

**JUDICIAL CONFERENCE OF INDIANA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Minutes
Carmel, Indiana
April 14, 2026**

1. Attendees:

- a. Members:** Brian Bade, Craig Bobay, Jonathan Brown, Judi Calhoun, Samuel Capps, Michael Christofeno, Marla Clark, MaryEllen Diekhoff, Aleksandra Dimitrijevic, Peter Foley (proxy for Elizabeth Tavitas), Danielle Gaughan, Craig Goedde, Kristina Kantar, Clayton Graham, Frances Gull, Jennifer Harrison, Elizabeth Hurley, Daniel Kelly (proxy for Lakshmi Reddy), Stephen Kitts, Jillian Kratochvil, Jeryl Leach, Stephenie LeMay-Luken, Sally McLaughlin, Kristen McVey, Jason McVicker, Bradley Mohler, Jennifer Newton, Jaime Oss, Hunter Reece, Marc Rothenberg, Loretta Rush, Matthew Sarber, Lori Schein (member and proxy for Andrew Bloch and Ellie Bright), Gregory Smith, James Snyder, Mark Spitzer, Adam Squiller, Richard Stalbrink, Stephanie Steele, Lisa Swaim, AmyMarie Travis.
- b. Not in attendance:** Andrew Bloch (Lori Schein proxy), Ellie Bright (Lori Schein proxy), Dustin Houchin, Clay Kellerman, Jason Mount, Lakshmi Reddy (Daniel Kelly proxy), Elizabeth Tavitas (Peter Foley proxy).
- c. Guests:** John Christ, Christopher Goff, Mark Massa, Justin McAdam, Derek Molter.
- d. Staff:** Noora Al-Nadheri, Jennifer Bauer, Chris Biehn, Adam Clay, Mary DePrez, Vicki Davis, Kathryn Dolan, Kelly Elliott, Michelle Goodman, Aaron Hood, Diane Mains, Mindy Pickett, Catheryne Pully, Robert Rath, Stephanie Rothenberg, Jeff Wiese, Josh Woodward.

- 2. Welcome and opening remarks.** Chief Justice Loretta Rush welcomed the Board. She discussed the Supreme Court's distribution of grant funds and the development of the budget for the next funding cycle. She shared that she will again seek funding for judicial security. Chief Justice Rush discussed salary adjustments and emphasized the importance of maintaining the quality of the judiciary. She will meet with legislative leaders to address this matter. Chief Justice Rush also reported that the Judicial Resources Committee was formed to develop a comprehensive process for evaluating judicial resources and making recommendations for future changes to meet the growing fiscal challenges. There will be a larger discussion regarding shared resources, particularly in rural communities. In addition, Chief Justice Rush explained that she has met with cabinet leadership to discuss partnerships and identify opportunities for greater collaboration.

3. **Minutes.** Chief Justice Rush made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held December 4, 2025. The motion carried unanimously.
4. **Court of Appeals report.** Judge Peter Foley, on behalf of Chief Judge Elizabeth Tavitias, provided an overview of highlights from the Court of Appeals' 2025 Annual Report. He reported that appellate case filings are trending upward each year, with the Court of Appeals issuing 2,122 opinions last year. The average age of a case is trending downward, with 1.7 months being the average age of a case between the completion of briefing and issuance of an opinion. Judge Foley shared that the Court of Appeals completed 36 "Appeals on Wheels" traveling oral arguments, which engaged over 6,000 students and teachers. He also reported that thirty-nine courts are operating a "Little Free Courthouse Library," and courts interested in establishing a library should contact the Court of Appeals for more information. Judge Foley noted that Emily Mertz is the new Director of Communication and should be contacted about matters related to traveling oral arguments.
5. **Indiana Judges Association (IJA) report.** President Judge Mark Spitzer reported that the legislative session concluded in March. Throughout the session, IJA met weekly with the Indiana Office of Court Services, Indiana Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, and lobbyists to monitor legislation. Judge Spitzer advised that the next legislative session will be a budget session during which the legislature can add or eliminate courts and judicial positions. Judge Spitzer encouraged board members to contact an IJA officer with any issues or concerns they may have regarding the upcoming session. He also shared that an IJA representative will attend each district meeting to provide updates on the association's activities and offer insight into the work being done. Chief Justice Rush noted that, as IJA President, Judge Spitzer serves on the Legislature's Interim Study Committee on Courts and the Judiciary.
6. **Indiana Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (ICJFCJ) report.** Judge Lori Schein, on behalf of President Judge Andrew Bloch, discussed how ICJFCJ continues to focus on building relationships with legislators and is interested in setting up informational sessions for legislators. Judge Schein reported that ICJFCJ is looking for new members and will have a table at the Spring Conference for those interested in joining.
7. **Pretrial Service Committee.** Chair Judge Mark Spitzer presented proposed amendments to the Pretrial Rules. The proposed amendments modify the qualifications of pretrial services staff and add an expiration date for a notice of intent to establish a certified pretrial services agency. The proposed amendments were previously published for public comment. Motion made by Judge Clayton Graham to adopt the proposed amendments, it was seconded by Judge Fran Gull and approved unanimously. The amended rules will become effective immediately.
8. **Problem-Solving Courts Committee.** Magistrate John Christ, on behalf of Chair Judge Christopher Buckley, presented proposed amendments to the Problem-Solving Court Rules. The proposed amendments modify the rules to align with the Adult Treatment Court Best

Practice Standards published by All Rise. Motion made by Judge Fran Gull to publish the rules for public comment, it was seconded by Judge Matthew Sarber and approved unanimously.

9. Probation Committee. Chair Judge Mark Smith presented proposed amendments to the Intrastate Transfer of Probation Supervision Rules. The proposed amendments are based on legislative changes and recommendations from probation departments. Motion made by Judge Stephenie LeMay-Luken to adopt the proposed amendments, it was seconded by Judge Jillian Kratochvil and approved unanimously. The amended rules will become effective July 1, 2026.

10. Judicial Resources Committee. Chair Justice Christopher Goff provided updates on the Judicial Resources Committee. The Committee has undertaken an initiative to assist those courts that are either highly used or underutilized. He explained that the Committee will distribute a notice and questionnaire to these courts to help identify areas of need and availability. Courts receiving the notice and questionnaire can contact the Committee's Best Practices Workgroup if they have any questions or need further assistance. Justice Goff explained that the process of requesting a new court will now be centralized in-house through the Committee. This approach will allow the Committee to present data to the legislature demonstrating the need for an additional court.

11. Court Security Bill. Justice Goff also provided an overview of the court security bill ([S.E.A. 291, Pub. L. No. 139-2026](#)), which requires public agencies to remove a judicial officer's personal information from publication. The legislation passed unanimously and became effective upon passage. The Office of Judicial Administration's General Counsel has posted information on its website to help judicial officers request the removal of their personal information from public agency publication. Judicial officers will still need to use private service providers to help ensure their personal information is removed from publications maintained by private entities. Justice Goff encouraged Board members to take advantage of other available resources, including the home assessments offered by the Indiana State Police.

12. Indiana Office of Judicial Administration (OJA) report. Chief Justice Rush reported that Justin Forkner, the former Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), concluded his service with OJA and has entered private practice. She outlined the process established to select the next CAO, which included gathering input from various stakeholders regarding the qualities and leadership needed for the position. Chief Justice Rush reported that Aaron Hood is now serving as the interim CAO.

Aaron Hood introduced himself to the Board and outlined his tenure with OJA. He emphasized that he is available to assist judicial officers and encouraged members to contact him if they are not sure who to reach out to on an issue. He reported that he is looking forward to the next legislative session and encouraged members to continue to maintain relationships with legislators.

13. Indiana Office of Court Service (IOCS) report. Executive Director Catheryne Pully introduced IOCS staff that were present, including the new staff liaison for the Board of Directors, Kelly Elliott. She provided the Board with information regarding upcoming education events and indicated that scholarship opportunities are available. She discussed the general inbox that IOCS has set up for legal research questions. She reported that the Domestic Relations Benchbook Committee completed the domestic relations template forms and finalized revisions to the Paternity Benchbook. In addition, Ms. Pully noted that the Guardianship Oversight Committee published its final report.

14. Court Technology report. Executive Director Mary DePrez reported that the implementation of the new e-filing system is delayed and there are no new updates. She noted that 9 counties are using the INjail application, with several additional counties expected to begin using it soon. She also reported an increase in disposition information transmitted to the Indiana State Police and explained how a court can verify that a defendant's disposition has been sent to the Indiana State Police. She noted that for every criminal conviction, the court must order that fingerprints be obtained if it has not already been completed. Court Technology is developing a cheat sheet for local jails outlining when fingerprints must be taken. Chief Justice Rush suggested that this information be shared in a Wednesday weekly message.

15. Next meeting: The 2026 meetings are scheduled for:

- September 2 - 10:30am - French Lick
- December 10 - 3:30pm - Carmel