

Meeting Minutes of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Courts and Justice-Involved Populations Subcommittee

Thursday, September 4, 2025, Approved

Attendees:

Subcommittee Members Attending: Amber Blankenship, Stephanie Bond, Judge Jim Rowe, Stephanne Thornton (Chair)

Subcommittee Members Not Attending: Candace Facemyer, Sam Hess, Cindy Hill, Patrick Mirandy, Tom Plymale

Office of Drug Control Policy Staff (ODCP): Rick Dempsey, Dr. Stephen Loyd, Justin Smith

Marshall University Staff: Bradley McCoy

Opening:

Stephanne Thornton (Chair) provided welcome and opening remarks of this meeting of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment, Courts and Justice-Involved Populations Subcommittee. The meeting was called to order on Thursday, September 4, 2025, and was conducted by Google Meet conference. A quorum of Subcommittee members was not present but Rick Dempsey, Associate Director at the Office of Drug Control Policy, acted as fifth member to approve the August 4, 2025 meeting minutes. Amber Blankenship made a motion to approve without changes, and Stephanie Bond seconded with all in favor and none opposed. There was no further discussion. The motion passed with all in favor. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss 2025 key performance indicator (KPI) status and progress.

Agenda Items:

Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Progress for Quarter 3 Progress Report

- Stephanne Thornton is sending Bradley McCoy percentages of completion for all KPIs this week.
- **Goal 1, Strategy 2, KPI 2:** This will hinge upon the completion of ODCP's updated database in partnership with West Virginia University. Academy programs are court-order only. The Bureau of Social Services (BSS) actually does the licensing for youth treatment, not The Office of Health Facility Licensure and Certification (OHFLAC). Violent youth are immediately sent to behavior correction facilities rather than treating the underlying mental health needs that cause their aggressive behavior. There is a need for more child advocacy in the state, but West Virginia lacks the staff and capacity. Aetna wants to train existing staff to offer evidence-based practices but that is just the start. There is a lack of a youth counselor workforce and youth peers do not really exist.
- **Goal 1, Strategy 3, KPI 1:** WVU is working on the database through November 30, 2025 and ODCP is working to check the fidelity of programs that will be listed. This information is on OHFLAC but will be put into the ODCP dashboard in a more digestible format.
- **Goal 1, Strategy 3, KPI 2:** Justin Smith joined the last West Virginia Behavioral Health Providers Association meeting, and more providers have started to use the Healthcare Enablement and Access Link (HEAL) dashboard to indicate available beds. 8 are up to date as of today and 16

have updated their information this month. This data is only as good as what they willingly report though.

- **Goal 1, Strategy 3, KPI 3:** Stephanne will work with Amber Blankenship about case management awareness. REACH has all case management resources documented for their county catchment area, but not statewide.
- **Goal 2, Strategy 1, KPI 1:** Sam Hess has implemented assessment checklists in Preston County and Stephanne Thornton will check with him about further rollout. REACH uses social determinants of health (SDoH) checklists at all reentry/court encounters. They have also added questions about financial literacy. Stephanne thinks it would be valuable to add questions about access to subsidies.
- **Goal 2, Strategy 1, KPI 2:** The Subcommittee discussed how this could be measured. Family Resource Networks (FRNs) have available resources listed but it needs double checked to make sure it is up to date in each county, and they are usually more treatment focused. Stephanne explored the link to NORC and East Tennessee's Recovery Ecosystem Index map, externally linked on ODCP's data dashboard website: <https://rei.norc.org/> The Subcommittee discussed confusion around the methodology of their county rankings.
- **Goal 2, Strategy 2, KPI 2:** Ashley Payne attended the July meeting to discuss recovery friendly employers. She has also been working with REACH on offering Building Bridges training.

Community Conversations

- Bradley McCoy provided an overview of the Community Conversations and the schedule. The first virtual Community Conversation has already occurred. The virtual format will be the same as in previous years with the exception that a “open discussion” breakout group is being added. The additional virtual and four in-person Community Conversations are scheduled for:
 - Friday September 5th 1:00-3:00 (virtual)
 - Tuesday September 9th 3:45-5:15 (in person, Charleston, WV)
 - Thursday September 11th 6:00-8:00 (in person, Logan, WV)
 - Monday September 15th 4:00-6:00 (in person, Moorefield, WV)
 - Tuesday September 16th (4:00-6:00) (in person, Wheeling (WV)

Additional Discussion

- Stephanne Thornton directed Dr. Stephen Loyd to visit Youth Services in Wheeling, so he is going to do so on his current visit there.
- Dr. Loyd is attending the next West Virginia First Foundation meeting.
- Family treatment courts have received funding for the next three quarters.

Adjournment:

Stephanne closed the meeting by thanking all Subcommittee members for their attendance and participation. The Subcommittee will meet on Tuesday, October 14, 2025 at 10:00 AM.