

**NEVADA'S COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
FOR THE PROTECTION AND PERMANENCY OF DEPENDENT
CHILDREN (CIP)
COORDINATOR'S ANNUAL TRAINING ASSESSMENT
REPORT DECEMBER 2009**



*Nevada Supreme Court
Administrative Office of the Courts*

**STATE OF NEVADA
COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)
COORDINATOR'S ANNUAL TRAINING ASSESSMENT REPORT – DECEMBER 2009**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The past year has been one of the best years yet for the Court Improvement Program. Building on its foundation and continuing the work of such a progressive and proactive program has been a true honor. I have also appreciated the opportunity to work with the leadership of Supreme Court Chief Justice James Hardesty, Associate Justice Nancy M. Saitta, and Associate Justice Michael Douglas. Without their wisdom, clear direction, passion, and patience, the Nevada Court Improvement Program would not be where it is today. Such strong leadership and advocacy protects the rights of all of our children and families, and assures CIP will continue to make progress toward improving outcomes for children and families.

CHAPTER 1

COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) SELECT COMMITTEE

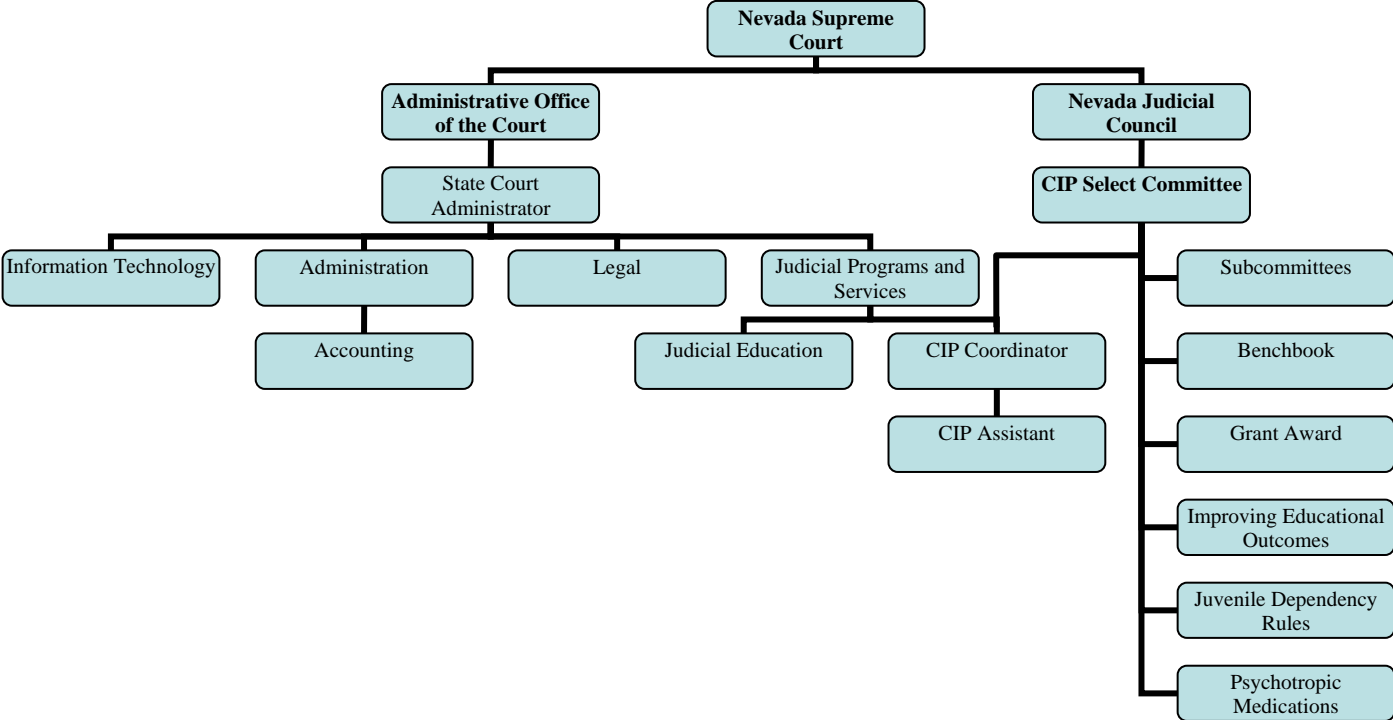
The Court Improvement Program is a multidisciplinary program that seeks improvement of interrelated systems serving children and families who enter the child welfare system. The program operates through team-oriented court and agency initiatives. The goal of CIP is to make the system more efficient and reduce the amount of time child victims of abuse and neglect spend in the foster care system.

As a standing committee of the Judicial Council of the State of Nevada, the Committee serves in an advisory capacity. Each year the CIP program begins with the CIP Annual Meeting/Retreat where the CIP Select Committee reviews progress on the strategic plans and priorities for the current year. Agendas for the subsequent quarterly meetings are structured around specific action items and are developed by Select Committee members in coordination with the CIP coordinator. The CIP Select Committee Chair serves on CIP-related subcommittees, helps direct and oversees policy development, and reviews and approves new project proposals for funding. A CIP Select Committee Roster is attached as **Appendix A**.

The CIP Select Committee is directly supported by two individuals employed by the Nevada Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), specifically, the CIP Coordinator and a full time CIP Assistant. Additionally, CIP is supported by other departments within the AOC on an as-needed basis. The following organizational chart depicts the structure of CIP as well as the Supreme Court and departments within the AOC which support CIP.

Finally, the work of CIP could not be accomplished without the dedicated teamwork and assistance of Nevada's federal, state, and local collaborative partners, which are listed in the attached **Appendix B**.

COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



CHAPTER 2

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES AND STATUS

The table starting on the next page lists the activities found in the Education and Training (or “Training”) Strategic Plan as well as providing a list of initiatives associated with each activity and the status of each of these initiatives.

**STATE OF NEVADA
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Education and Training (ED) or “Training” Strategy ED1

Provide training opportunities for child welfare stakeholders, lawyers, members of the judiciary to keep current on national trends, federal child welfare law, and best practices

Strategic Plan Activity Code	Current CIP Initiatives	Status
<p style="text-align: center;">ED 1.1</p> <p style="text-align: left; margin-top: 20px;"><i>(continued on next page)</i></p>	<p>Send up to three representatives to national conferences.</p> <p style="text-align: left; margin-top: 20px;"><i>(continued on next page)</i></p>	<p>Washoe County Deputy Public Defenders Jennifer Rains and Paige Dollinger attended the ABA conference on Improving Representation for Parents in the Child Welfare System: <i>Representing Your Client and Advocating for Change in Challenging Times</i>: The 2009 National Conference on Children and the Law May 13-16, 2009. Attendees will provide a 1-hour presentation on best practices at the Youth Summit scheduled in September 2010. (See AP6.3).</p> <p>An analyst with the Administrative Office of the Court’s Judicial Programs and Services Division attended the 12th National Child Welfare Data and Technology Conference June 22-24, 2009 to gain a better understanding of national standards for data collection on juvenile cases. The analyst is involved in finalizing Phase II Uniform System of Judicial Reporting requirements for juvenile case types and has already applied information gained at the Conference to data collection, identifying outcome measures, and analyzing of the CIP Early Representation pilot project.</p> <p>Tom Morton, Director of the Clark County Department of Family Services, attended the National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators Child Welfare Directors’ Policy Summit in Washington, D.C., September 14-16, 2009. Mr. Morton submitted a CD and binder of materials to the CIP office as part of his report that will be delivered at the January 22, 2010, CIP meeting.</p>

Strategic Plan Activity Code	Current CIP Initiatives	Status
ED 1.1 <i>(continued)</i>	Send up to three representatives to national conferences.	<p>Nevada Supreme Court Associate Justice and CIP Chair Nancy Saitta extended invitations to attend the Third National Judicial Leadership Summit on the Protection of Children sponsored by the Pew Charitable Trust and Casey Family Programs to Eighth Judicial District Family Court and Lead Model Court Judge Diane Steel, Clark County Department of Family Services Director Tom Morton, Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) Administrator Diane Comeaux, and the CIP Coordinator. The Summit was held October 15-17, 2009, in Austin, TX and the team of five participated.</p> <p>Prior to attending the Summit and working with Administration for Children and Families Region IX Representatives, Jewel Roberts and Linda Mitchell, retired Judge CIP Contract Liaison Joanne Brown, Executive Director of Government Relations Office for the National Center of State Courts Kay Farley, Principal Court Management Consultant Dick Van Duizend, and DCFS Quality Improvement Manager Jan Fragale, preparatory materials were gathered and distributed to the team by the CIP Coordinator and Assistant.</p> <p>In November 2009, CIP training opportunities such as the Beyond the Bench conference in California in June 2010 were distributed to judges and masters who have calendars of NRS432B cases.</p>
ED1.2	Appoint CIP member to work with Youth Advisory Councils as required by FCIA (aka Chaffee)	Appointment to be made at the January 22, 2010, quarterly CIP meeting.

Education and Training (ED) or “Training” Strategy ED2

Develop and implement continuing education programs and materials for Judges and Juvenile Hearing Masters on child welfare issues

Strategic Plan Activity Code	Current CIP Initiatives	Status
ED2.1	In collaboration with the Judicial Education Division of the AOC and national consultants, establish a baseline for training curriculum and priorities	Request granted to form a training Ad Hoc Working Group to be appointed approved by CIP Chair Justice Saitta. A meeting was held between the AOC Manager of Judicial Education and his staff, and the CIP Coordinator, on December 10, 2009, to discuss the logistics, assistance from Judicial Education staff, budget, and potential dates for the Youth Summit in September 2010. A list of training issues developed by CIP Coordinator was provided to the Judicial Education Manger.
ED2.2	Develop “nutshell” dependency training in conjunction with agency, AOC Judicial Education, correlated with the Judicial Benchbook on child welfare cases for courtroom practice	The Ad Hoc Working Group will be utilized to advise the development of the curriculum.
ED2.3	Adapt “nutshell” dependency course as a 4-hour refresher courses (for subsequent years)	The Ad Hoc Working Group will be utilized to advise the development of the curriculum.
ED2.4	Provide training on child welfare issues at annual Family Law Judges and Nevada District Judges Association conferences	Agenda was already established for 2009 conferences; the Ad Hoc Working Group will collaborate with AOC Judicial Education staff to schedule training for the 2010 judicial conferences. The CIP Coordinator made a connection between the AOC Judicial Education Manager, his staff, and Judge James Payne from Indiana. Judge Payne offered his PowerPoint presentation on the Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSR) to be used at an appropriate training for Judges, and the CIP Coordinator shared that information along with contact information for Judge Payne.
ED2.5	Send up to two judicial officers to Child Abuse and Neglect Institute (CANI) National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) training	No applications were received in 2009. In addition to the existing link to NCJFCJ on the CIP webpage, the CIP Coordinator will continue sending out email to Judges and Hearing Masters regarding similar training opportunities during 2010.

Education and Training (ED) or “Training” Strategy ED3

Develop and implement continuing education programs and materials for court staff involved in child welfare issues

Strategic Plan Activity Code	Current CIP Initiatives	Status
ED3.1	Identify and develop baseline training and education material for court staff involved in child welfare cases	<p>The original plan to distribute information from the Senior Model Court was modified as CIP members were notified that materials would be available in the CIP office, and electronic versions would be provided upon request. Due to the large volume of the dependency manual materials and the specific and technical information regarding one specific case management system utilized in the Second Judicial District, the above materials were not used. Additional materials for the webpage may be considered. A CIP display board with information about piloted projects and the state and federal partnership was put on display throughout the 2009 Court Staff Conference. Color printouts of statewide piloted projects and CIP contact and webpage information was disseminated to 150 participants.</p> <p>A one-page CIP informational brochure was developed and will be circulated at the 1st quarterly CIP Select Committee meeting in 2010.</p>
ED3.2	Update training and education material for court staff (for subsequent years)	
ED3.3	Provide training on child welfare issues at the Court Administrators and Clerks Conference	

Education and Training (ED) or “Training” Strategy ED5
Support training and education for specific groups of stakeholders

Strategic Plan Activity Code	Current CIP Initiatives	Status
<p>ED5.1</p> <p><i>(continued on next page)</i></p>	<p>Work with stakeholders to develop training programs and materials for stakeholders regarding best practices in child welfare cases, including: ASFA mandates and timeframe requirements, the <i>Resource Guidelines</i>, and other best practices in child protection cases, adoption stability, behavioral health, child development, educational rights/services, roles and responsibilities, increasing parental involvement, meaningful visitation, older youth, and new child welfare agency policies and practices</p> <p>Licensed Kinship Caregivers</p> <p><i>(continued on next page)</i></p>	<p>CIP funded and administered 11 contracts/subgrant agreements over the course of 1 year, including those listed below. These include working with Supreme Court and AOC staff as well as staff from each of our statewide partners. Collaborating entities are listed in parenthesis within the project descriptions below, together with numerous community volunteers (identified as our collaborative partners in Appendix B to this report) on the following pilot projects:</p> <p>Sierra Association of Foster Families was the grantee for the Licensed Kinship Caregivers Project. The project, funded at \$18,000, reinforces relative caregivers as an important resource for the child welfare system not only for the stability they provide to children, but for their ability to reduce or ameliorate the impact of the removal of the children from their parent(s). Although the project serves all 85 “licensed kinship foster parents” with services and support, the majority of these caregivers are single grandmothers, many in their late 60s and 70s, and the children most likely to be in their care, are older (8+ years). Recognizing the special challenges faced by these caretakers, this project provides ongoing day-to-day programs developed specifically to help address issues of youth placed in the homes of relatives. Those trainings included Lifebooks (offered year round), Dependency Court Proceedings (05/04/09), Six Heart Emotions/Grief (05/04/09),</p>

APPENDIX A

Judicial Council of the State of Nevada
COURT IMPROVEMENT FOR THE PROTECTION AND PERMANENCY
OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN (CIP) SELECT COMMITTEE
(Revised August 27, 2009)

Justice Nancy M. Saitta, Chair
Supreme Court of Nevada

Diane J. Comeaux
Administrator
Division of Child and Family Services

William "Bill" E. Fowler
Executive Director
Nevada CASA Association, Inc.

Tom Morton
Director
Clark County Dept of Family Services

Kathleen M. O'Leary
Chief Deputy Public Defender
Washoe County Public Defender's
Office

Judge Andrew Puccinelli
District Court Judge
4th Judicial District Court

Cynthia "Cindy" Pyzel
Chief Deputy Attorney General
Office of the *Nevada* Attorney General

Kevin Schiller
Director
Washoe County Dept of Social
Services

Judge Deborah E. Schumacher
District Court Judge
2nd Judicial District Court

Assemblywoman Debbie Smith
Assembly District 30, *Nevada*

Chief Judge Teresa Sprouse
Tribal Judge
Duckwater Shoshone Tribal Court

Judge Cynthia Dianne Steel
District Court Judge
8th Judicial District Court! Family
Division

Ron Titus
Director and State Court Administrator
Administrative Office of the Courts

Erika Pike Turner, Esq.
Attorney at Law
Gordon Silver

Janice Wolf, Esq.
Attorney at Law
Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada

Members Emeritus
Mike Capello
Consultant

Judge Michael Gibbons
District Court Judge
9th Judicial District Court

Mary Herzik
Director
Washoe County CASA

Tammy Tovey Stephenson
Senior Deputy Attorney General
Office of the *Nevada* Attorney General

Pat Thacker
Director
Clark County CASA

Committee Staff
Sheryl A. Overstreet, CIP Coordinator
Robbie Taft, Administrative Assistant
Court Improvement Program (CIP)
Administrative Office of the Courts

APPENDIX B
LIST OF NEVADA COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Administration for Children and Families
Administrative Office of the Courts
Attorney General's Office
Attorneys for Children
Attorneys for Parents
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Casey Family Programs
Child and Family Futures Program
Children's Bureau
Clancy Productions
Clark County Department of Family Services
Clark County Foster and Adoptive Parent Association
Clark County Special Public Defender's Office
Community Volunteers
Court Improvement Program Select Committee & Members Emeritus
Creating Effective Organizations
Department of Public Safety State Parole & Probation
District Attorney's Offices (Carson City, Clark, Lander, and Washoe Counties)
Division of Child & Family Services
Foster Parents
Government Financial Management, Inc
Great Basin CASA
Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada
National Association of Drug Court Professionals
National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators
National Foster Parents Association
National Resource Centers
Nevada CASA Association, Inc.
Nevada Indian Commission
Nevada Inter-Tribal Council
Nevada Judges, Hearing Masters, & Court Staff
Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence
Nevada State Legislature
Northeastern Nevada CASA
Sierra Association of Foster Families
State CIP Coordinators
Supreme Court & Staff
Supreme Court Clerk's Office
Supreme Court Law Library
Tru Vista Program

University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV)
University of Nevada, Reno (UNR)
Volunteer Attorneys for Rural Nevadans
Washoe County Department of Social Services
Washoe County Public Defender's Office
Washoe Legal Services
Waterhole Software, Inc.
WestCare

Table of Collaborative Partners includes agencies and individuals who have at some time worked on a CIP-related project, including our contract and subgrant partners, and/or individuals or entities (including both staff and volunteers) who share our common goal(s).