

FAMILY LAW AGENDA

Tuesday, April 15th

7:00 am – 11:00 am	Registration	
7:00 am – 7:45 am	Continental Breakfast	
8:00 am – 8:15 am	Welcome & Conference Overview	
8:15 am – 9:45 am	The Neuroscience and Epigenetics of Trauma: A Judge's Guide to Navigating Angst, Abuse and Injury Part 1— Defining the Challenges	Kimberly Papillon
Session Description	<p><i>In this highly interactive session, participants will explore emerging research in neuroscience and how it affects the ways that we react to children and parents. Brain imaging and decision-making studies will be used to explain how we assess risk and the best interest of the child.</i></p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interpret how physiological processes affect our assessments of credibility, competence, threat and potential for growth• Recognize how intergenerational trauma can lead to epigenetic changes that alter lifelong outcomes• Identify ways to increase accuracy guided by science	
9:45 am -10:00 am	Break & Exhibitors	
10:00 am – 11:00 am	Unanswered Questions in Nevada Family Law	Melissa Exline
Session Description	<p><i>Family law is a result of changing thoughts of how things should be done over time. The caselaw and interplay with statute has not always developed in a thoughtful or logical way. This presentation will focus on oddities or problem areas that result due to lack of clear law and ways that can be addressed by the court.</i></p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider a few circular or gray areas of Nevada statutory and case law• Identify possible ways to avoid allowing parties to become trapped in litigation by being thoughtful in the analysis or approach to gray areas	
11:00 am – 12:30 pm	Lunch On Your Own	
12:30 pm – 1:00 pm	Improving Access to Justice in Family Court Through Informal Trials	Judge Gregory Gordon
Session Description	<p><i>With the increasing number of self-represented litigants, traditional court procedures often fail to serve justice effectively. Informal Family Law Trials offer a streamlined, accessible process that restores litigants' confidence in the court system by emphasizing fairness, clarity, and simplicity. This session outlines the legal framework, procedural changes, and practical considerations for judges overseeing these trials, including how they can maintain neutrality while facilitating fact-finding.</i></p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify key procedural differences in informal family law trials under DCR 27• Recognize how to manage the trial while supporting litigants' ability to present their case, without compromising judicial impartiality• Explore implementation strategies and best practices to prepare for Nevada's pilot program	
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Cryptocurrency in Family Law Cases	Kelly Burris
Session Description	<p><i>In divorce cases, cryptocurrency is becoming a more and more common asset. Cryptocurrency can be one of the most valuable assets a marital estate may have. It is also one of the easiest ways to hide money for a tech savvy, but dishonest spouse. Unfortunately, many attorneys don't know the first thing about what it really is, how it works or what to do when it becomes an issue in a divorce. This session will teach the basics of cryptocurrency in family law matters and what to watch out for in divorce cases.</i></p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define cryptocurrency and common terminology used in its practice• Recognize how cryptocurrency is bought and sold and how to locate cryptocurrency assets• Identify questions to ask in discovery and when an expert is needed• Apply tips for valuing and dividing cryptocurrency and digital assets.	
2:00 pm – 2:15 pm	Break & Exhibit Viewing	

		Chief Judge Bonnie Bulla, Judge Deborah Westbrook, Judge Michael Gibbons, Judge Gregory Gordon, Judge Rhonda Forsberg, Judge Regina McConnell
2:15 pm – 3:45 pm	Recent Appellate Decisions Impacting Family Courts	
Session Description	<p>A multifaceted discussion regarding cases from the Nevada Supreme Court and Court of Appeals addressing the impact on district judges serving in our family courts. The first half of the session will be a review of recent published appellate decisions featuring the Court of Appeals Judges themselves. It will be followed by a discussion about the impact of these and other appellate decisions led by a panel of District Court Judges.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify recent state appellate court decisions that have affected family courts Discuss the impact of these decisions on your own courtroom 	
3:45 pm – 4:00 pm	Break & Exhibit Viewing	
4:00 pm – 5:00 pm	The Neuroscience and Epigenetics of Trauma: A Judge's Guide to Navigating Angst, Abuse and Injury Part 2— Pinpointing Concrete Solutions	Kimberly Papillon
5:00 pm – 5:15 pm	Closing Comments	

DISTRICT COURT AGENDA

Wednesday, April 16th

10:00 am – 4:00 pm	Registration	
10:00 am – 11:30 am	NDJA Executive Board & Committee Meeting	
11:30 am – 1:00 pm	Lunch On Your Own	
1:00 pm – 1:30 pm	Seminar Opening & Overview	
1:30 pm – 2:30 pm	The Scylla and Charybdis of Contempt	Judge Richard Glasson
Session Description	<p>Lurking just beneath the surface of the subject of contempt are threats and obstacles that could turn smooth sailing courts and judicial careers into wrecks that will await rediscovery from the unwary. Judge Glasson will skipper a session on the subject of contempt, providing you with sextants and compasses to steer a safe and steady course.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiate between civil vs criminal contempt and direct vs indirect contempt Recognize what is necessary to fill out an appropriate order regarding a contempt finding Determine how to avoid situations where contempt might occur 	
2:30 pm – 2:45 pm	Break & Exhibit Viewing	
2:45 pm – 4:15 pm	Top 10 Ways Judges Get Judicial Ethics Complaints	David Sachar
Session Description	<p>What type of situation is the mostly likely to spawn a judicial ethics complaint? Judges are constantly barraged by situations that are fraught with peril – and not just in the decision-making process. The code of judicial conduct provides guidance for judges to avoid ethical pitfalls and help to create confidence in the courts. But some of these pitfalls are more common than others. How do you identify and avoid these fact patterns? Is it even possible in today's litigious society to avoid complaints altogether? This session will discuss these issues, provide examples, and ways to insulate the judicial officer from some – but not all – complaints. Counting down from 10 to 1 the session will help solve problems for the judge who wants to follow the code and avoid ethics complaints.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key ethical concerns related to social media and generative AI Differentiate between legal error and ethical misconduct in judicial decision-making Assess the impact of ethical violations on public trust and the rule of law 	
4:15 pm – 4:30 pm	Break & Exhibit Viewing	
4:30 pm – 5:30 pm	Compassionate Jurisprudence	Dr. Bridgett Ortega
Session Description	<p>In this session, develop a better understanding of self to practice compassion in the context of day-to-day court operations. Explore the relationship between compassion for others and treating oneself with kindness, concern, and support.</p> <p>Learning Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the importance of understanding your own needs and how meeting these needs can enhance the ability to be a compassionate judge Employ practical examples and strategies to integrate compassion into daily interactions and decision-making processes Identify how these strategies can increase trust and cooperation from court participants 	
5:30 pm – 7:00 pm	Welcome Reception	

Thursday, April 17th

7:15 am – 8:15 am	Buffet Breakfast and Exhibitors	
8:30 am – 10:00 am	Fentanyl and the Courts: Understanding the Crisis, Supporting Recovery, and Implementing Best Practices	Judge Kim McGinnis & Lauren Beal
Session Description	<p>The evolving fentanyl crisis presents unique challenges for the justice system. This session will provide a comprehensive overview of fentanyl, including its potency, prevalence, and impact on individuals and communities. Presenters will examine Nevada-specific data and resources and highlight the role of trauma in substance use. A discussion on best practices will emphasize the importance of transitioning individuals from custody to services and role of family visitation in supporting long-term recovery outcomes.</p> <p>Learning Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Examine the reasons people begin using fentanyl and the neurobiological effects of addiction and traumaRecognize evidence-based approaches to treatment and recovery in the courts and servicesIdentify services currently available in respective jurisdictionsExplore opportunities to expand access to effective treatment and support systems	
10:00 am – 10:15 am	Break and Exhibit Viewing	
10:15 am – 11:15 am	2025 Legislation Overview	Mike Hillerby & John McCormick
Session Description	<p>A review of the bills that impact the courts, judiciary, or legal system that are currently working their way through the 2025 legislative session.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Discuss and identify current Nevada legislation that will impact the courts	
11:15 am – 12:45 pm	Working Lunch: Resilient Judge Part 1	Amy Tirre & Margaret Crowley
Session Description	<p>Through this course, understand the neurophysiology of stress and how it impacts the brain and body. Learn how to reduce and improve mental health to support professional competence. Gain practical, science-based techniques to alleviate stress in real-time using the five senses. Design a personalized roadmap with practices for becoming more resilient in the face of everyday stressors.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand neuro-physiological impacts of chronic stress on lawyers and their mental healthLearn and practice techniques to reduce stressImprove resilience	
12:45 pm – 1:00 pm	Break & Exhibit Viewing	
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Resilient Judge Part 2	Amy Tirre & Margaret Crowley
2:00 pm – 2:15 pm	Break and Exhibit Viewing	
2:15 pm – 3:15 pm	Human Judges in an AI World: Coexistence or Competition?	Paul Embley
Session Description	<p>AI may be the most overhyped tech buzzword today—claims like “bottled water infused with artificial intelligence” show just how far it’s gone. But what about the legal system? Is AI actually being used in courtrooms, and if so, is it working? This session explores the current landscape of AI in the judiciary: where it’s being applied, what ethical concerns it raises, and whether there’s real potential for it to serve justice rather than disrupt it.</p> <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify the current applications of artificial intelligence in the judiciaryExplore the challenges and limitations of implementing AI in legal settingsExamine the potential future Impact of AI on legal practices	
3:30 pm – 4:30 pm	NDJA Meeting and Elections	
4:30 pm – 5:00 pm	NDJA Education Committee Meeting	
5:30 pm – 6:30 pm	Networking Reception and Photos	
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	District Court Judges Annual Awards Banquet	

Friday, April 18th

7:15 am – 8:15 am	Buffet Breakfast and Exhibitors	
8:30 am – 9:30 am	Nevada Appellate Courts Criminal Opinion Review	Chief Judge Kevin Higgins
Session Description	<i>A review and commentary on several criminal opinions from the Nevada Supreme Court and Court of Appeals for 2024-2025.</i>	
	Learning Objectives:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify recent criminal decisions that will have the most impact on the courtsSummarize the importance and consequences of recent criminal decisions on their judicial decisions	
9:30 am – 9:45 am	Break and Exhibit Viewing	
9:45 am – 10:45 am	Nevada Appellate Courts Civil Opinion Review	Micah Echols
Session Description	<i>A review and commentary on civil opinions of the Nevada Supreme Court and Court of Appeals for 2024-2025.</i>	
	Learning Objectives:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify recent civil decisions that will have the most impact on the courtsSummarize the importance and consequences of recent civil decisions on their judicial decisions	
10:45 am – 11:00 am	Break and Exhibit Viewing	
11:00 am – 12:30 pm	Recent United States Supreme Court Opinions Review (Virtual)	Dean Erwin Chemerinsky
Session Description	<i>Dean Chemerinsky's annual review of U.S. Supreme Court opinions and insights about cases heard in 2024-2025.</i>	
	Learning Objectives:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify recent US Supreme Court decisions that will have the most impact on the courtSummarize the importance and consequences of recent Supreme Court decisions on their judicial decisions	
12:30 pm – 1:00 pm	Closing Remarks	