

MINUTES
Family Court Advisory Commission
NCJC Boardroom
February 28, 2020

The Family Court Advisory Commission (FCAC) met at the NCJC in Raleigh on Friday, February 28, 2020. The meeting came to order at 10:10 AM. The following individuals were present:

FCAC Members

Judge Galen Braddy, Chair
Stephanie Gibbs
Justice Robin Hudson
Justin Minshew
Nikki Smith
Rose Stout
Judge Donna Stroud
Lori Wainright
Shirley Webb-Owens

NCAOC Staff

Cindy Bizzell, GAL Administrator
Lori Cole, Court Management Specialist
Brad Fowler, Chief Business Officer
DeShield Greene, Court Management Specialist
Stephanie Smith, Court Management Specialist
Tara Minter, Court Management Specialist

Approval of Minutes

The December 2019 meeting minutes were unanimously approved. The Commission also decided to resume posting the FCAC minutes on www.nccourts.gov once the minutes have been approved since the minutes of this body are a public record.

eCourts: ICMS Update

Brad Fowler provided an update on the integrated case management system (ICMS), also known as Odyssey. The decision to convert to Odyssey from NCAOC-developed applications began after all 100 elected clerks of superior court signed a letter advising NCAOC to explore vendor solutions rather than creating new applications and continuing to update existing applications. As part of the preparation of the Request for Proposals (RFP), NCAOC consulted with the National Center for State Courts and other states to determine the content of the RFP as well as issues NC should consider in the selection of a vendor. Brad stated that conversion to Odyssey is an access to justice project as well as a technology project. After vendor demos, Tyler Technology Inc. was selected, and a contract was signed in June 2019.

The eCourts Advisory Committee advises NCAOC on various policy issues and also when there are conflicting local practices in order to assist NCAOC in developing a uniform system. The project is currently in the process of configuring the system to NC and converting existing data in the NCAOC applications. It was recently decided that the criminal application eCitation will

also be replaced by Odyssey functions in order to completely retire the mainframe. ICMS will be implemented in 12 tracks.

A public portal will be available for the public to access non-confidential information. The portal will be accessible at the courthouse as well as remotely, so the public does not have to go to the courthouse. The decision has been made that closed cases will not be scanned initially. Cases will be scanned point forward and some pending files will be scanned. Decisions are still being made as to whether a filed case will be immediately available for viewing or if the clerk will review the filing before it is publicly available. However, Tyler Technologies recommends filings not be made publicly available until after the clerk completes a review of the filings. Judge Stroud advised that the Chief Justice's Rules Advisory Commission is reviewing rules for eFiling and some of the Rules of Civil Procedure will be impacted. Information about the meeting of the Rules Advisory Commission is available at: <https://www.nccourts.gov/commissions/chief-justices-rules-advisory-commission>.

Advocacy for Uniform Parentage Act

Judge Beth Dixon was scheduled to present on this topic but was unable to attend the meeting. She will be invited to present at the May 29th meeting.

Family Court Fact Sheet

DeShield Greene presented two updated fact sheets for the consideration of the FCAC. One fact sheet is a one-page document and the other is a two-page fact sheet. Both list the benefits of family courts. There was agreement that each document is needed, depending on the audience. DeShield will make the updates to the one-page fact sheet that were suggested by the FCAC. She advised that the fact sheets still need to be reviewed by the NCAOC Communications Office to ensure they comply with branding guidelines.

Approval of Family Court Annual Report

DeShield circulated a draft of the Family Court Annual Report for the review of the FCAC prior to the meeting, and the suggested changes were incorporated into the report. DeShield thanked Lori Wainright for assisting her and Lori Cole in drafting the report. The Commission unanimously approved the Family Court Annual Report, which will be delivered to Chief Justice Beasley.

NCAOC Court Programs Updates

Access and Visitation

Lori Cole provided the following update on the Access and Visitation Program:

- The Coordinators have been meeting regularly via conference call to discuss local activities, resources, and questions.

- Since there are no funds in the grant for travel to attend trainings, a VCAP inquiry webinar was offered in January to demonstrate how the Coordinators can perform a statewide search in VCAP. This allows them to determine if there is an existing order in another county in the state.
- The Coordinators will be moving toward a uniform reporting form for collection of statistics related to the program.
- The floating A&V coordinator position expanded services to Pitt County in February.

Custody Mediation

Stephanie Smith provided several Custody Mediation program updates:

- Three new custody mediator positions have recently been filled and staff will be working to train them.
- The pilot Domestic Violence Screening Project for custody mediation cases continues in Durham. They are working to expand the project into Harnett County so it can be incorporated into Odyssey (ICMS). The goal is to have a more uniform system statewide for determining if parties involved in a domestic violence matter can participate in custody mediation or if it should be waived.
- On March 19-20, the custody mediators will have a training on Inner Family Systems.

Human Trafficking

Tara Minter provided an update on current Human Trafficking projects:

- A national human trafficking online module is being modified for NC. Once it is complete, NC judges will be needed to volunteer to review the module.
- At the NC Human Trafficking Commission meeting, it was announced that the NC SBI will allow foreign national human trafficking survivors to remain in the country for prosecution of the human trafficking case on a case-by-case basis.

Meeting Dates

The FCAC will next meet on May 29, 2020. The remainder of the 2020 meeting dates are September 18 and December 11.

Having no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 12:09 pm.

Submitted by DeShield Greene