

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Minutes of the 5th Meeting of the 2025 Interim

October 16, 2025

Call to Order and Roll Call

The fifth meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Judiciary was held on October 16, 2025, at 11:00 AM in Room 149 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Brandon J. Storm, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Brandon J. Storm, Co-Chair; Representative Daniel Elliott, Co-Chair; Senators Matthew Deneen, Gerald A. Neal, Michael J. Nemes, Aaron Reed, Reginald L. Thomas, and Phillip Wheeler; and Representatives Kim Banta, John Blanton, Lindsey Burke, Jennifer Decker, Stephanie Dietz, Patrick Flannery, Nima Kulkarni, Derek Lewis, Mary Lou Marzian, Kimberly Poore Moser, Jason Nemes, Jason Petrie, T.J. Roberts, and Mitch Whitaker.

Guests: Representative Susan Witten; George Eklund, Director of Education and Advocacy, Coalition for the Homeless; Randy White, Commissioner, Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ); Dr. Clark Lester, Chief of Mental Health Services, DJJ; Nancy Galvagni, President and CEO, Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA); Caroline Ruschell, Chief Executive Officer, Children's Advocacy Centers of Kentucky (CACs); Margaret McGladrey, PhD, Assistant Professor, College of Public Health, University of Kentucky (UK); Joyce Johnson, Clinical Director of Outpatient Services, Stepworks; and Jody Perry, Jailer, Larue County.

LRC Staff: Roberta Kiser, Stephanie Larkin, Matissa Robinson, Eric Rodenberg, Randall Roof, Joshua Shelepak, and Robert Wright.

Approval of Minutes of September 18, 2025, Meeting

A motion was made by Representative Roberts and seconded by Senator Wheeler to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2025, meeting. Minutes were approved by voice vote without objection.

2025 RS HB 534 - AN ACT relating to actions for forcible entry and detainer

Representative Witten and George Eklund, Director of Education and Advocacy, Coalition for the Homeless, discussed 2025 RS HB 534, otherwise known as "AN ACT relating to actions for forcible entry and detainer." Representative Witten discussed the provisions of, circumstances surrounding, and significance of the bill; listed states who have passed similar legislation; and summarized key provisions of the bill related to housing barriers to

Committee meeting materials may be accessed online at <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/CommitteeDocuments/8>

tenants, landlords' rights, and complementing larger efforts to increase housing supply and affordability.

Mr. Eklund detailed scenarios where a tenant faces eviction; identified the nature of a forcible detainer action; outlined the forcible entry and detainer process; discussed provisions of the bill related to landlords' rights; discussed the effect the bill would have on the court system; and discussed the impact of the bill, stating expungement of no-fault evictions helps decrease housing instability.

In response to Senator Wheeler, Mr. Eklund further discussed the scope of the bill.

In response to Senator Nemes, Representative Witten and Mr. Eklund confirmed provisions of the bill related to scenarios where a tenant is required to pay money owed.

In response to Senator Thomas, Representative Witten confirmed the bill only applies to dismissed forcible detainer actions.

In response to Chair Storm, Mr. Eklund confirmed a dismissal requires a judge's order, and discussed the frequency in which juveniles appear in forcible detainer petitions.

2025 RS SB 111 - AN ACT relating to juvenile justice

Randy White, Commissioner, DJJ; Dr. Clark Lester, Chief of Mental Health Services, DJJ; and Nancy Galvagni, President and CEO, KHA, discussed 2025 RS SB 111, otherwise known as "AN ACT relating to juvenile justice."

Commissioner White discussed the provisions of, the circumstances surrounding, and the need for the bill related to the proposed high acuity mental health treatment facility; outlined the types of youth who would be served in the proposed facility; presented the case study of a youth who would have benefited from the proposed facility; discussed the gap the proposed facility would fill in DJJ's spectrum of facilities and care options; detailed how the proposed facility would meet the needs of referred youth in need of high acuity support, as well as keep staff and clinicians safe; illustrated how the design of the proposed facility would improve efficiency of services, safety of youth and staff, and security while providing individualized care and meeting statutory requirements; discussed provisions of the bill related to population of the proposed facility; stated the cost of the proposed facility; and reiterated the need for the proposed facility.

Commissioner White further discussed the provisions of, the circumstances surrounding, and the need for the portions of the bill related to two proposed female juvenile detention centers (JDCs); discussed significant construction projects at all JDCs; outlined the concept design and needs of the proposed facilities; and reiterated the need for all of the proposed

facilities.

Dr. Lester discussed statistics related to juveniles referred to DJJ for inpatient psychiatric care; and outlined the types of youth who would be served in the proposed high acuity mental health treatment facility.

Ms. Galvagni cited statistics related to the increasing amount of high acuity youth admitted to private hospitals; spoke in favor of the bill, citing several cases where hospital staff have been attacked or injured by high acuity youth, and the strain on services to other patients presented by serving high acuity youth; and reiterated the need for the proposed high acuity mental health treatment facility.

In response to Senator Wheeler, Dr. Lester clarified the three state psychiatric hospitals do not serve juveniles; and discussed long-term residency in Kentucky's adult psychiatric hospitals. Commissioner White discussed concerns related to treating juveniles in adult psychiatric hospitals.

In response to Representative Banta, Commissioner White outlined DJJ's plan to staff the proposed high acuity mental health treatment facility.

In response to Representative Burke, Commissioner White outlined DJJ's plan to retain staff for the proposed high acuity mental health treatment facility; and discussed the decision to make the proposed facility a 24-bed facility. Dr. Lester discussed the estimated average length of stay for a high acuity youth in the proposed high acuity mental health treatment facility; stated DJJ would not populate the proposed facility with youth who could not eventually be transferred to a regular DJJ facility; and stated youth housed in the proposed facility would be pre-adjudicated youth. Ms. Galvagni confirmed private hospitals would continue to admit high acuity youth if the proposed facility is built.

In response to Representative Moser, Commissioner White and Dr. Lester discussed the process for determining the eligibility for transfer to the proposed facility. Ms. Galvagni discussed defining a high acuity youth.

In response to Representative Nemes, Commissioner White outlined the intake process for high acuity youth, stating DJJ often has little to no information regarding their medical needs or mental health status when receiving referred youth.

In response to Representative Marzian, Commissioner White and Ms. Galvagni further discussed the decision to make the proposed facility a 24-bed facility.

In response to Chair Storm, Commissioner White cited the needs for the proposed facility

and significant renovations as reasons why an existing Marion County facility has not been chosen for the proposed facility; and discussed the locations and cost of the proposed high acuity mental health treatment facility and the two proposed female JDCs.

Children's Advocacy Centers of Kentucky

Caroline Ruschell, Chief Executive Officer, CACs, discussed the value of CACs; services provided by CACs; the appearance of CAC offices; statistics related to CAC clientele and CAC services provided in FY2025; CAC's Multidisciplinary Enhancement Project (MEP); and CAC provided training related to prevention of child abuse.

Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) Treatment in State and County Correctional Facilities

Margaret McGladrey, PhD, Assistant Professor, College of Public Health, UK; Joyce Johnson, Clinical Director of Outpatient Services, Stepworks; and Jody Perry, Jailer, Larue County, discussed OUD treatment in state and county correctional facilities, specifically the use of the long-acting injectable (LAI) buprenorphine.

Ms. Johnson outlined Stepworks' organizational history; detailed Stepworks' services related to providing the LAI buprenorphine used in the treatment of OUD in state and county correctional facilities; and discussed re-entry services provided by Stepworks.

Mr. Perry outlined his professional experience with Stepworks and the Department of Correction's Regional Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) program related to implementing OUD treatment in the Larue County Detention Center (LCDC); and spoke in favor of the use of buprenorphine, citing a reduced burden on LCDC staff and a decreased amount of seized contraband.

Dr. McGladrey discussed how the use of the LAI buprenorphine complies with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) when administered in the course of OUD treatment in state and county correctional facilities; detailed how the use of buprenorphine reduces implementation issues in correctional facilities; and presented statistics related to post-incarceration outcomes for individuals treated with buprenorphine during incarceration.

In response to Senator Wheeler, Ms. Johnson emphasized the importance of medication-assisted OUD treatment. Dr. McGladrey further emphasized the importance of medication-assisted OUD treatment, detailing the physical facilities in which LAIs are administered. Mr. Perry and Ms. Johnson outlined the benefits of LAIs.

In response to Representative Moser, Ms. Johnson confirmed treatment timelines required by the 1115 waiver; explained buprenorphine's effects; discussed Stepworks' services related to re-entry case management; and Mr. Perry spoke in favor of re-entry services.

In response to Representative Nemes, Ms. Johnson discussed the average length of post-incarceration treatment for individuals receiving buprenorphine.

In response to Senator Thomas, Mr. Perry discussed factors driving success related to an emphasis on re-entry services in rural areas.

In response to Co-Chair Elliott, Mr. Perry confirmed he has had conversations with other county jailers regarding the use of the LAI buprenorphine.

In response to Chair Storm, Dr. McGladrey confirmed the LAI buprenorphine is FDA approved. Mr. Perry confirmed the LAI buprenorphine is administered by injection; discussed the decrease in seizure of crushed medication in cells; and stated Stepworks' employees administer the LAI. Ms. Johnson discussed how treatment is administered for individuals post-incarceration; and stated how often individuals are required to take the LAI as compared to other medications post-incarceration.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:06 PM.