

Supreme Court of Nevada  
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

ROBIN SWEET  
Director and  
State Court Administrator



JOHN MCCORMICK  
Assistant Court Administrator  
Judicial Programs and Services

RICHARD A. STEFANI  
Deputy Director  
Information Technology

**JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF THE STATE OF NEVADA**

*"To unite and promote Nevada's judiciary as an equal, independent and effective branch of government."*

**Committee to Study Evidence-Based Pretrial Release**

*Summary Prepared by Jamie Gradick*

February 26, 2018

2:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.

Videoconference (Carson City, Las Vegas)

**Members Present**

Justice James Hardesty, Chair  
Judge Stephen Bishop  
Judge Joe Bonaventure  
Jeremy Bosler  
Heather Condon  
Kowan Connolly  
Judge Gene Drakulich (*Judge Tammy Riggs, Proxy*)  
Judge Elizabeth Gonzalez  
Chris Hicks  
Judge Kevin Higgins  
Judge Cedric Kerns (*Dana Hlavac, Proxy*)  
Philip Kohn  
Judge Victor Miller  
Judge Michael Montero  
Judge Scott Pearson  
Judge Thomas Perkins  
Judge Elliott Sattler  
Judge Mason Simons (*Randall Soderquist, Proxy*)  
Judge Diana Sullivan  
Judge John Tatro  
Judge Alan Tiras  
Professor Anne Traum  
Judge Natalie Tyrrell  
Anna Vasquez  
Jeff Wells  
Steven Wolfson  
Bita Yeager

**Guests**

Jim Austin  
Mark Emoe  
Amanda Evans  
Lori Eville  
Neil Hubbert  
Kim Kampling  
Alison Lopez  
Mindy McKay  
Steve Rickman  
Judge Joseph Sciscento

**AOC Staff**

Jamie Gradick  
Hans Jessup  
Kandice Townsend

- I. Call to Order - Justice Hardesty called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.
  - Ms. Gradick called roll; a quorum was present.
  - Attendees approved the summary of the 7-19-17 meeting.
  - Opening Remarks
    - Justice Hardesty welcomed attendees and commented on the significant amount of work the pilots sites have completed since the last meeting.
  - Public Comment
    - There was no public comment.
  
- II. Pilot Site Program – Status Updates
  - Ms. Anna Vasquez provided a status update on the pilot program in Clark County.
    - Added 10 positions to the department; have filled eight at this point.
    - As of January 1, all criminal departments of the Las Vegas Justice Court (11) are using the NPRA tool; there has been an increase in the number of people being released within 24 hours.
  - Judge Joe Bonaventure provided an overview of the “Initial Appearance Court” program.
    - This is an additional calendar for probable cause reviews; cases are reviewed and bail determinations are made between 12-24 hours after arrest. Sessions are held twice daily, seven days a week.
    - The “Initial Appearance Court” program began in February; this is a paper review, the judge receives the NPRA tool, arrest report, temporary custody record, and financial affidavit.
    - Currently, this is an “off the record” proceeding and attorneys are not present.
    - Attendees discussed possible expansion for the program; there is also a “bench warrant return” project in the works but this is not currently part of the probable cause sessions.
  - Ms. Kowan Connolly provided a status update on the pilot program in Las Vegas Municipal Court.
    - There have been increases in overrides and in the number of defendants released.
    - The department is considering possible procedural changes to address the high FTA rate.
  - Ms. Heather Condon provided a status update on the pilot program in Washoe County. (*See meeting materials for additional information*)
    - Change and constant monitoring of data are key; Ms. Condon commented on the need for collaboration by all stakeholders if the program is going to succeed.
    - The pretrial services department remains short-staffed as both caseloads and the amount of required supervision have increased.
    - The FTA rate has fluctuated but remains reasonable; the re-arrest and revocation rates are stable.
    - Mr. Chris Hicks asked for clarification regarding supervision; Ms. Condon confirmed that supervision of defendants in justice court continues through district court.
    - Ms. Condon informed attendees that she has been working with court administrators, IT representatives, and the county regarding the possibility of utilizing a data warehouse to handle the statistical needs of the program.
  - Attendees discussed concerns regarding data collection.

- Ms. Connolly informed attendees that her team gathers data manually. There is a new E-Courts system that may be able to compile reports but it has yet to be implemented.
- Ms. Vasquez informed attendees that her statistics are electronically managed by three systems and the vendor compiles the reports as needed.

### III. NPR Assessment Results/End-of-Year Analysis (*See meeting materials for additional information*)

- Dr. James Austin provided an overview of the data collected from the pilot sites since the last Committee meeting and commented on the “great strides” that have taken place regarding the pilot sites’ ability to gather accurate data.
  - Each site is submitting aggregate level counts by month.
  - Type of arrest is not being tracked but sites are reporting consistent FTA and re-arrest data.
  - More importantly, the sites are now reporting individual data (scores, overrides, etc.) for each defendant that is scored; this will provide information that was not previously available.
- Dr. Austin provided a brief overview of the recent trends and/or challenges demonstrated by the data.
  - White Pine and Las Vegas Municipal Court – declines in jail population
  - Washoe County and Clark County – no declines in jail population but this is offset by increased coverage/participation in Clark County and increased bookings in Washoe County.
  - A significant number of low/moderate risk defendants are not being released by the courts – this is a challenge and could be occurring for various reasons.
  - Mr. Phil Kohn asked for clarification regarding whether there is data to indicate in which types of cases the NPR recommendation is not being followed. Dr. Austin commented that he can compile this information and will provide it to the Committee membership when it is available.
  - Dr. Austin informed attendees that three of the four pilot sites are automated; there are challenges in White Pine but he and Judge Bishop have spoken to a vendor about possible solutions.
  - Dr. Austin informed attendees that re-arrest rates are lower now than they were before the pilot site program began; FTA rates are lower for White Pine County and Clark County but higher for Las Vegas Municipal and Washoe County.
  - Override factors – many courts are choosing “other” category. Dr. Austin explained that this category is only an initial placeholder and will need to be removed from the tool and replaced with the appropriate override categories.
- Dr. Austin discussed recommended “next steps” for the program.
  - The pilot sites have suggested adjusting the tool to include any bench warrant that is active for failure to comply; Dr. Austin commented that this is a common reason for overriding in the “other” category.
  - Dr. Austin suggested developing an IT application for the rural counties and conducting a revalidation study of the tool based on the 217 cases that are automated and can be quickly analyzed.
    - Based on initial conversations with the pilot sites, the proposed revalidation caseload would be manageable.

- Dr. Austin suggested that those who are or have been critical of the NPRA tool be included in the revalidation process.
  - Pending revalidation and any necessary adjustments, Dr. Austin would like to see the tool/program go statewide sometime during the summer of this year.
- Attendees discussed defendants leaving the jail and which groups of this population did not have risk assessments completed. This is something that the revalidation can address.
  - Discussion was held regarding the make-up of the jail population and whether the “right” people are being held. This is not formally tracked but the pilot sites have reported that the jail populations have grown “tougher”.
  - Attendees discussed the possibility of granting pretrial services the power to release certain case types/situations automatically.
    - Some of the pilot sites already have a policy/practice like this in place.
    - Justice Hardesty commented that there needs to be a degree of uniformity to this and suggested the individual jurisdictions “trade notes” on how this is handled.
- Discussion was held regarding the application of this program in the “rural” Clark County courts; this approach can be modified based on the needs of the courts.
- Attendees discussed the development of instruments for DUI and domestic violence. Dr. Austin commented that this is something that could be looked at during the revalidation; there are research and factors to support a tool in the DV area so he could likely develop something for use in the courts.
- Mr. Chris Hicks asked for clarification regarding why a 10-year cap on prior history and a 2-year cap on prior failures to appear were added to version 2 of the tool.
  - Dr. Austin explained that the data did not show significant activity beyond the 10/2 year cap. Additionally, research shows that the more recent the activity, the more relevant it becomes as an indicator.
  - Attendees discussed whether a 2-year window is too short; Dr. Austin informed attendees that this is a factor that can be reviewed during the revalidation study.
  - Mr. Hicks commented that use of the “prior history more severe” override could drop if the 10-year cap was extended or removed from the tool.
  - Mr. Hicks agreed to work with Dr. Austin in reviewing this issue during the revalidation process.
- Attendees discussed re-arrest rates prior to implementation of the NPRA versus currently and the inclusion of the money bail defendants. Data is tracked differently as part of the of the pilot-site program.
  - Dr. Austin commented that a discrepancy of 3% versus 12% is not statically relevant but should be monitored.
- Attendees discussed revocation based on a crime versus re-arrest and the impact of each on the defendant’s score; should revocations be counted as re-arrest on the tool?
  - The reasons for the re-arrest need to be reported on the tool. Attendees expressed concern regarding the capabilities of some jurisdictions to accurately report this and collecting the data on this during the revalidation.
- Attendees discussed jurisdictional capabilities to report drug-based violations.
- Mr. Hicks requested that the revalidation process review the possibility of including prior arrests on the tool instead of prior convictions; in order to put the “proper information” into the tool, we should be using the arrest data.
  - Dr. Austin commented that convictions prove to be a better predictor than arrests.

IV. Status of Criminal History Repository (*See meeting materials for additional information*)

- Ms. Mindy McKay and Ms. Alison Lopez provided an update on the status of Nevada's criminal history repository.
  - Disposition backlog – over 951,000 initially not reported statewide.
  - The department became a repository in 1986 and does not have records prior to that point.
  - Disposition Subcommittee – various representatives from law enforcement, courts, legal community convened to analyze why the dispositions were never reported and to make recommendations for improvement.
    - Continuously working towards electronic methods/solutions. New “rap sheet system” rolling out this week, e-dispo, etc.
    - Grant funds have allowed training and site visits throughout the states on annual basis.
    - Report monitoring within the Criminal Records Unit to track which dispositions were or were not received and to follow-up with courts/prosecutors not submitting.
    - Established baseline requirement for submissions.
    - Standardized forms and guidelines for submission of information.
    - Utilize alternate funding to improve reporting - addresses methods for aiding courts in reporting.
    - Daily tracking and reporting measures are now in place.
  - Currently all courts are reporting in a consistent a timely manner and the backfill is almost completed.
    - Approximately 8,000 remain for various reasons (need fingerprint card, etc.)
    - Now 59% complete with rap sheets; two million arrests in system currently, still missing 870,000 dispositions for various reasons (case still active, records destroyed, etc.)
  - Justice Hardesty asked for clarification regarding a group of cases discovered in a closet and the status of those cases in the system.
    - These are not included in the original backlog.
    - This discovery led to the discovery of other “possibly” misplaced dispositions; Ms. McKay's team is currently researching these to determine if they are already in the system. There were 218,757 found at NSLA and 25,000 at SOR; these are not necessarily in addition to the 870,000 missing arrests since, at this time, it hasn't been determined whether these misplaced records have been entered or not.
    - Part of the analysis will be determine whether there is arrest data to match with conviction data of these dispositions. Discussion was held regarding unaccounted for arrests and dispositions; arrest data is just as inaccurate as conviction data.
  - Justice Hardesty asked for clarification regarding the possibility of determining which, of the 870,000 missing dispositions, are misdemeanors and which are felonies?
    - Ms. McKay explained that, based on the arrest record, they can discern the type of charges.
    - These dispositions are part of the 2.1 million arrests so there is a way to determine what percentage of these pending dispositions are misdemeanors or felonies.

- Discussion was held regarding the length of time required to make this determination; Ms. Lopez informed attendees that she would do her best to find whatever information the Committee requested regarding this.
- Justice Hardesty commented on the “history” of the problem; there has been a “disconnect” between court and prosecutor reporting and previous practices; each party was assuming the other was reporting.
- Discussion was held regarding the ability of courts to submit record electronically.
  - Ms. Lopez explained that it works via a direct printing; the courts submit through their CMS and the dispositions print on the other end.
  - Ms. Lopez explained that all current dispositions are entered; the 870,000 missing records are ones that are being researched because they are missing information.
- Justice Hardesty asked for clarification regarding how many of the missing 870,000 are dated prior to 2013.
  - Discussion was held regarding whether how many of the missing dispositions are dated prior to 2008 since the NPRA tool caps priors at 10 years. Ms. Lopez informed attendees that she can find this information. Justice Hardesty commented that the Committee would refine its requests for information and deliver those to Ms. McKay and Ms. Lopez.
- Attendees discussed the reporting capabilities of the new system. Ms. McKay is hopeful that the new system will allow for tracking the timeliness of reporting from individual courts.
- Ms. McKay informed attendees that her team is working on a “correlation project” with the purpose of ensuring their records match the data the FBI has on record.
- Ms. McKay and Ms. Lopez provided an overview on the committees and work group efforts of the department.
  - The Subcommittee on Criminal Justice Information Sharing came out of the 2017 Legislative Session; Ms. Julie Butler serves as chair of this subcommittee, it will likely begin meeting in the near future.
  - Ms. McKay provided a brief overview of the subcommittee’s tasks and design.
  - Judge Stephen Bishop commented that, since the repository only tracks the fingerprint-based records, the misdemeanor counts could be off.
- Dr. Austin asked whether there are any patterns present in the missing records; discussion was held regarding other means of detecting a defendant’s prior arrest and conviction data; the data might be missing from the repository but the courts had access so it was not missing from the NPRA validation study, at least in Clark County.
  - This is something that will need to be cross-checked during the revalidation process.
- Ms. Vasquez expressed concern regarding the records electronically sent from her court; they are submitted daily but she cannot always see them in the system.
- Mr. Hicks asked for clarification regarding the definition of “current”; Ms. Lopez explained that the department defines “current” as anything within the last 2 years.
- Ms. Lopez explained that there will always be more dispositions than arrests because each arrest is assigned a process control number but there could be multiple charges under that arrest’s PCN.
  - Often the courts are deleting charges from their systems once the DA decides not to pursue them so the information never makes it to the repository through the courts.

- The Subcommittee on Criminal Justice Information Sharing will likely address this issue.
- Attendees discussed the use of PSI report to access information that is not in the repository.
- Attendees discussed whether, knowing that these issues exist, if we are going to engage in a revalidation of the tool, can we ensure that we have the accurate data.
  - Dr. Austin commented that, while the repository may not have the record, the courts may be able to access it via other means/systems.
  - Ms. Connolly informed attendees that they are working on an interface that may allow for information sharing with SCOPE.
- Justice Hardesty commented that the Committee will refine and submit its information requests and he thanked Ms. McKay and Ms. Lopez for attending.

#### V. Modifications to NPRA Discussion

- Justice Hardesty informed attendees that he was recently asked why certain defendants (ICE hold, 1<sup>st</sup> degree murder, etc.) are being scored.
  - Attendees discussed limited resources and the need to streamline the process so that pretrial services staff are not assessing defendants when it is not necessary.
  - Dr. Austin commented that, initially, the Committee recommended assessing everyone. At this point in the process, that may no longer be the best approach. It would be possible to make certain cases a “mandatory override.”
  - Ms. Condon and Ms. Vasquez commented that pretrial services might not be aware of an ICE hold at the time of booking. Additionally, if the hold is lifted, it is too difficult for pretrial services to “go back” after the fact and complete the assessment.

#### VI. Other Items/Discussion

- Justice Hardesty informed attendees that funding for the OJP Diagnostic Center’s participation in this project has ended. Dr. Austin has indicate that, based upon his relationship with the Diagnostic Center, he may be able to continue his efforts. Dr. Austin will look into this.
- Assuming Dr. Austin is able to continue providing assistance to the pilot site program, the Committee would like to request that Dr. Austin provide assistance in developing a rural application process of the program and tool to the rural court and that he complete the revalidation study of the NPRA tool.
  - Justice Hardesty proposed the creation of a subcommittee to work with Dr. Austin on the revalidation process.
  - Justice Hardesty asked Dr. Austin and Judge Bishop (with input of other rural judges as applicable) to continue to work on rural court application and to be ready to provide a report at the next meeting.
    - The AOC IT department could be included in the conversation in case they can provide assistance in terms of providing services to the rest of the rural courts.
  - Mr. Jeremy Bosler commented that he would like to see efforts continue and supported the proposal.
  - Justice Hardesty asked for a motion to support his proposal.
    - Judge Stephen Bishop made the motion.
    - Mr. Jeremy Bosler seconded the motion.

- Justice Hardesty conformed that the revalidation process would look at the various issues, concerns, recommendations brought up during the Committee meetings.
- Judge Higgins commented that technological support is going to be necessary in the rural courts; this is going to need to be addressed.
- The motion was approved unanimously.
- Anyone interested in serving on the revalidation subcommittee should reach out to either Justice Hardesty or Ms. Jamie Gradick, via email.

VII. Next Meeting Date

- The next meeting will be scheduled for late spring; additional details will be provided at a later date.

VIII. Additional Public Comment

- There was no additional public comment.

IX. Adjournment

- Justice Hardesty adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.