant to the CIP, to judges and masters who have NRS 432B calendars, as well as to senior judges who are assigned.

Publishing and distributing informational booklets or pamphlets explaining matters related to child abuse and dependency proceedings will fill an important gap in court outreach. Topics for a "What I Can Expect" series of booklets or pamphlets already identified include: guardianships; financial support for adoption of older youth; and an explanation of the rights and roles of children, parents and foster parents. Materials will also be made available at courthouses, in social services offices, at attorneys' offices, and through services providers, public libraries, and the web. Collaboration with UNLV Boyd School of Law and UNR and UNLV schools of social work is contemplated in the preparation of the materials. This project is a priority for the CIP Select Committee and volunteer resources including interested children in foster care will be used in the identification of topics and the design and preparation of the pamphlets.

- CIP recognizes that outreach and partnership with numerous public and private entities and individuals is critical in order to share ideas and resources to effectuate more far reaching and positive outcomes. Examples of previous outreach resulted not only in educating and raising the level of awareness around child abuse and neglect issues, but also netted ongoing volunteerism, pro bono legal representation, provided youth a voice, and in return Nevada Judges, attorneys, and CIP representatives received critical input in some instances.

**B3: Establish a Committee on Improving Safety for Children, as a permanent CIP standing committee.**

One standing committee of the CIP committee, the CIP Juvenile Dependency Rules Subcommittee, chaired by Judge Andrew Puccinelli (4<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, Elko) has been assigned to review Nevada statutes to determine conformity with federal child welfare laws and regulations and make recommendations to the CIP committee regarding necessary statutory changes. The CIP reassessment identified many strengths in Nevada's statutes and also listed areas where the statutes could be improved to better address the intent of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), and best practices, such as the purpose of specific court hearings, notice to fathers, the requirements of a dispositional hearing, and appointment of counsel.

Recommendations for Rules of Court and changes to the Administrative Code and agency regulations will also be included in the regular reports of this standing committee to the CIP committee. Review of local rules may also be undertaken to ensure consistency with ASFA and ICWA and improve the level of practice, especially as related to timeliness and meaningful permanency hearings.

This committee will be advisory to the Supreme Court, Legislature & Rules Committee of Judicial Council, and local rules of court committees, as needed. Another primary assignment of this committee will be to review and regularly report to the CIP committee on best practices relating to statutes and enabling legislation that could benefit Nevada's children and families.

**B4: Establish a Committee on Improving Permanency for Children, as a permanent CIP standing committee.**

A second standing committee was appointed in the second quarter of 2009 to focus on improving permanency through improving representation of the parties in abuse and neglect proceedings. The committee agenda began with the plan to administer two surveys on representation. The first survey was distributed to all judges and masters, asking for response on questions regarding their policies for the appointment of counsel for children and parents. The survey requested information on a range of specific issues including number of appointments, circumstances in which attorneys are appointed, terms of appointment, and compensation to appointed counsel. The second survey will be distributed to all attorneys who represent parents or children statewide and will focus on the nature of their appointments,



issues relating to representation, compensation, obstacles to effective representation, and suggestions for improving representation. Responses to both surveys will be collected and analyzed with the results conveyed to the CIP committee, including recommendations for any policy, legislative, and budgetary proposals. Consideration of use of court rules to govern the appointment of counsel and the development of minimum competence and training standards for appointed counsel is also included in the mandate of this committee.

Half-day workshops on specific topics related to representation in abuse and neglect proceedings will be presented across the state and made available to attorneys via videotape/DVD. Topics will include those recommended in the CIP reassessment and from the surveys to attorneys and judges, such as improving permanency for older youth, educational rights of children, interstate placement and the ICPC, sibling placements, incarcerated parents, risk and safety analysis, effective case plans, substance abuse treatment, and mental health issues.

To further address issues of ICPC, an assessment was conducted of the current use of cross-jurisdictional resources for placement/adoptions including use of Priority Placements and identifying challenges to interstate placement including conducting analyses of state law and regulations. This assessment was conducted through the use of surveying judges and caseworkers, conducting interviews, and reviewing case files for administrative data and state ICPC protocols. Instituting recommended Rules of Court and forms to facilitate ICPC and the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources was addressed by obtaining a list of essential documents from the ICPC coordinator, adding protocols based on URESA for interstate communication between courts, setting special shortened hearing times for cases involving interstate placements, and developing and holding trainings on ICPC as appropriate. Other strategies to expedite these cases as identified through the use of surveys and interviews will be incorporated into ongoing activities within the CIP Strategic Plans.

**B5: Establish a Committee on Improving the Well Being of Children and Families, as a permanent CIP standing committee.**

This standing committee will focus on the overall well being of children in care, including eliminating barriers to permanency and ensuring that appropriate and adequate services are available for all children in care. The committee was assigned by the Chair of the CIP Select Committee, Justice Saitta, to assess the mental health services provided to children in the custody of the court, specifically, the use of psychotropic medication. An ad-hoc working group has begun the assessment by working to gather case data, contacting medical

professionals regarding the appropriate use of such medication, and, the implementation of protocols for the assessment and review of court orders for the administration of psychotropic medication. The working group includes attorneys, court representatives, mental health professionals, and representatives of state agencies that are responsible to provide health care to children.

When this assessment is completed and submitted to the CIP Committee, additional aspects of child well being, specifically as related to children in foster care and their families, will be assigned. According to the CIP reassessment, the availability of resources for parents to use in completing their case plans was often cited as a barrier to reunification and placement stability. Like many other states, Nevada is faced with the challenge of providing effective and appropriate mental health assessment, including diagnosis and treatment for children and parents working on reunification. Identifying and cataloging needs and resources statewide is an appropriate task for the Committee and a process that can lead to targeted strategies designed to fill service gaps, including collaborative planning and advocacy with other stakeholders in the child welfare arena.

**B6: Organize statewide initiatives to increase public awareness on the safety, permanency, and well being of children and strengthening families at risk.**

The CIP reassessment raised a number of specific issues that would benefit from statewide initiatives, including improving transitions for older youth, educational resources for children in foster care, and foster parenting. Also highlighted in the CIP reassessment was the need for statewide informational and educational campaigns on the public's responsibilities regarding children at risk and roles of social services agencies and the courts. Incorporation of statewide AFCARS and NCANDS court-specific data being generated from Nevada's SACWIS system "UNITY" will be an important feature of the statewide initiatives.

Meeting the needs of tribes and tribal children is also a priority. In collaboration with the Nevada State Indian Commission, the AOC Tribal Consortium, UNLV Boyd School of Law, UNR and UNLV schools of social work, and other entities as appropriate, collaborate on the development of training curricula related to the complex issues around tribal children and parents, including enforcement of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), the recognition of tribal court orders, and full faith and credit. Development and distribution of ICWA protocols

appropriate to the courts will be a priority. Assessment of resources for Native American children and families will also be undertaken in collaboration with state and county social services in designated counties. With the signing of the *Fostering Connections Act* in October 2008, by which the foster care services provided by the Tribes can be reimbursed directly by the federal government, and the emphasis on improved foster care for Tribal children, the role of the CIP committee as a resource to Nevada's tribes is even more important and offers opportunities for increased collaboration between state and tribal courts.

**B7: Improve permanency outcomes for children and families.**

The U.S. Children's Bureau (a subdivision of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) encourages state agencies to invite court and legal representatives (typically from CIP) to participate in federal Title IV-E foster care eligibility reviews. In 2008, the CIP coordinator participated in a day-long training on IV-E and the week-long review. As a result of this participation, the CIP coordinator was able to resolve issues and answer specific questions relating to file review. When the final report is received, the CIP coordinator will make arrangements to present those aspects of the report that directly relate to the courts to the CIP Select Committee for their analysis and strategic planning.

The August 2009 CFSR will involve court representatives. A survey sent to Nevada's judges during the first quarter of 2009 requested volunteers to participate and 9 affirmative responses were received. Training will be done in collaboration with DCFS.

Through increased court and legal representatives' involvement in Child and Family Service Reviews, statewide preparation in the CFSR and PIP process, and Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Reviews, as appropriate, will result in better permanency outcomes for children and families.

The remaining pages of this chapter delineate each of these seven strategies. For each strategy, the necessary activities that must be completed to satisfy the strategy are listed. For each activity, the following is provided: description, accountable party(s), benchmarks, and an anticipated timeframe for performing the activity. To assist in evaluating and measuring the success of court improvement efforts, quarterly reports will be provided on the progress of Court Improvement initiatives across all three Strategic Plans. With regard to training, types of trainings,

numbers of participants, and written summaries of evaluations will be collected, analyzed, and summarized as indicated in the Training Strategic Plan. For data collection and analysis, please see the Data Strategic Plan, which includes strategies for evaluation and progress measurement.

Strategy	Activity	Accountable Party	Benchmarks	Timeline
<p><b>B1: Focus the Court Improvement Program Committee more directly towards advancing the outcomes of safety, permanency and well being for children and families</b></p> <p><b>B1</b> continued on next page</p>	<p><b>B1.1</b> Hold Monthly meetings with the Chair and/or Vice Chair of CIP to ensure direction, development, and completion of activities in timely manner</p> <p>Revised: In 2009, meetings will be held bi-monthly</p>	<p>CIP Chair and Vice-Chair CIP Coordinator</p>	<p>Monthly meetings held in 2008 Task Lists Developed and Implemented</p>	<p>Jun. 2007 and Ongoing</p>
	<p><b>B1.2</b> Expand monthly and bi-monthly meetings to include AOC Director and Supervisor of Judicial Programs and Services (JPS)</p>	<p>CIP Chair CIP Coordinator AOC Director Supervisor JPS</p>	<p>Bi-monthly meetings held between CIP Coordinator and Supervisor of Judicial Programs and Services (JPS)</p> <p>Monthly meetings held between CIP Coordinator, AOC Director and Supervisor of Judicial Programs and Services (JPS)</p> <p>Bi-Monthly meetings held between CIP Chair, AOC Director and CIP Coordinator</p> <p>Bi-monthly meetings held between CIP Coordinator and Deputy Director for Judicial Programs and Services (JPS) and Quarterly meetings held between CIP Chair, AOC Director, Deputy Director for Judicial Programs and Services (JPS) and CIP Coordinator</p>	<p>Jun. 2008 and Ongoing</p>
	<p><b>B1.3</b> Continue review of internal CIP processes and implement needed changes, including holding annual planning meeting of CIP Select Committee in person, and continuing development of CIP Manual with procedures</p>	<p>CIP Chair CIP Committee Members AOC Director CIP Coordinator</p>	<p>Internal CIP processes reviewed and evaluated</p> <p>Hold annual meeting in person and quarterly video and teleconferences thereafter</p> <p>Continue development of CIP Manual with procedures and manual reviewed annually for updates</p>	<p>March 2010- Dec. 2010 and each year thereafter</p>

Strategy	Activity	Accountable Party	Benchmarks	Timeline
<p><b>B1: Focus the Court Improvement Program Committee more directly towards advancing the outcomes of safety, permanency and well being for children and families (continued)</b></p>	<p><b>B1.4</b> Appoint the chair and members of a Policy and Procedures committee and set schedule of meetings.                      Revised: CIP executive committee to assign these responsibilities                      Begin development of CIP Policies and Procedures                      Update and Publish CIP Manual</p>	<p>AOC                      CIP Coordinator                      CIP Committee Members</p>	<p>Letters of appointment signed by Chief Justice or Chair of CIP                       Policies and procedures developed                      CIP Manual First Draft to be completed by June 30,2009                      Revised: CIP Manual (first draft) to be completed by November 30, 2009</p>	<p>Dec. 2008 and each year thereafter</p>
	<p><b>B1.5</b> Develop &amp; sign a Declaration of Cooperation between branches of government stating support for taking appropriate steps to work together to improve safety, permanency &amp; well being of children and strengthen families                       Revised: CIP Committee will review alternative drafts at second quarter meeting                       Revised: Draft Declaration of Cooperation developed and distributed to CIP Committee at 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter meeting for discussion and possible action at 4<sup>th</sup> quarter meeting</p>	<p>AG                      CIP                      AOC</p>	<p>Review state law                      Identify any regulatory or statutory barriers                      Evaluate other states' practices with similar Declarations of Cooperation</p>	<p>Dec. 2008                       April,2009                       Dec. 2009</p>
	<p><b>B1.6</b> CIP Chair, Coordinator, and other appropriate CIP Members and/or court staff to meet with Courts</p>	<p>CIP Chair                      CIP Coordinator                      CIP Members                      AOC</p>	<p>Meet with judges, masters, and other stakeholders as appropriate across the state to discuss NRS 432B cases, identify local needs, and how and what CIP can assist</p>	<p>FY 2009 and ongoing</p>
	<p><b>B1.7</b> CIP Coordinator to travel within state to provide oversight on subgrants</p>	<p>CIP Coordinator</p>	<p>Meet with subgrantees, discuss projects, and confirm progress or identify any barriers</p>	<p>FY 2009 and ongoing</p>

Strategy	Activity	Accountable Party	Benchmarks	Timeline
<p><b>B2: Formally establish the Court Improvement Office within the Administrative Office of the Courts with adequate personnel and resources to effectively staff the expanded mandate of the Court Improvement Committee and accomplish outreach and public education goals</b></p> <p><b>B2</b> continued on next page</p>	<p><b>B2.1</b> Continue to work together with public and private entities and individuals on local, state and national levels to raise the level of knowledge and awareness of abuse and neglect and provide direct services to at-risk children and families, including community events on a local level such as the Legends Reno-Tahoe Open PGA Tournament and volunteer appreciation events</p>	<p>CIP AOC CASA Welfare Agencies Schools and Universities Bar Associations Law Enforcement Hospitals Foster Parent and other non-profit Organizations Service Organizations Churches Private businesses</p>	<p>Multi-disciplinary participation in local, statewide and national events and activities</p> <p>Project status reports from funded entities and In-Kind time reports from CIP members, community organizations and individuals</p> <p>Published newspaper articles and reports on meetings and activities held, goals accomplished, and services provided</p> <p>Volunteer recognition events held</p>	<p>Jun 2008 and Ongoing</p>
	<p><b>B2.2</b> Work with AOC webmaster and staff to revise and maintain CIP website, including annual graphics subscription</p>	<p>CIP Coordinator AOC webmaster AOC Public Information Officer</p>	<p>Ongoing regular additions, notices and updates, including web links will be possible when the AOC upgrades its website to accommodate additional functionality</p> <p>Calendar of Events including conferences and trainings, posted and updated</p> <p>Posting of CIP Library List of Publications and Resources available on-line (including on-line training) or in the CIP Office</p>	<p>Jun 2008 and ongoing</p>

Strategy	Activity	Accountable Party	Benchmarks	Timeline
<p><b>B2: Formally establish the Court Improvement Office within the Administrative Office of the Courts with adequate personnel and resources to effectively staff the expanded mandate of the Court Improvement Committee and accomplish outreach and public education goals (continued)</b></p> <p><b>B2</b> continued on next page</p>	<p><b>B2.3</b> Identify and develop volunteer resources throughout the state for special initiatives such as surveying service needs, disseminating information regarding model programs, and gathering best practices information for the CIP committee</p> <p>Note: This is a large project that will require leadership outside of CIP and significant collaboration, and has been delayed</p>	<p>CIP AOC Consultant in collaboration with UNLV School of Law and UNLV &amp; UNR schools of social work Student interns</p>	<p>Comprehensive list of volunteer resources developed and survey and dissemination methods identified</p>	<p>July 2008 July 2009  July 2010</p>
	<p><b>B2.4</b> Research, write, publish and distribute pamphlets on legal and procedural issues, e.g. Guardianship as a permanent plan; what children should expect from the courts, their lawyer and social worker; rights of youth leaving care; understanding the juvenile court; and my rights. Publish and distribute to courts, agencies, providers and attorneys, and the public</p> <p>Note: CIP coordinator is researching topics and models and has arranged for collaboration with the Sierra Association of Foster Families to obtain the input and participation of youth in the design of the pamphlets</p>	<p>Consultant in collaboration with UNLV law school and UNR &amp; UNLV schools of social work. Student interns</p>	<p>One pamphlet (5000 copies)</p>	<p>Dec 31, 2008 and each year thereafter</p> <p><b>Revised: Dec. 2009</b></p>
	<p><b>B2.5</b> Organize statewide participation in National Adoption month in November and Prevent Child Abuse month in April</p>	<p>CIP Committee CIP Coordinator AOC <b>DCFS</b> Funded entities</p>	<p>Multi-disciplinary statewide participation in National Adoption month and Prevent Child Abuse month</p>	<p>Each fiscal year  Nov. 2008</p>



Strategy	Activity	Accountable Party	Benchmarks	Timeline
<b>B2: Formally establish the Court Improvement Office within the Administrative Office of the Courts with adequate personnel and resources to effectively staff the expanded mandate of the Court Improvement Committee and accomplish outreach and public education goals (continued)</b>	<b>B2.6</b> Work to improve foster parent recruitment, retention and training	CIP Committee AOC Foster Parent Associations Funded entities	In-Kind time reports from CIP members Project status reports from funded entities; In-Kind time reports from community organizations and individuals; press releases; project status reports from funded entities	Semi-Annually  Revised: Reports due Quarterly
	<b>B2.7</b> CIP Coordinator and other CIP members attend national conferences pertaining to Strategic Planning and annual Court Improvement Program meeting	CIP Coordinator CIP Committee members or their designees	Participation in national conferences	Each fiscal year
	<b>B2.8</b> Obtain a CIP Banner for use in public awareness campaigns, at CIP meetings, and other CIP information dissemination opportunities	CIP Coordinator	CIP Banner depicting the mission or purpose of CIP displayed at CIP meetings, conferences, trainings, and other appropriate opportunities	Dec. 2009 and ongoing
	<b>B2.9</b> Display for current CIP strategies and activities for use in public awareness campaigns, at CIP meetings, and other CIP and child welfare information dissemination opportunities	CIP Coordinator CIP Committee AOC	Poster display made available to CIP committee members, AOC judicial education and other staff, to promote CIP and related strategies and activities at CIP meetings, conferences, trainings, and other appropriate opportunities. Display updated as appropriate.	Dec. 2009 and ongoing
	<b>B2.10</b> Appropriate funds on an annual basis for local pilot CASA programs relating to improving advocacy resources for children at risk. 1 grant/year	CIP CASA Director	Local CASA program assisted with start up funding	Each fiscal year as funding allows
	<b>B2.11</b> Appropriate funds on an annual basis for development of materials for use in public awareness campaigns, trainings, special events, and other CIP and child welfare information dissemination opportunities	CIP Coordinator	Materials developed (i.e., magnets, brochures, etc.) for dissemination	Each fiscal year as funding allows

Strategy	Activity	Accountable Party	Benchmarks	Timeline
<b>B3: Establish a Committee on Improving Safety for Children, as a permanent CIP standing committee</b>	<b>B3.1</b> Appoint the members of the standing committee and chair, and set schedule of meetings  Revised: Meetings will include statewide participants and video conferencing and teleconferencing will substitute for meetings due to fiscal constraints  Revised: Reappointed as Juvenile Dependency Rules subcommittee, chaired by Judge Puccinelli (4 <sup>th</sup> Judicial District)	Chief Justice or Chair of CIP  CIP	Letters of appointment signed by Chief Justice or Chair of CIP  Meetings scheduled  Revised due to fiscal constraints, participation will be monitored by CIP coordinator and the subcommittee will report quarterly to the CIP Select Committee	Dec 2007  Bimonthly meetings starting July 2008  Revised: January 2009
	<b>B3.2</b> Review state law and rules of court for conformity with Federal child welfare law and regulations  Note: This is the assignment of the Rules Committee	<b>Rules</b> Committee  Invitees  UNLV School of Law	Reports at bimonthly meetings  Legislative proposals for 2009-2010  Legislature	July 2008  Dec 2008  Revised: January 2009
	<b>B3.3</b> Report back to AOC with recommendations for legislation, statewide and local rules of court  Note: Reporting will be through the CIP Select Committee after the Rules Committee has completed its work and made recommendations	AOC  NRCs  UNLV School of Law  CIP  CIP contractor	Written report with legal analysis submitted to CIP for distribution to CIP committee	Oct. 2008  <b>Revised September 2010</b>
	<b>B3.4</b> Work with legislators to promote issues related to the safety of children and strengthening families	CIP  Designated Judges  CIP contractor	Ongoing at CIP meetings with Legislative members  Attend Leg. Committees as requested  Collaborate with interested community groups	Ongoing
<b>B3</b> continued on next page				

Strategy	Activity	Accountable Party	Benchmarks	Timeline
<b>B3: Establish a Committee on Improving Safety for Children, as a permanent CIP standing committee (continued)</b>	<b>B3.5</b> Study appropriateness of uniform statewide rules and forms regarding abuse and neglect proceedings and make recommendations  Note: This has been assigned to the Rules subcommittee (see above)	CIP Designated judges Rural attorneys	Open forums for lawyers, judges, and interested persons in Washoe and Clark Counties  2 regional public forums  Revised: Quarterly reports from Rules Subcommittee to CIP Select Committee	Aug 2008  Dec 2008 <b>Revised: Dec 2010</b>
	<b>B3.6</b> Review all Nevada statutes relevant to child welfare and consider recommendations towards consolidating/re-codifying into a single, discreet Code or Title.  Note: This has been assigned to the Rules subcommittee (see above)	CIP Committee AOC <b>DCFS Director</b>	Revised: Statewide informational meetings beginning 2009, with recommendations to be presented to Legislative committees in Fall, 2010	Jan 2009 thru Nov 2010
	<b>B3.7</b> Revised: CIP Select Committee will review at each meeting the UNITY system safety performance measures, i.e., timeliness of initiating child abuse and neglect investigations; recurrence of abuse or neglect by parents, adequacy of services to protect children at home and prevent removal, and risk of harm to children while in foster care	CIP DCFS	Compiled review standards, developed in collaboration with DCFS  Presentation by DCFS on safety performance measures at semi-annual meetings of committee	Ongoing starting in 2009

Strategy	Activity	Accountable Party	Benchmarks	Timeline
<b>B4: Establish a Committee on Improving Permanency for Children, as a permanent CIP standing committee</b>	<b>B4.1</b> Appoint the members of the standing committee and chair, and set schedule of meetings. Meetings will be held throughout the state.	Chief Justice or Chair of CIP AOC CIP Consultant Judicial Council Other stakeholders	Letters of appointment signed by Chief Justice or Chair of CIP Meetings scheduled Bi monthly meetings: Press release for each meeting Increased public attendance	June 2009  Bimonthly meetings thereafter
	<b>B4.2</b> Survey courts on appointment practices and policies	CIP NRC	Summary of survey results on appointment practices and policies	July 2008 thru Oct 2008 Revised: May 2009
	<b>B4.3</b> Survey attorneys on appointment practices and policies Note: Survey to be finalized and disseminated after results are compiled from the judicial survey	CIP NRC	Summary of survey results on appointment practices and policies	Sept. 2008 thru Oct. 2008  <b>Revised: June 2010</b>
	<b>B4.4</b> Review standards for legal representation adopted in other states and ABA guidelines and make recommendations to CIP committee on establishing standards of representation. Note: This will be completed in conjunction with the review of the judicial and attorney surveys	Committee CIP NRC	NRC Legal and Judicial Issues to lead forum on the use of standards for representation and other states experience, and review different models for improving representation though standards, guidelines, contracts, etc.	July 2008 thru Oct. 2008  <b>Revised: Dec.2010</b>
	<b>B4.5</b> Review surveys and make recommendations to CIP committee regarding possible legislation to facilitate improved representation	CIP committees AOC Legislative liaison	Document presenting recommendations to CIP committee regarding possible legislation to facilitate improved representation	Oct. 2008 thru Dec 2008 Revised: ongoing-see above
<b>B4</b> continued on next page				

Strategy	Activity	Accountable Party	Benchmarks	Timeline
<b>B4: Establish a Committee on Improving Permanency for Children, as a permanent CIP standing committee (continued)</b>	<b>B4.6</b> Develop and organize special training curriculum for pro bono attorneys  Note: Goal is to develop model curriculum that can be presented in discrete units and delivered in the “Nutshell Format”	CIP NRC	Based on the surveys, follow-up national standards, expressed interests, new federal/state laws and regulations/rules  Trial practice issues	Jan 2009 thru Jun 2009  Revised: June 2010
	<b>B4.7</b> Assist in the development of attorney practice standards that encourage active, competent representation for all parties.	CIP NRC	Work with NRC to present to CIP Committee alternative models of attorney practice standards	Jul 2009 thru Dec 2009  Revised: Dec. 2009- June, 2010
	<b>B4.8</b> Identify local barriers to permanency involving Washoe County, Clark County, and rural courts	County DSS DCFS CIP Contractor	Summary of barriers to permanency involving Washoe County, Clark County, and rural courts	Jan 2010 thru Jun 2010
	<b>B4.9</b> Make recommendations to CIP Committee regarding best practice methods used in other states to eliminate barriers to permanency, e.g., on benchmark hearings for older youth, pros and cons of using mediation, family conferencing, and other methods of alternative dispute resolution.	CIP AOC Consultant Judicial Ed NV State Bar Other legal stakeholders	Identify and contract with consultant to identify states using best practice methods of benchmark hearings for older youth, pros and cons of using mediation, family conferencing and other methods of alternative dispute resolution	Jun 2010
<b>B4</b> continued on next page				

Strategy	Activity	Accountable Party	Benchmarks	Timeline
<b>B4: Establish a Committee on Improving Permanency for Children, as a permanent CIP standing committee (continued)</b>	<b>B4.10</b> Revised: Review at each CIP Select Committee meeting, UNITY data for preceding six months on Performance Measures, i.e., foster care reentry, foster placement stability, permanency goals for children, finalization of adoptions, and the use of APPLA as a permanency goal	CIP DCFS	Dev. Review standards with DCFS- semiannual meetings with representatives from DCFS to review UNITY data on well being indicators	Ongoing starting in 2010
	<b>B4.11</b> Institute recommended Rules of Court and forms to facilitate ICPC and effective use of cross jurisdictional resources  Revised: Based on the 2008 Nevada State ICPC Assessment and best practices identified from sister states, CIP Select Committee will appoint a working group to recommend any needed changes to the Rules of Court so as to facilitate cross jurisdictional placements.	State ICPC coordinator CIP DCFS Consultant coordinator	Report on recommended modifications to Rules of Court regarding ICPC  Develop web-based training for judges and DCFS on effective use of ICPC	Sept. 2009  Dec. 2010
	<b>B4.12</b> Train attorneys and CASA volunteers on cross-jurisdictional resources, including ICPC.	Attorney General DCFS ICPC Coordinator Judges Lawyers	Evaluate web based training  Incorporate into regularly provided trainings for social workers, lawyers, judges, providers, CASA volunteers and foster parents	July 2010  Ongoing thereafter
	<b>B4.13</b> Draft and print an informational pamphlet that can be provided to parents to advise them regarding out-of-state placement options for permanency.	ICPC Coordinator Caseworkers CIP	Pamphlet drafted  Pamphlet printed and published on website  Distribute pamphlet to agency offices and courts	June 2011  Sept. 2011  Dec. 2011

Strategy	Activity	Accountable Party	Benchmarks	Timeline
<b>B5: Establish a Committee on Improving the Well Being of Children and Families, as a permanent CIP standing committee</b>	<b>B5.1</b> Establish standing committee and appoint chair, establish meeting schedule Meetings will be held throughout the state  Note: CIP ad hoc working group was appointed January 2009 to study and make recommendations regarding mental health services for children in foster care, specifically, the appropriate use of psychotropic medication	Chief Justice or CIP Chair AOC CIP Consultant Judicial Council	Letters of appointment signed by Chief Justice or Chair of CIP Meetings scheduled and held  Meetings held and quarterly reports to CIP Select Committee	Dec 2009  Bimonthly meetings starting Jan 2010
	<b>B5.2</b> Survey courts to determine range of services used in case plans for children/families and identify service gaps	CIP	Statewide survey, compile results for mapping needs and resources	Feb 2010
	<b>B5.3</b> Map service array for each judicial district and match with eligibility criteria and identified needs	CIP+ contractor Local court team, i.e., court personnel, attorneys, providers, county/state social services, and other health and human services agencies	Mapping Sessions in each Court  Compile results and translate onto a map  Round # 2 Mapping sessions beginning with compilation and maps from first session	Jun 2010  Jan 2011  Jul 2011
	<b>B5.4</b> CIP Select Committee will review semi-annually, UNITY data for preceding six months for performance measures, e.g., needs and services of child, parents, & foster parents; child and family involvement in case planning, worker visits to child & parents, educational needs of child, physical and mental health	CIP DCFS	Develop review standards for Nevada with DCFS and semiannual meetings with representatives from DCFS to review well being indicators	Ongoing starting in 2011

Strategy	Activity	Accountable Party	Benchmarks	Timeline
<p><b>B6: Organize and/or participate in statewide initiatives to increase public awareness on issues related to the safety, permanency and well being of children and strengthening families at risk</b></p> <p><b>B6</b> continued on next page</p>	<p><b>B6.1</b> Revised: Statewide initiative to improve educational achievements of children at risk, beginning with statewide summit on related issues, including truancy court diversion programs, special education rights and advocacy, transitional education plans, most effective use of FCIA funds, and programming to support post secondary education</p>	<p>CIP Courts Schools UNR UNLV ILP coordinator Voc. schools</p>	<p>Review of state FCIA plan by CIP Select Committee</p> <p>Expand Public Service Announcements (PSA's) on Independent Living (IL) and Educational Training Vouchers (ETV's)</p> <p>Ad hoc working group to present recommendations to the Select Committee on priorities for improving educational outcomes through the courts</p>	<p>Jun 2009 thru Dec. 2009 and ongoing</p> <p><b>Rev: Dec 2009</b></p>
	<p><b>B6.2</b> Develop and host a statewide summit including multidisciplinary stakeholders, e.g., CIP, court staff, legal representatives, welfare agencies, service providers, schools, foster parents, children, families and legislative liaison to raise the level of awareness around issues of child wellbeing, foster youth in transition, and strengthening families</p>	<p>AOC CIP Consultant Multi-disciplinary stakeholders as noted</p>	<p>Determine scope of Summit by working group</p> <p>Contract consultant</p> <p>Outreach to stakeholders</p> <p>Agenda content prepared</p> <p>Summit Held</p>	<p>Dec. 2009</p> <p><b>Revised: May 2010</b></p>
	<p><b>B6.3</b> Statewide Summit convened by Supreme Court/Governor's Office on improving outcomes for older youth</p>	<p>CIP Youth Advisory Committee CASA UNLV / UNR NRC's DCFS Governor's Office</p>	<p>Working group formed, needs assessment conducted by committee, review of national research on youth transitioning out of care, compare with Nevada data, survey youth 16-18 in care regarding needs and interests, draft agenda for CIP.</p> <p>Revised: partnerships with private sector on support for youth transitioning out of foster care</p> <p>Obtain sponsorships from private sector.</p>	<p>Dec 2008</p> <p>Dec 2009</p> <p><b>Revised: July 2011</b></p>



Strategy	Activity	Accountable Party	Benchmarks	Timeline
<b>B6: Organize and/or participate in statewide initiatives to increase public awareness on issues related to the safety, permanency and well being of children and strengthening families at risk (continued)</b>	<b>B6.4 Identify and develop future projects with interested Nevada tribes beginning with Report on the Findings from the August 2009 State/County Tribal Regional Roundtable Meetings by DCFS and the Nevada Indian Commission</b>	<b>AOC/CIP Consultant Tribal Reps</b>	<b>Report on Findings reviewed by committee, working group formed, review of national research on current tribal projects and compare with Nevada data, survey youth in care regarding needs and interests, draft recommendation to CIP Committee</b>	<b>March 2010 – Sept. 2011</b>

Strategy	Activity	Accountable Party	Benchmarks	Timeline
<b>B7: Improve permanency outcomes for children and families through increased court and legal representatives' involvement in Child and Family Service Reviews, statewide preparation in the CFSR and PIP process, and Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Reviews, as appropriate</b>	<b>B7.1</b> Provide information regarding CFSR/PIP and IV-E processes including on-site review reports to all court personnel, interested judges, and legal representatives	CIP, DCFS	Information provided, as appropriate CFSR power point disseminated to judges and masters and invite DCFS to submit additional information regarding August CFSR	July 2008 and each year thereafter Revised: June 2009
	<b>B7.2</b> Review materials provided and convene appointed workgroups to identify issues in on-site review reports and develop plan and activities to address those issues	CIP committees Appointed Workgroup	Identify eligibility issues deriving from failure to make necessary findings and unacceptable findings. This is a continuing activity.	Dec 2008 and ongoing  Revised: Dec. 2009
	<b>B7.3</b> Facilitate legal and judicial participation in the CFSR/PIP and IV-E reviews as appropriate.	AOC CIP DCFS	Attend meetings	When scheduled in 2008 and ongoing
	<b>B7.4</b> Review IV-E report to identify areas where court has an appropriate role	AOC CIP Judges	Identify eligibility issues deriving from failure to make necessary findings and unacceptable findings. This is a continuing activity.	July 2008 and ongoing
	<b>B7.5</b> Develop and organize special IV-E training curriculum for judges, attorneys, and other interested stakeholders	AOC CIP Judges Attorneys Court and Agency staff, CASA volunteers Foster Parents	Determine scope of Training Contract consultant Outreach to stakeholders Agenda content prepared Training Held	Sept. 2008    Dec. 2009  Revised: May 2010

## *Chapter 3 – Collaboration Efforts*

### **Collaboration Efforts to Date**

The Nevada CIP has a long history of working with DCFS, the Child and Family Services Divisions of Clark and Washoe Counties, and representatives from other stakeholder groups [e.g., attorney groups representing children and parents and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)]. Since the inception of CIP, the heads (or designated representatives) of these agencies and organizations have been members of the CIP Committee. Either the Chief Justice or a Justice of the Supreme Court has chaired the Committee.

The three CIP Strategic Plans have been developed to closely align and compliment the PIP goals for Nevada relating to the courts. To foster more complete communication and exchange of ideas, CIP and DCFS, Clark County Department of Family Services, and Washoe County Department of Social Services hold monthly status and planning meetings to review and coordinate efforts articulated in the PIP and the CIP Strategic Plan(s). In the past 5 years, CIP has either completed or started 15 strategies and numerous activities that involve collaboration with Courts in all 9 judicial districts, DCFS, Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS), Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS), Clark County's Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada (LACSN), Washoe County's Sierra Association of Foster Families, Washoe Legal Services, Clark County's Foster and Adoptive Parent Association, Volunteer Attorneys for Rural Nevadans (VARN), statewide and local CASA Programs across the state, National Resource Centers, and other state Court Improvement Programs and Child Welfare Agencies. Court representatives have participated in the previous two Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Reviews conducted in Nevada. This participation has included judges, masters, and AOC personnel. The Court Improvement Program Coordinator served as a reviewer for the entire IV-E review process conducted the first week of June 2008, and will serve as a reviewer for the CFSR in August 2009.

Over the past twelve months, bi-monthly and quarterly meetings have been held between Associate Justice and CIP Chair Nancy M. Saitta, AOC Director Ron Titus, AOC Deputy Director Robin Sweet, and the Court Improvement Program Coordinator. These meetings were held to ensure direction and the completion of activities in a timely manner. A review of

internal processes was conducted, and as a result, major changes to Nevada CIP's infrastructure have taken place. A formalized RFP Process has been developed and used in multiple instances. Additionally, policies and procedures are being developed to aid in the completion of a CIP Manual.

Monthly collaborative meetings between staff from the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services, Clark County Department of Social Services, Washoe County Department of Social Services, the Court Improvement Program Coordinator, and Deputy Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts continue to occur. The statewide CASA Executive Director and the Executive Director for Sierra Association of Foster Families have both been invited and participated in these meetings. (Please see attached Table of Collaborative Partners for listing of specific names and associated businesses).

### **Planned Collaboration Efforts**

In early 2006, in an effort to expand its influence throughout the state, it was decided that the CIP committee should be brought under the framework of the Judicial Council of the State of Nevada.

In 2008, the CIP committee was expanded to include a tribal judge from the Duckwater Shoshone tribe in Ely, and two private attorneys; one a private practice attorney in Northern Nevada who has had first-hand experience in taking an extremely complex dependency case pro bono, and a private attorney in practice in Southern Nevada, who was recently honored at the Pro Bono Awards Ceremony in Clark County as an attorney having donated 100 or more hours of her time. For the first time in the history of Nevada CIP, a member of the Nevada Assembly was appointed, Debbie Smith.

In early 2009, the CIP Select Committee was further reconstituted. The Director of Washoe County Department of Social Services retired from his position, and although he resigned from the committee, he was asked by CIP Chair Justice Saitta, and did agree, to work with CIP in an ongoing advisory capacity. Two CASA program directors, one from Washoe County and one from Clark County, stepped down from the committee and recommended that the statewide CASA Executive Director be appointed as he could represent the all CASA programs throughout the state. Judge Michael Gibbons also ended his service to the CIP

committee on January 31, 2009, after having served since its inception in 1995. He said he believed that there will continue to be a rural judge representative with Judge Puccinelli continuing on, so the committee would receive effective input. Judge also said he would continue to be involved in this field as a member of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and as a Board member with the Nevada State CASA Association. The final change in the membership came with Tammy Tovey-Stephenson, Deputy Attorney General stepping down, but also agreeing upon appointment by Justice Saitta, to Co-Chair an Education Subcommittee with Judge Deborah Schumacher from the Second Judicial District Family Court. The final addition to the Select Committee is Cindy Pyzel, Deputy Chief Attorney General. Cindy's extensive history with the Nevada Attorney General's Office and working with the Division of Child and Family Services will make her a valuable member of the committee. (Please see Appendix A for an up to date CIP Select Committee Roster).

During the next year, the CIP Coordinator will visit most of the nine judicial districts, and if possible, the CIP Chair, State Court Administrator, the statewide CASA Director, and possibly a retired juvenile court judge will join her. The purpose of these meetings is to strengthen collaborative efforts at the local level. As a result of the CIP coordinator's participation in the IV-E review, more representatives from the courts and private attorneys have indicated a willingness to participate in the IV-E review and CFSR processes. On a national level, collaboration has taken place between numerous states involved in the National Data Exchange Project. Nevada started with the collaboration between CIP and the National Center of State Courts (NCSC). This project has grown now to include multiple states and multiple stakeholders from multi-disciplinary entities.

Staff from the AOC has met with the Judicial Tribal Consortium, an informal group of local, state, and tribal officials throughout Nevada, several times a year focusing on court-related matters, including the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and child welfare issues. Most recently, a 1-day Regional Roundtable was sponsored by the Nevada Indian Commission and Division of Child and Family Services working with Casey Family Programs on July 27, 2009 in Reno, NV. The CIP Coordinator, along with CIP Consultant Joanne Brown, attended the one-day roundtable, and at the conclusion of the meeting, attendees were appreciative of the participation and offer to assist in future endeavors. This resulted in an inquiry about from

the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada, Inc., to attend, make presentation, and/or participate in the 44th annual ITCN Convention in November 2009.

Discussions have also been held with CIP Member Judge Teresa Sprouse to discuss working together on needed projects with our tribes such as foster care, including recruitment, retention, training, and funding; domestic violence training with the emerging focus on our children that are in and around domestic violence and the issues of perpetrators who do not see themselves as a batterers; developing CASA programs; lack of nearby resources; identifying needs and sponsoring training around ICWA (Indian Child Welfare Act); and because tribes are different, two areas of need are around legislation and education.

In August 2009, through work and cooperation by Sierra Association of Foster Families (SAFF), Nevada CASA Association, Legends at Reno-Tahoe PGA Tournament, AOC staff, and the CIP Coordinator, two girls who have aged out of foster care, participated along with the Assistant from SAFF, the CASA Executive Director, , PGA Tournament Director, PGA Volunteer Coordinators (who waived the \$65/each volunteer fee), AOC staff Analyst and husband, CIP Coordinator and husband, and a third hole captain, as community volunteers at the tournament. As one of three 18<sup>th</sup> hole Captains at the PGA tournament, ongoing partnership and outreach to community volunteers by the CIP Coordinator will continue each year, which includes the commitment by the girls who aged out of foster care, to return next year. Both girls cited the fun and pride experienced in being a community volunteer, and having the opportunity to meet with and have a photo taken with the tournament champion. Since 1999 northern Nevada charities have benefited more than \$1.8 million dollars from this PGA tournament.

Also in August of 2009, meeting and collaborating with the entire “team” that attended the Annual CIP Meeting of Agencies and Courts affirmed our commitment to one another to continue working together. Attendees included an AOC Deputy Director, CIP member and Attorney at Law, CIP Coordinator, Assistant Director of Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS), Rural Region Social Services Manager for the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), Child Protection Services Manager for DCFS, Director of Washoe County’s Department of Social Services (WCDSS) - Children’s Services, Adoptions Specialist from DCFS, Supervisor from WCDSS, and Manager from CCDFS.

On a national level, sharing of information occurs continually through the use of the CIP list serve. Nevada's use of the list serve has proven helpful in gathering information on the Early Representation pilot project, converse with CIP coordinators from different states on how they are progressing on projects, shared ideas and and developed materials, and has provided information on additional funding opportunities.

(Please see attached Table of Collaborative Partners<sup>2</sup> for listing of specific names and associated businesses).

These joint ventures show what success can be achieved when forces are joined together, not only on a local basis, but across the nation, as we all work to tackle issues common to every state.

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<sup>2</sup> Table of Collaborative Partners includes individuals who have at some time worked on a CIP-related project, including our contract and subgrant partners, and/or individuals or entities who share our common goal(s).

**Judicial Council of the State of Nevada**  
**COURT IMPROVEMENT FOR THE PROTECTION AND PERMANENCY**  
**OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN (CIP) SELECT COMMITTEE**

(Revised August 27, 2009)

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**Justice Nancy M. Saitta, Chair**  
Supreme Court of Nevada

**Diane J. Comeaux**

Administrator  
Division of Child and Family Services

**Judge Cynthia Dianne Steel**

District Court Judge  
8th Judicial District Court/ Family Division

**William "Bill" E. Fowler**

Executive Director  
Nevada CASA Association, Inc.

**Ron Titus**

Director and State Court Administrator  
Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)

**Tom Morton**

Director  
Clark County Dept of Family Services

**Erika Pike Turner, Esq.**

Attorney at Law  
Gordon Silver

**Kathleen M. O'Leary**

Chief Deputy Public Defender  
Washoe County Public Defender's Office

**Janice Wolf, Esq.**

Attorney at Law  
Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada

**Judge Andrew Puccinelli**

District Court Judge  
4th Judicial District Court

**Members Emeritus**

**Judge Michael Gibbons**

District Court Judge  
9th Judicial District Court

**Cynthia "Cindy" Pyzel**

Chief Deputy Attorney General  
Office of the Nevada Attorney General

**Mary Herzik**

Director  
Washoe County CASA

**Kevin Schiller**

Director  
Washoe County Dept of Social Services

**Tammy Tovey Stephenson**

Senior Deputy Attorney General  
Office of the Nevada Attorney General

**Judge Deborah E. Schumacher**

District Court Judge  
2nd Judicial District Court

**Pat Thacker**

Director  
Clark County CASA

**Assemblywoman Debbie Smith**

Assembly District 30, Nevada

**Chief Judge Teresa Sprouse**

Tribal Judge  
Duckwater Shoshone Tribal Court

**Committee Staff**

**Sheryl A. Overstreet**

Coordinator  
Court Improvement Program (CIP)  
Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)

**Robbie Taft**

Assistant  
Court Improvement Program (CIP)  
Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)



Table of Collaborative Partners for Basic Grant

Agency

Individual Names

Administrative Office of the Courts	Fred Aker Bradley Ammerman Deanna Bjork Kathryn Burns Myrna Byrd Vickie Elefante Ralph Ewing Greg Fisicaro Janice Frayo Bill Gang Stephanie Heying Patricia Hudgins Sheila MacDonald Jan McGinty Joan Neuffer Debra Norvell Gloria Quinn Vickie Roberts Cynthia Sampson Stephanie Sullivan Robin Sweet Anna Verbanac Nenita Wasserman Autumn Zemke
Clark County Department of Family Services	Donna Sawyer
Community Volunteers	Darrin Heying Tomika Martin Martin Overstreet Tammy Winge
Division of Child and Family Services	Jan Fragale Amber Howell Sue Lamon Christine Lovass-Nagy Kathleen Rubenstein Emily Salaices Fernando Serrano Andrew Zeizer, Consultant
Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada	Terry Bratton Gwen Dixon Steve Hiltz Laurie Richardson
National Resource Center on Legal & Judicial Issues	Joanne Brown

Table of Collaborative Partners includes individuals who have at some time worked on a CIP-related project, including our contract and subgrant partners, and/or individuals or entities who share our common goal(s).

Reno Tahoe Open	Bill Gerguson Michael Stearns Michael Velardi
Sierra Association of Foster Families	Joseph Galata
Washoe County Department of Social Services	Diane Madole Nancy Peterson

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