



Court Improvement Program

Community Improvement Councils Quarterly News Oct-Dec 2013

Issue 1

January 2014

Inside this issue:

Safety Practice Model Training	2
10th JD Submits Block Grant	2
Nevada Courts Outpace National Average	2
Court Timeliness Measures	3
Managing Your Court Data	3
CIP Contact Information	4
Judicial Districts' CIC Future Meetings/Events Schedule	4

4th Judicial District Attorney Training

Local and state dependency experts conducted a day-long seminar on the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) and NRS 432B. The 4th JD CIC sponsored training covered everything from ASFA to attendance at the Family Drug Court, including a graduation.

Special guest speaker, Nevada Supreme Court Justice Nancy Saitta joined a panel discussion sharing her experiences with 432B matters, and explaining the Court Improvement Program and the concept and intent of the Community Improvement Councils.

Nevada Deputy Attorney General Ross Armstrong discussed the perspective and responsibilities of the Nevada Attorney General for NRS 432B proceedings.

Kristen McQueary, Elko County Chief Civil Deputy District Attorney, shared the Elko County DA's assessment of 432B proceedings.

Local attorneys Travis W. Gerber and Michelle Rodriguez reviewed ASFA history and policy; and procedure and application of NRS 432B.

The impact of CASA and Family Drug Court on dependency cases was explained by Alana McKinney, Director of CASA Northeastern Nevada, and Court Master Andrew Mierins.

The impetus behind this seminar was to overcome a barrier to timely processing of dependency cases that the 4th JD had identified: attorneys and stakeholders without adequate training and expertise in the child welfare process.

Each participant received a comprehensive resource binder for their reference.

For Additional Information Contact:

[Julie Thuemler](mailto:jthuemler@elkocountynevada.net), Judicial Administrator at 775-753-4601 or jthuemler@elkocountynevada.net

For Additional
Information Contact:

Kathie
Malzahn-Bass

Centralized Case Index

One of CIP's data exchange projects, the Centralized Case Index, will enable near real-time court timeliness reporting through an integrated dashboard. Information from DCFS and court case management systems will be blended into a single reporting database to facilitate this capability. By

February 28th, the five court timeliness measures as well as time to each of the dependency court hearings will be implemented in a proof of concept using data from the 2nd JD. Not only will judges eventually be able to obtain aggregate data reports, they will be able to drill down to get case spe-

cific information. The intention is to provide a continuous feedback loop to the courts and CICs on how they are doing to help them determine where they may wish to focus additional efforts.

For Additional Information Contact:

Molly Taylor
molly.taylor@dcfs.nv.gov
775-687-4943- ext. 235
Brandy Holbrook
bholbrook@dcfs.nv.gov

Child Welfare Safety Practice Model Training for the Courts

A new child welfare safety practice model is being introduced to the CICs. Seven CICs, the 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 6th, 7th, 9th, and 10th judicial districts, have already trained their key stakeholders to incorporate the new

model and the rest are soon to follow. The training in the rural region was conducted by the Division of Child and Family Services' (DCFS) Safe Model experts and focused on: 1)reading the Nevada Initial

Assessment, 2)learning to identify impending danger, 3)safety plan determination, 4)conditions for return, and 5)safety planning.

10th JD CIC Submits Block Grant for New CASA Program

The 10th JD's CIC has applied for a \$75,000 Community Development Block Grant to begin a CASA program under the Churchill County Board of Commissioners. The CASA Steering Committee included: the court and legal stakehold-

ers; the Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe; NAS Fallon Fleet, DCFS; a County Commissioner; County Social Services; County Juvenile Probation and Detention; and an ad hoc member from the public.

For Additional Information Contact:
Sue Sevon
ssevon@churchillcourts.org
(775) 423-6088 ext. 257

Nevada Courts Outpace National Average

Time to adoption 30.7 months in 2012, down from 36.3 months in 2010

The Community Improvement Councils (CICs) have been working to overcome the barriers to termination of parental rights and to adoption for two years.

The CICs have been so impactful that the time it takes for the courts to return children to their homes or find safe, permanent placements has been significantly reduced and now stands below the national average. For example, in its 2013 Annual Progress and Services Report, the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) reports that the median length of time it took for a

child to be adopted in Nevada in 2012 was reduced to 30.7 months down from 36.3 months in 2010. Nevada courts and child welfare agencies have now outpaced the national median, which is 32.4 months.

District court judges across the state are to be congratulated for the tremendous efforts they have put into improving outcomes for the most vulnerable of our children. Most CICs are meeting quarterly, many monthly, to implement their action plans that enhance the well-being of children in care. Some courts are holding hearings

more frequently to make certain the cases involving these children are foremost in the system.

Several courts are now involved in electronic data exchange projects to promote timely notice to the parties to encourage their meaningful participation in the court process. All courts have refocused their efforts on meeting both federal and state timelines and they now have access to current data to help them track the impact of their efforts.

Court Timeliness Measures

The chart below, outlining five court timeliness measures, is a testament to the amazing work of the CICs statewide. In just under two years the time to termination of parental rights has decreased statewide by 135 days from 764 in 2011 to 629 by June 2013.

Attachment D: Page 1 of 1

Timeliness Measure Reporting Template

Court Function Indicator <i>[Specific, observable, and measurable indicators to track change toward the desirable outcomes]</i>	Initial Baseline Rate in Days or Level <i>[Baseline level of the measure at beginning of granting period]</i> Jan 1, 2011 - Dec 31, 2011	Target Improvement (if applicable) <i>[Projected levels of improvement in performance measure by end of granting period]</i>	Annual Rate or Level Year 1 <i>[Level of performance measure after one year of program implementation]</i>	Timeframe <i>[Period of time covered by data]</i>	Difference From Previous Annual Rate <i>[Difference in annual level at end of fiscal year from rate at start of fiscal year. If appropriate, note significant change.]</i>	Difference From Baseline <i>[Difference in the annual level from the baseline, if appropriate, note significant changes.]</i>	CIP Project Targeting Measure (if applicable) <i>[If this measure was targeted by an intervention, please list the project or activity impacting the measure]</i>
Timeliness Indicators							
4G. Time to First Permanency Hearing	359	NRS requires permanency hearings within 1 year	366	Jan 1, 2012 - Dec 31, 2012	7	7	Dependency mediation, CASA, attorney training and pro bono programs
			358	Jan 1, 2013 - Oct 31, 2013	-8	-1	
Time to Subsequent Permanency Hearings	367	NRS requires permanency hearings within 1 year	199	Jan 1, 2012 - Dec 31, 2012	-168	-168	Dependency mediation, CASA, attorney training and pro bono programs
			330	Jan 1, 2013 - Oct 31, 2013	131	-37	
4A. Time to Permanent Placement	945	DCFS PIP Strategy 3, Goal 1 timely permanency reduce barriers to adoption & TPR	870	Jan 1, 2012 - Dec 31, 2012	-75	-75	CICs focus on eliminating barriers to timely placement in their judicial districts
			890	Jan 1, 2013 - Oct 31, 2013	20	-55	
4H. Time to Termination of Parental Rights Petition	Not Available (N/A)		N/A				
			N/A				
4I. Time to Termination of Parental Rights	764	DCFS PIP Strategy 3, Goal 1 timely permanency reduce barriers to adoption & TPR	699	Jan 1, 2012 - Dec 31, 2012	-65	-65	CICs focus on eliminating barriers to timely placement in their judicial districts
			629	Jan 1, 2013 - June 30, 2013	-70	-135	

Narrative:

The Community Improvement Councils (CICs) have been reviewing their local data regularly to help identify where adjustments in process may be needed. The CICs have created three (3) separate annual action plans to address improving timeliness to permanency.

Nevada Administrative Office of the Courts

2013 CIP Annual Report

Katherine R. Malzahn-Bass, Program Coordinator

Help Managing Your Court Data to Improve Outcomes

As courts become more data oriented, opportunities to improve outcomes for children and families increase.

Alicia Summers, Ph.D., the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' Program Director, Research and Evaluation, is available to help each CIC pull and interpret its court data.

In addition to court timeliness data from the Division

of Child and Family Services' case management system, UNITY, Alicia can also pull Nevada dependency court information from the data base at Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago.

The Chapin Hall data is uploaded from UNITY every six months. Formulas or "recipes" have been written to create standardized re-

ports providing aggregate, trend, and comparisons to data from other judicial districts or states.

Judges may obtain access to the database by contacting Kathie Malzahn-Bass for a User ID and Password.

For help obtaining and understanding your court data contact Alicia Summers at NCJFCJ, (775)784-7570 or asummers@ncjfcj.org

Understand your court data
For Further Information Contact:
Alicia Summers
NCJFCJ

NEVADA SUPREME COURT
 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
 COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
 201 S. CARSON STREET, SUITE 250
 CARSON CITY, NV 89701

Katherine Malzahn-Bass
 Court Improvement Program Coordinator
 Phone: 775-687-9809
 Fax: 775-687-9811
 Email: kmalzahn-bass@nvcourts.nv.gov

Robbie Taft
 Administrative Assistant III
 Phone: 775-687-9812
 Fax: 775-687-9811
 Email: rtaft@nvcourts.nv.gov

In 2010, each of the State's ten judicial districts created a Community Improvement Council (CIC) that focused on identifying barriers to timely permanent placement of children at risk. The CICs have been meeting regularly in their communities and at annual Summits where they have learned to interpret data specific to their districts, while creating strategies to reduce the amount of time that it takes to move cases involving children at risk through the court process. The overriding focus, in addition to the safety of the child, is to create an environment where the best decisions are made for each child.

Visit Our Web Site

[http://www.nevadajudiciary.us/
 index.php/
 courtimprovementprogram](http://www.nevadajudiciary.us/index.php/courtimprovementprogram)

**CIP Working for the Protection &
 Permanency of Dependent Children**

Judicial Districts' CIC Future Meetings/Events Schedules

Judicial District	Meeting / Event	Date	For Additional Information Contact
1 st JD	Child Safety Training	2/12/14	Juvenile Master Kristin Luis kluis@carson.org
2 nd JD	CIC Retreat	2/14/14	Rachel Anderline
3 rd JD	CIC Meeting	3/3/14	Debbie Gilmore
5 th JD	CIC Meeting	2/19/14	Tim Sutton
6 th JD	CIC Meeting	2/25/14	Judge Michael Montero
8 th JD	Child Safety Training	3/11-12/14	Judge Frank Sullivan
9 th JD	CIC Meeting	3/13/14	Judge Nathan Tod Young ntyoung@douglas.nv.gov
10 th JD	CIC Meeting	3/18/14	Judge Thomas Stockard