

APPROVED - MINUTES	
Committee	UTAH INDIGENT DEFENSE COMMISSION
Date, Time	Thursday, March 19, 2026, 2 PM – 4 PM
Location	370 E South Temple, Suite 500, Salt Lake City, UT 84111. Also, virtually via Zoom.
Commissioners Present	Chair John Kwarm, Mary Corporon, Kendall Thomas, Wally Bugden, Lorene Kamalu, Margaret Lindsay, Michael Zimmerman, Paul Dodd, Tom Ross, Pam Vickrey, Aaron McKnight, Michael Drechsel, Sen. Todd Weiler.
Commissioners Excused	Rep. Stephanie Gricius, Richard Mauro
Staff	Matthew Barraza, executive director; Adam Trupp, assistant director; Joshua Buhay, financial analyst; Daniel Lancaster, Capital Mitigation & Forensic Social Work; Katriina Adair, Grant program manager.
Guests	Candace Reid, Southern Utah Regional Managing Defender.
Agenda Item	Welcome & Introductions
	Chair John Kwarm welcomed the attendees and asked them to introduce themselves.
Agenda Item	Approval of Minutes
	Commissioner Ross moved to approve the previous meeting's minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Drechsel. The motion was passed unanimously by all present.
Agenda Item	Southern Utah Regional Managing Defender
	Matthew Barraza stated that Candace Reid had previously been the Managing Defender for Iron, Beaver and Kane counties for three years and had recently had Sanpete, Sevier, Wayne, and Grand counties added to her as the new Southern Utah Regional Managing Defender. He noted that the IDC Staff and Candace Reid were currently looking for an administrative assistant to assist with her workload.
Agenda Item	FY27 Appropriations Review
	Matthew Barraza started the review by summarizing the three funding requests to the legislature for ongoing grant funding, ongoing funding for IADD, and ongoing funding for compensation to correct a funding

shortage due to COLA and other compensation increases. He stated that the IDC was awarded \$700,000 for the grant program as one-time funding, which would necessitate the IDC to request renewal the next year. The funding for compensation was also awarded, but he noted that the request for funding for IADD was not awarded, which would lengthen already one-year-plus wait times on appeals.

Matthew Barraza stated that IDC staff and IADD's Chief Appellate Officer had been proactive on lobbying for funds and had started early with extensive help from the Governor's Office. He stated that he had met with members of the Governor's Office who were receptive to potential supplementary funding during the interim session and that IDC Staff would be strategizing on messaging and the enlisting of partners to assist in messaging and lobbying for additional funding for the IDC and IADD.

Commissioner Ross stated that Matthew Barraza and Adam Trupp did everything in their power to lobby for additional funds during the session. He continued to state that the IDC was close to getting additional funds appropriated for IADD but that the legislature instead awarded funds to the non-profit AJFA. He stated that much of the legislature did not understand what the IDC did which resulted in them de-prioritizing the IDC for additional funding.

Senator Weiler asked what IADD's AI use policy was, to which Matthew Barraza stated that Thomson Reuter's Westlaw accounts recently added built-in AI assistance in tabling briefs which saved clerk or attorney time which still required attorney review to ensure absence of AI hallucinations.

Senator Weiler stated that he had noticed an attack on public defense from the House-side of the legislature during the session. He noted that his private firm brought on externs from local universities to help and asked if IADD could create projects for interns or externs to work on, which he would help champion. Matthew Barraza thanked Commissioner Ross for the suggestion and for offering to assist.

Senator Weiler noted that the IDC was going to lose two allies in the House with two IDC-supportive Representatives not filing for re-election.

Agenda Item	FY27 Grant Policy
	Matthew Barraza stated that previous and current IDC grant funding policy was that once a grant was awarded, funding was renewed every year unless an issue with the grant was identified during monitoring; if the

IDC or a county noticed an issue with the grant, they would work together to resolve the issue if possible and end the grant and return those funds to the funding pool if not. Matthew Barraza noted that when that had happened in the past, counties would ask if they could reallocate the underperforming grant’s funding to another purpose, to which the IDC would say no per grant policy.

Matthew Barraza continued that since grant funding had remained flat over the previous few years, staff was recommending amending grant policy to allow counties to reallocate funding within line items when the system identified more efficient uses for the funding and that the requested change would be handled as a renewal rather than as a new grant request. He stated this change would give counties flexibility on reallocating funding on grants while also incentivizing them to internally review the performance of their grant-funded programs.

Commissioners discussed the pros and cons of the proposed policy change, but at the end, the matter was left undecided. The commission will seek further clarification from staff before making a decision.

Agenda Item

Highlights of Bills Passed by the Legislature in 2026

Matt Barraza highlighted a number of bills relating to adult criminal justice that were passed by the legislature during the 2026 General Session: HB 274, HB 495, HB 94, SJR 1, SB 134, and SB 323.

Commissioners commented on the ramifications of the various bills, particularly SB 134, which adds new judges, and SB 323, which creates the Department of Criminal Justice. Commissioner Tom Ross, executive director of the Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice, said that the new department’s organizational structure will clarify leadership roles and improve flow of communication, and create efficiencies. The IDC will be part of the new department, but it will retain its independence and the Commission’s role won’t be affected by the organizational changes.

Commissioner Pam Vickrey, executive director of the Utah Juvenile Defender Attorneys, talked about the legislature’s willingness to work with the Criminal Justice Oversight Committee to address issues affecting youth and juvenile justice, particularly with regard to drug use in schools. She said there is a lot of confusion about the difference between non-judicial intervention and school-based intervention, and how schools can respond to students’ drug use. The biggest change was putting a cap on how many times schools can intervene (3 times) before referring a

	<p>youth offender to the juvenile justice system. She also talked about HB 48, which not only changed the recidivism definition but also how and when a young person who is charged in adult court can be housed provisionally in a youth facility. Commissioner Vickrey was concerned about this bill because it was clearly based on one particular case and about the narrative used to describe the youth. She talked about SB 167 that makes changes to the plan to reintegrate youth to school, and finally about HB 465 to create suspended detention time for youth, which was not passed. Pam will continue to work with the bill's sponsor in preparation for next year's legislative session. In conclusion, Commissioner Vickrey highlighted an initiative to create a youth violence coordinator position for Salt Lake, Weber, and Davis counties to coordinate between the counties to serve higher risk youth. She expressed appreciation to all who collaborated with her and the Criminal Justice Oversight Committee.</p> <p>Commissioner Ross applauded Pam Vickrey's and the Criminal Justice Oversight Committee's work on juvenile delinquency matters during the legislative session and throughout the year. He also expressed satisfaction that the recidivism definition was not changed because that would have complicated data reporting and comparison across various years.</p> <p>Adam Trupp's report on the child welfare bills was postponed until the next commission meeting because there was not enough time.</p>
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Agenda Item	Public Comment
	None
Next Meeting	Thursday, April 16, 2026.
Adjourn	Meeting adjourned at 4 PM