

KENTUCKY JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON
MENTAL HEALTH



| Kentucky Judicial Commission on Mental Health Meeting Minutes | |
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| Meeting Date, Time | December 5, 2025; 1:00-3:00 PM ET |
| Meeting Location | Administrative Office of the Courts 1001 Vandalay Drive Frankfort, KY 40601 |
| Virtual Option | The meeting was also offered virtually through Zoom; a recording can be found here . |

| Attendees | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Name | Organization |
| Whitney P. Allen, Jr. | Commissioner Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs |
| Matthew Cole | Commissioner of the Department of Vehicle Registration |
| Hon. Robert B. Conley | Deputy Chief Justice, Kentucky Supreme Court |
| Lisa DeJaco Crutcher (Zoom) | Executive Director/CEO, Catholic Charities of Louisville |
| Hon. J. Foster Cotthoff (Zoom) | District Court Judge |
| Erica Hargis | Director of Division of Probation and Parole |
| Van Ingram | Executive Director of Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy |
| Lisa Lee | Commissioner of Department of Medicaid Services |
| Dr. Lindsey Jasinski (Zoom) | Chief Administrative Officer, Eastern State Hospital – University of Kentucky |
| Amy Luttrell | CEO, Goodwill |
| Hon. Cole Adams Maier | Circuit Court Judge |
| Cora McNabb | Executive Director, Office for Vocational Rehabilitation |
| Hon. Damon Preston | Department of Public Advocacy |
| Dr. Steven Stack | Secretary, Cabinet for Health and Family Services |
| Hon. Stacy Tapke | Past President of County Attorneys Association |
| Diane Thompson | Nelson County Circuit Court Clerk |
| Hon. William Leach | District Court Judge |
| Hon. Larry Thompson | Kentucky Court of Appeals Judge |
| Hon. Marcus Vanover (Zoom) | Family Court Judge |
| Silas Session | Delegate – Whitney P. Allen, Jr. |
| Christina Weeter | Delate – Kelly Foster |
| Betty Whittaker | Delegate – Cora McNabb |

Agenda

- I. Registration and Lunch**
- II. Welcome and Commission Updates**
- III. Connecting Veterans to Services: A Brief Overview**
- IV. Committee and Workgroup Updates**
- V. Agency Update Roundtable**
- VI. Closing Remarks**
- VII. Adjourn**

Welcome and Commission Updates

Deputy Chief Justice Conley welcomed members to the Quarterly December Commission meeting of the Kentucky Judicial Commission on Mental Health (KJCMH). He recognized several key accomplishments from 2025, including the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 26, which enhanced protections for parents and caregivers with disabilities; the completion of twelve local community mapping events, with one additional session scheduled before the end of the year; and the 14 virtual 202A forums, which allowed judges, attorneys, law enforcement, hospitals, and treatment providers to discuss regional 202A processes.

Justice Conley highlighted the trainings and resource tools developed throughout the year. He explained how these resources are being utilized across Kentucky, reflecting on the collaborative efforts across the KJCMH workgroups. He emphasized that this work would not be possible without the commitment of the Commission members.

Justice Conley referenced the meeting materials, which included the agenda, the upcoming 2026 commission meeting dates, and the meeting minutes from the September quarterly meeting. Additionally, he noted that the final 2024 KJCMH annual report was included in the meeting materials and will be available on the KJCMH website. The meeting materials also included a KJCMH brochure, which members were encouraged to share with their system partners.

Justice Conley then discussed the draft 202A Virtual Forum Report, which was also included in the meeting materials. He highlighted how the report reflects the themes and insights gathered from the forums and follow-up surveys. He encouraged members to review the draft report and provide feedback within the next two weeks, noting that the findings and recommendations may impact processes across the Commonwealth. Feedback should be submitted to Shawna Mitchell by December 20th.

Justice Conley provided an update on the local community mapping events. He shared that the Commission has continued to support Kentucky communities through targeted technical assistance, sustainability planning, and follow-up conversations to help communities advance the action steps identified during their community mapping sessions. There is one remaining community mapping session this year, which will take place in Clark County on December 16th. The full community

mapping update can be found in the meeting materials, which summarize this quarter's progress.

Justice Conley also provided an overview of the KJCMH's 2026 legislative package, which will prioritize reforms to KRS 202C. He explained that the KJCMH formed a high-level focus group of judges, attorneys, and key partners to analyze KRS 202C and develop targeted recommendations to improve the process. Representative Nemes expressed interest in sponsoring the 202C legislative recommendation, and meetings are scheduled with Representative Nemes and Representative Moser to discuss next steps and expectations for the 2026 legislative session.

Justice Conley recognized Chief Justice Lambert, who on December 2 received the Judge Stephen S. Goss Memorial Award for Leadership Lifetime Achievement. He emphasized this honor and Chief Justice Lambert's years of compassion, innovation, and unwavering commitment to improve behavioral health systems. This award was presented during the virtual Judges and Psychiatrists Leadership Initiative Summit, hosted by the Council of State Governments Justice Center, the American Psychiatric Association Foundation, and the National Center for State Courts.

Justice Conley then introduced Commissioner Whitney Allen, Jr. and Dr. Silas Session, Sr. from the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs, to present on connecting veterans to services. The presentation highlighted Kentucky's efforts to identify veterans across systems and ensure they receive appropriate care and support.

Connecting Veterans to Services: A Brief Overview

Commissioner Whitney Allen, Jr. from the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs (KDVA) opened the presentation by thanking the Commission and highlighting KDVA's role in supporting veterans.

Dr. Silas Session presented on KDVA's mission and vision, which is to educate, assist, and serve veterans to ensure they receive benefits and services in accordance with federal and state laws. He described the Office of Kentucky Veteran Services and the anticipated initiatives for 2026, including student support resources and faith-based engagement forums. He also reviewed additional benefits such as scholarship opportunities, college credit incentives, and veteran readiness and employment programs. He highlighted resources including the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), the 988 Partner Toolkit, and the Veterans Support Group Resource Guide.

Dr. Session discussed the Governor's Challenge on suicide prevention, noting upcoming training opportunities in spring 2026. Additionally, he touched upon House Bill (HB) 30, which focuses on suicide prevention for Kentucky service members, veterans, and their families. He also shared information about the Armory Project listening session for February 2026.

Dr. Session explained KDVA's Cemetery Division and pre-eligibility services offered to veterans, including recent changes in Kentucky's law that expanded eligibility for burial in state veterans' cemeteries. He also explained KDVA's Benefits Division, which connects veterans with several

benefits, including disability compensation, Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC), pensions, special monthly compensation, claims appeals, and reentry assistance. He explained tuition waiver eligibility and emphasized how the Homestead Exemption is available to veterans. KDVA can assist veterans and families with navigating these services, and contact information was shared for each division of KDVA.

He next discussed KDVA's Programs Division, which provides programming, conferences, and support initiatives. He noted an upcoming meeting on February 4 and invited Commission members to participate. He highlighted the Women Veterans Program and the Wounded and Disabled Veterans Program, which focuses on suicide prevention, resource sharing, and statewide support initiatives. He also reviewed KYNECT-A-VET, a phone-based assistance service, and Here Now Help, which connects veterans with licensed professionals.

Lastly, he discussed the COMPACT program and its relevance for veterans; the Office of Veterans Legal Services, which assists with discharge claims at no cost; and the Veterans Trust Fund, which supports organizations delivering services to veterans.

Commissioner Allen provided closing remarks, emphasizing the importance of connecting veterans to KDVA services and the agency's commitment to partnership and collaboration.

Justice Conley thanked the presenters.

Committee and Workgroup Updates

I. Treatment and Access Committee

Amy Luttrell thanked Deputy Chief Justice Conley and acknowledged the Commission's progress this year. She highlighted that each workgroup in the Treatment and Access Committee continues to advance its workplan initiatives and develop training and education tools to support system partners.

- a. **Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Workgroup-** Crystal Adams, Director of the Division of Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities, Cabinet for Health and Family Services, reported that the workgroup continues to focus on completing both the KRS 202B training series and the Autism in the Courts training series. She also shared updates regarding Cabinet-level initiatives, including Families First, Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waivers, and person-centered planning efforts.

The workgroup also distributed a priorities survey to members to help identify and prioritize next year's workplan items. Crystal noted that the group remains actively engaged in supporting SB 26 implementation. Several meetings have been held with the Department for Community Based Services, and the workgroup will continue

supporting implementation needs moving into next year.

- b. **Strengthening Communities Workgroup-** Dr. Lindsey Jasinski, Chief Administrative Officer at Eastern State Hospital, reported that the workgroup remains active and continues to build upon its training materials and workplan priorities. She noted that this quarter the workgroup finalized and published the Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) judicial training series. The training series can be found on the KJCMH [website](#). Additionally, she highlighted ongoing discussions regarding stigma-reduction trainings, collaborations with community partners, and alignment with statewide initiatives.
- c. **Court Responses Workgroup-** Judge Stephanie Pearce Burke was unable to attend. Amy Luttrell provided the update on her behalf, stating that the workgroup has continued discussions related to Casey's Law petitions, Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT), and follow-up items stemming from the 202A Virtual Forum. The group is also closely monitoring statewide efforts and continues to support the Mental Health Diversion Initiative. Amy referenced the meeting materials, which include a detailed report of the workgroup's progress.

II. **Civil and Family Justice Committee**

The Honorable J. Foster Cotthoff, 3rd Judicial District, reported that the committee's workgroups remain focused on advancing workplan priorities and supporting partners through trainings and collaborative initiatives. Judge Cotthoff also thanked Dr. Session, noting his work with the Veterans Treatment Court in Christian County.

- a. **Domestic Violence Workgroup-** The Honorable Denise Brown, Family Court Judge for the 30th Judicial Circuit, was unable to attend. Judge Cotthoff referenced the workgroup report included in the meeting materials. Highlights include progress on standardized trainings, development of the Advocating Safety School Resource Guide, and ongoing exploration of curriculum development for peer support specialists and recovery programs.
- b. **Dependency, Neglect and Abuse-** Honorable Marcus Vanover, 28th Judicial Circuit, reported that the DNA Workgroup continues to advance several priorities across multiple subgroups. He provided updates on the ongoing DNA training efforts, including the Relationships Matter Part 2 Training Series; development of treatment provider FAQs; the Best Practice Guide; and the continued enhancements to training for court-appointed counsel. Judge Vanover also reported that the workgroup continues to monitor legislative efforts related to Guardian ad Litem (GAL) restructuring and remains prepared to provide feedback as proposals develop.

- c. **Guardianship and Commitment Workgroup-** Stacy Tapke, Kenton County Attorney, provided updates on behalf of the Guardianship and Commitment Workgroup. She reported that the guardianship workgroup continues working on revisions to AOC guardianship forms, including the AOC-745 form. The workgroup is also developing educational tools for families navigating guardianship. She also noted coordination with the Kentucky Guardianship Association and ongoing review of guardianship-related legislation.

She further reported on the Commitment Workgroup's continued work on KRS 202A processes, including review of the AOC-720 form. The workgroup plans to finalize their form revisions next quarter. The group will also support follow-up efforts from the 202A Virtual Forum and develop resources for Community Mental Health Centers on the 202A process.

III. **Criminal Justice Committee**

The Honorable Cole Adams Maier, 25th Judicial District, provided an update on the Criminal Justice Committee and referenced detailed updates included in the meeting materials. Committee priorities this quarter included advancements in data entry processes, review of jail survey data, and continued focus on juvenile competency standards.

- a. **Competency Workgroup-** Dr. Koleen Slusher, Director of the Kentucky Correctional Psychiatric Center (KCPC), was unable to attend. Judge Maier reported on her behalf and referenced the Competency Workgroup report included in the meeting materials. Judge Maier noted that the Competency Workgroup continues to refine its legislative recommendations related to KRS 202C and remains focused on improving and strengthening competency-related court processes. Current priorities include clarifying competency evaluation procedures in the Kentucky Circuit Clerks Manual and working with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to review data-collection and record-entry practices to promote greater consistency and ensure that proposed changes are data informed. Judge Maier also shared system updates from KCPC. Both jail-based competency programs in Louisville and Fayette County continue to move forward. KCPC will keep the workgroup updated on emerging trends and challenges, including those related to Seth's Law and its impact on the forensic system.
- b. **Pre-Arrest and Diversion Workgroup-** Steve Shannon, Executive Director of KARP, Inc., was unable to attend and Judge Maier provided an update on the workgroup's progress. The workgroup continues refining its workplan and awaits the final results from the statewide jail survey, which will guide the group's next steps. Members

were referred to the meeting materials for the workgroup's full report.

- c. **Juvenile Justice Workgroup-** The Honorable Lisa Jones, 1st Appellate District, Division 2, Kentucky Court of Appeals, was unable to attend. Judge Maier reported on her behalf, highlighting the group's continued focus on habitual truancy, development of a judge-focused truancy curriculum, and legislative review efforts on competency standards. Additional details were referenced in the meeting materials.
- d. **Reentry Workgroup-** Erica Hargis, Director of the Division of Probation and Parole at the Department of Corrections, provided an update on the Reentry Workgroup. She shared how the group continues planning for next year's initiatives and remains engaged in learning opportunities to strengthen reentry supports. The workgroup is awaiting the jail survey findings and organizing presentations for upcoming meetings. She expressed appreciation for the veterans-related reentry information shared during the KDVA presentation earlier in the meeting.

Judge Maier concluded by thanking Shawna Mitchell and her team for their continued leadership and encouraged members to connect with Heather Vice regarding Community Mapping initiatives.

Agency Update Roundtable

Justice Conley opened the floor to agency updates.

Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services

Commissioner Lee provided an overview of anticipated policy changes connected to HB 1 and the potential impacts on Medicaid populations. She highlighted that Medicaid currently supports many Kentuckians living below the federal poverty level and emphasized the importance of preparing for anticipated implementation timelines.

She noted that under the upcoming changes, individuals in the Medicaid expansion group will only be eligible for one month of retroactive coverage, which may increase challenges related to outstanding medical bills. Beginning January 1, 2027, individuals in the Medicaid expansion population may also be subject to community engagement or work requirements totaling 80 hours per month. These requirements may be met through employment, education, or volunteer service. Certain individuals, including veterans and individuals receiving treatment for substance use disorders, are excluded from these requirements. Commissioner Lee emphasized that these changes may significantly affect Medicaid eligibility and access to care, and she is committed to keeping the Commission updated as implementation planning continues.

Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

Dr. Silas Session provided an additional update on KDVA initiatives and shared information about an upcoming virtual job fair. The job fair will be free to both employers and participants and will go live

on January 21.

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet

Commissioner Cole shared an update regarding the upcoming launch of Kentucky’s mobile driver’s license initiative. He explained that the mobile license will help improve identification processes, including airline travel, and will eventually integrate with additional state systems. This integration is anticipated to support improved access to services, including employment verification, disability supports, court processes, and other government functions. He expressed appreciation for the strong partnership with the Department of Corrections and other collaborating agencies.

Closing Remarks

Deputy Chief Justice Conley thanked Commission members for their time, commitment, and continued partnership. He reflected on the significant accomplishments achieved throughout the year and expressed appreciation for the Commission members, agency partners, and workgroup leaders in advancing behavioral health initiatives across the Commonwealth. He reminded members that the next quarterly meeting will be held on March 23, 2026, at the Administrative Office of the Courts. He asked Commission members to gather in the lobby following adjournment for a group photograph.

Contact information: JCMH@kycourts.net.

Webpage: [Kentucky Judicial Commission on Mental Health – Kentucky Court of Justice \(kycourts.gov\)](http://kycourts.gov)

The commission adjourned at 3:00 PM ET.

Additional Information

Noncommission Members and Public in attendance:

| Name | Organization |
|--------------------------|---|
| Harper Addison | Kentucky Correctional Psychiatric Center |
| Sydney Richardson | Kentucky Correctional Psychiatric Center |
| Dr. David Susman | Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities |
| Dr. Allen Brenzel (Zoom) | Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental, and Intellectual Disabilities |
| Tamara Hart (Zoom) | |
| Katherine North (Zoom) | Kentucky Association of Health Plans |
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KJCMH Support Staff in attendance:

| Name | Department |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Eboni Thompson | Office of Statewide Programs |
| Shawna Mitchell | Judicial Commission on Mental Health |
| Jim Hoffman | Communications |
| Debbie Hall | Office of Statewide Programs |
| Maria Macaluso | Judicial Commission on Mental Health |

