

SENTENCING COMMISSION MINUTES – pending approval	
Committee	Utah Sentencing Commission
Date	Wednesday, May 7th, 2025
Time	12 PM – 2 PM
Location	Hybrid Zoom Virtual meeting – Capitol Board Room 240, Capitol Building
Members Present	<p><u>Virtual Attendance</u>: Ann Marie Taliaferro, Neira Siaperas, Alex Garcia (for Jared Garcia)</p> <p><u>In-Person Attendance</u>: Tom Ross, Jeff Buhman (for Rob VanDyke), Ryan Robinson, Matthew Hansen, Scott Stephenson, Stewart Young, Pam Vickrey, Christina Zidow</p>
Staff & Visitors	<p><u>Staff</u>: Tiffany Nguyen, Dan Strong, Dr. Michele Leslie, Marlesse Jones</p> <p><u>Visitors</u>: Brett Robinson, Trisha Reynolds, Albert Cramer</p>
Agenda Item	Welcome and Introductions – <i>Dan Strong, Director</i>
Notes	<p>Dan Strong welcomes the commission to the May 7th, 2025 Utah Sentencing Commission meeting.</p> <p>The commission reviewed the previous meeting minutes from Thursday, February 27th, 2025.</p> <p>Motion: Jeff Buhman (for Rob VanDyke) motions for the commission to approve the minutes as presented. Ryan Robinson seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.</p>
Agenda Item	Presentation on Corrections Parenting Program – <i>Trisha Reynolds, UDC</i>
Notes	<p>Trisha Reynolds presents the Family-Based Alternative Justice, a presentation on Preventing Family Separation in Utah.</p> <p>Children are considered the hidden victims when talking about criminal justice and connecting to incarcerated parents. About 2,000 babies are born to incarcerated women annually with 4% of women reporting being pregnant at time of admission to state prison. The CDC estimates that the lifetime cost associated with child maltreatment total over \$121 billion.</p> <p>The Advisory Board Membership include representatives from several agencies such as the Department of Corrections, the Children’s Center of Utah, Department of Health and Human Services and Intermountain Health Care.</p> <p>Best practices include considering multiple alternative sentencing and program options that intervene at different points in the criminal justice process, ranging from arrest to post-conviction and/or reentry to the community. Another best practice includes non-custodial measures that should be prioritized when children will be affected, including for pre-trial detention, so as to prevent the negative impact on children of having a parent in prison.</p> <p>Utah’s Provisional Plan includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pre-Trial Diversion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Child’s Best Interest Law ○ Alternative Sentencing Options (Probation, Electronic Monitoring, Community Service, etc) ● Sentencing Diversion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Early Release ○ Improved Re-entry Planning and Community Supervision ● Parole Diversion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parole Violator Program

	Proposed Legislation of the 2025 Legislative Session included mandatory data collection. The universal pregnancy screening passed in jails. The change in composition of the CPEC Advisory Board passed with the addition of other agencies such as DFFS, AOC, a Prosecutor Attorney and a Defense Attorney.
Agenda Item	Check-In with SOMAC / DVOT – Dr. Michele Leslie, SOMAC
Notes	<p>Dr. Michele Leslie reviews the work of SOMAC and DVOT. DVOT is looking at legislation to widen the risk assessment goals in domestic violence reported cases. DVOT is comparing findings in other states of domestic violence risk assessments. An evaluation is also being reviewed in DVOT of a most effective risk assessment in the incarcerated population.</p> <p>Dr. Leslie then reviews the work of SOMAC updates. Public education is becoming a focus for the group to help the public understand the registry and the movement it implements. SOMAC will also be working on treatment standards in partnership with UDC.</p>
Agenda Item	CCJJ / Sentencing Commission Interim Proposal for Policy Analysis – Tom Ross, CCJJ Executive Director
Notes	<p>Tom Ross discusses the interim proposal for policy analysis. The Governor’s Executive Order to enhance Utah’s Criminal Justice Strategy.</p> <p>Governor's Executive Order 2025-2: This order has two main pieces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agency Review of Statutes: State agencies are tasked with evaluating statutes they enforce or are responsive to, suggesting changes if needed (e.g., outdated, ineffective, incorrect penalties). CCJJ will work with state agencies and legislative folks to develop a "rubric of how the agencies are going to do this" by October 2025, with a first report due July 2026. ● Criminal Justice Policy Framework: Establish principles and provide recommendations to the governor and legislature based on a framework encompassing public safety, deterrence, proportionality, judicial discretion, rehabilitation, recidivism, costs, capacity, victim needs, and data. <p>Both the Judiciary Committee and Law Enforcement Committee are focusing on reviewing bills impacting criminal penalties, assessing their impact on costs and outcomes, and exploring a "more comprehensive approach to criminal justice policy."</p> <p>Proposed solutions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Analysis of Bills:</u> The idea is to provide "basic analysis on a potential bill on the front end" to legislators. This could include pulling up related statutes, providing data on average serving times for similar offenses, and brief comparisons to surrounding states. The goal is "informing without taking away a legislator's right to run a bill." ● <u>"Look Back" Evaluation:</u> A system to "look back every three years or something to see how did that all play out." This would assess if the legislation achieved its intended goals and identify areas for improvement. ● <u>CCJJ's Neutral Role:</u> Emphasized is CCJJ's role as a "trusted source somewhere along the way for data research...facilitating," rather than advocating for specific policies, to maintain its neutrality and build trust with the legislature. ● <u>Working Group Formation:</u> Suggestion to form a working group, similar to the habitual offender initiative, to discuss these ideas and develop short-term and longer-term strategies. This group would report back to commissions.

Agenda Item	Sentencing Commission Subcommittee Updates – Dan Strong, USC Director
Notes	<p>Dan Strong presents the updates of the USC’s subcommittees.</p> <p>The Adult Guidelines Subcommittee reviewed new offenses from the last legislative session for classification in sentencing guidelines, with most achieving consensus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● House Bill 38 (Gang Recruiting): Discussed the classification of gang recruiting offenses. Aggravated recruiting (causing injury, distress, or using a weapon) was deemed a Person offense. A vote is pending on whether basic gang recruiting (soliciting, enticing, intimidating minors) should be classified as a Person offense or an Other offense, as consensus was not reached. <p>A vote will be held at the next meeting to discuss the approval of an adjusted review of gang recruiting sentencing guidelines.</p> <p>The Anomalies Subcommittee focused its meeting on follow-up to House Bill 403 (Pornographic Performances). Recommendations were to break out "pornographic performance" from "distributing pornographic material" into separate offenses in statute, without changing elements, for clarity. Also recommended changing the mens rea for public place performances involving minors from "negligently failed to determine the minor's age" to "knowingly or recklessly in the presence of a minor."</p> <p>The Juvenile Subcommittee has not yet met but will review current guidelines for updates and discussion of other items.</p>
Agenda Item	Interim Goals – Open Discussion
Notes	Interim goals were discussed priorly in the meeting. No additional goals were provided by the commission.
Agenda Item	Public Comment
	<p>Marlesse Jones addresses the commission that Matthew Hansen will be stepping down from the Victim Services Commission, and as designee for the USC, as he has been appointed to the 2nd District bench.</p> <p>Albert Cramer addresses the commission to push forward for a risk based registry for reoffenders.</p>
Agenda Item	Adjourn
Notes	<p>Motion: Tom Ross motions for the commission to adjourn. Christina Zidow seconds the motion. The motion was unanimously agreed upon.</p> <p>The commission adjourns.</p> <p>Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 26th, 2025 from Noon-2 PM. Location: <u>Anchor Location</u>: CCJJ Conference Room, E. Senate Building Google Meet Link: meet.google.com/gac-rqky-iqw</p>
DISCLAIMER	Please note that these meeting minutes have been primarily generated or assisted by an artificial intelligence (AI) tool. These notes have been edited by staff to ensure accuracy and completeness.