

**CINA Court Improvement Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes for**  
**Friday, March 23, 2012**  
**10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

**Snowden Administration Building**  
**820 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

**Attendance:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Judge Rindner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anita Alves	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Judge Blankenship
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Linda Beecher	<input type="checkbox"/> Melissa Stone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amanda Metivier
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Judge Esch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diane Payne	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wendy Lyford
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christy Lawton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Judge Tan	<input type="checkbox"/> Judge Stephens
<input type="checkbox"/> Judge Reese	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Judge Devaney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lucille Johnson
<input type="checkbox"/> Susanne DiPietro	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carla Raymond	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maude Hopson
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Francine Eddy-Jones	<input type="checkbox"/> Judge White	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beverly Oskolkoff	<input type="checkbox"/> Lisa Rieger	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Lynn Biggs	

Also attending: Travis Erickson; Karen Largent (telephonically); Stefanie Winters; and Bob Polley.

Minutes of December 16, 2011 approved, as amended.

**Next Meeting: Friday, July 20, 2012, 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., in Anchorage**

**October 2012 Statewide CINA Conference Planning update** - (Bob Polley)

The date is set for the Second Biennial Safe Children, Strong Families Conference -- the statewide, interdisciplinary conference for CINA practitioners: **Wednesday, October 10, 2012, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the Egan Center in Anchorage.** The conference planning group has been discussing potential agenda topics and these were shared with the CIP committee. Committee members suggested additional agenda topics.

**CINA Rules 24 & 25 Proposal** – (Laura Bottger, Court Rules Attorney)

Ms. Bottger provided the CIP committee with an update regarding the CINA Rule 24 proposal which addresses registration, confirmation, and enforcement of tribal court child custody order, as well as the CINA Rule 25 proposal related to the expedited enforcement of such orders. In the Tanana decision in 2011, the Alaska Supreme Court held that child custody order entered by tribal courts in proceedings held under ICWA are entitled to full faith and credit, to the same extent as other states' and foreign orders. The proposed new CINA rules provide a process to support enforcement of those orders. Ms. Bottger explained that the language of the rule proposals is modeled after the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act (UCCJEA). Ms. Bottger hopes to present the proposals to the Supreme Court in May. [\*\* [link to Rule Proposals](#) \*\*]

**HB 126 – Regulations and OCS Policies/Procedures** – (Carla Raymond)

Carla reviewed the new regulations and OCS policies & procedures regarding older youth re-entering state custody. The CIP committee discussed several issues related to “resumption” of OCS custody, including: whether existing CINA matter is re-opened or a new CINA petition filed; the provision of notice to parents regarding older youth (18+); applicability of ICWA; GAL versus attorney appointment for youth; and potential child support obligation for parents. Per OCS staff, approximately 6 youth have re-entered custody statewide. Senate Bill 82, currently pending in the Legislatures, would modify the statute to permit youth who were at least 16 years old and released to the custody of a parent/guardian (because they refused out-of-home placement) to re-enter state custody. If passed, this will lead to some additional changes in the regulations and policies/procedures.

**Fostering Connections Act / OCS Data Profile** – (Christy Lawton)

Christy provided the CIP committee with an overview regarding the implementation of the Fostering Connections Act by OCS. [**[link to Fostering Connection summary](#)**] In addition, Christy reviewed the January 2012 OCS Data Profile. [**[link to Data Profile](#)**]

Christy also provided copies of two new publications: the Alaska Resource Family Handbook and the OCS Notifications Field Guide. Both publications are available on the OCS website. If any committee members would like extra hardcopies, they are available from the CIP coordinator or OCS.

**Permanency for Older Youth** – (Amanda Metivier)

Casey Families provided a permanency values training at the last FFCA retreat. 27 Youth from around the state attended, as well as 6 OCS Independent Living specialists. The group discussed how to reduce APPLA as a permanency goal for older youth. Amanda discussed the passage of Senate Bill 82 – FFCA youth were instrumental in its development and drafting. The new law will reduce APPLA as a permanency goal, defines “siblings” and establishes a sibling placement preference, and also eases the process for foster placement variances in rural areas. Amanda also advised the CIP that 20 FFCA youth attended the Youth Policy Summit in Juneau, including visits to every legislators office. A CIP member complimented FFCA youth regarding their joint presentation with Tribal/State and WPIC to the Legislature.

## **Subcommittee Reports**

**Family Contact:** Representative from the subcommittee will present regarding family contact issues at the upcoming CASA/GAL conference. Regarding family contact training for resource families and other stakeholders, per OCS, training will be conducted by OCS. Judge Tan requested that, given the turnover among judicial officers, additional training should be provided for CINA judges.

**Mediation & Family Group Conferencing:** A written report was distributed and discussed at the meeting.

**Education:** The subcommittee remains focused on planning for the October 2012 statewide, interdisciplinary CINA conference. A CIP member asked regarding sponsorship of regional conferences. Funding is still available, but there have not been requests submitted in the past couple of years. The CIP discussed ways to advise a broader audience of this funding opportunity for regional conferences.

**Independent Living Workgroup:** Per Amanda, the group is still tackling the issue of expanding transitional housing options for older youth. They are drafting a letter to OCS recommending regulatory changes and will ask the CIP co-chairs to consider signing the letter.

**Substance Abuse - Shields Initiative:** A DBH representative was unavailable for this meeting. Judge Tan advised that the lack of consistency of substance abuse assessments in CINA cases is an ongoing issue.

**ICWA:** Diane Payne is now co-chairing the subcommittee with Lisa Rieger. Diane advised that a new CIP grant is available for tribal courts, although the RFP has not yet been issued. Diane also informed the CIP that a Tribal Court Symposium will be held May 8-9 in Anchorage, with a focus on early childhood trauma issues.

**Education and Foster Care:** Amanda discussed the success of the Children in Transition (CIT) program of ASD in Anchorage in tracking school placement change information for foster youth, including development of a checklist for OCS workers with the goal of reducing unnecessary school changes. Per OCS, education issues are always supposed to be an agenda topic at TDMs. Also, special funding is available from OCS to provide for transportation, including gas money for foster parents bringing children to their “home” school.

**Rural Issues:** Judge Devaney advised that a vendor gave a presentation to the subcommittee regarding ankle monitors, which provided very useful information about the potential use of these monitors in certain CINA cases. The subcommittee hopes to have an AAG join them to assist in the development of protocols. The subcommittee has continued their discussion regarding the use of Skype to provide for “remote” visitation in CINA cases. Ms. Lawton informed the CIP that the OCS offices in Wasilla, Juneau, Fairbanks and Anchorage currently have video-conferencing available.

**2:30 p.m. Adjourn**