

Meeting Minutes of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Courts and Justice-Involved Populations Subcommittee Thursday, May 14, 2026, Approved

Attendees:

Subcommittee Members Attending: Stephanie Bond, Candace Facemyer, Coty Long, Judge Jim Rowe, Stephanie Thornton (Chair)

Subcommittee Members Not Attending: Amber Blankenship, Sam Hess, Cindy Hill, Lesley Hill, Lori Lynch, Tom Plymale

Guest Speaker Attending: Alvin Hall, Dan McCawley

Office of Drug Control Policy (ODCP) Staff Attending: Olivia Fox, Dr. Stephen Loyd

State Opioid Response (SOR) Staff Attending: Stephanie Frazer, Renee Harris

State Opioid Response (SOR) Regional Coordinators Attending: Jill Poe

Marshall University Staff Attending: Bradley McCoy

Opening:

Stephanie 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, May 14, 2026, and was conducted by Google Meet conference. Stephanie Thornton approved the April 14, 2026 meeting minutes. There was no further discussion. The purpose of this meeting was to invite the guest speaker, Alvin Hall, to discuss use of screeners such as the Adverse Childhood Experience (ACEs) questionnaire at Recovery Point.

Agenda Items:

Guest Speaker – Alvin Hall (Recovery Point, Director of Behavioral Health)

- Alvin Hall is located at the Bluefield location of Recovery Point and discussed his experience at his facility and what he knows about the other three facilities. Recovery Point does currently use the ACEs questionnaire and has also expressed an openness to start using a resiliency questionnaire.
- Screeners used at Recovery Point include anxiety, depression, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), stages of change upon entry to treatment, bipolar/mood disorders, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) with a referral to a neurologist, and more specific screeners post-intake assessment
- Approximately 95% of clients at the Bluefield location are also justice-involved.
- The types of trauma therapy services provided are dependent on the facility. Individual and group therapy of multiple types are provided, including trauma-specific therapy focusing on ACEs. A domestic-violence trauma therapy group exists at the women's facility. The specific types of therapy offered at each facility are based on workers' clinical backgrounds and experience so it is up to their discretion what is provided. The Huntington facility's clinical director is getting certified in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy.

- North Carolina has a bench card and a bench playbook for judges informing them about ACEs. West Virginia needs a similar one, especially since the state already has playbooks like it informing judges about topics such as domestic violence.
 - <https://www.nccourts.gov/assets/documents/publications/ACEs-Informed-Courts-bench-card-06102022.pdf?VersionId=OXca.tkfmfOSRwzD6XX8dwfX.9tiDnZ3>

General 2026 State Plan Updates

- Dan McCawley from the Recovery Subcommittee joined the meeting to discuss a key performance indicator (KPI) in their section of the Plan. They would like to get people with lived experience into carceral settings to speak with inmates and collect better intakes. Virginia has had success with this already. Multiple organizations in the state are doing reentry and want this as a goal. The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) has a policy that does not allow those with carceral backgrounds access to the jails and prisons.
- The next step is for Stephanie Thornton, Dan McCawley, and Amber Blankenship to set up a meeting with DCR representatives from the Courts Subcommittee to discuss this policy.
- Stephanie Thornton provided a brief update about her calls with each organization doing reentry, her communication with Chief Shawn Schwertfeger and Lata Menon about the Embedded Peers Program, and her meeting with Dan McCawley from West Virginia Sober Living about the Police and Peers Program.
- Stephanie Thornton is going to request data from John Bess on state ID refusal upon leaving carceral settings.

Additional Discussion

- Janine Breyel with the West Virginia Perinatal Partnership will have a table at the Public Defenders Conference and is identifying areas for more collaboration in the future.

Adjournment:

Stephanie closed the meeting by thanking all Subcommittee members for their attendance and participation. The Subcommittee will meet on Tuesday, June 9, 2026 at 11:00 AM.