



GOVERNOR'S JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION

TONY EVERS, GOVERNOR
JENNIFER GINSBURG, CHAIR

May 18, 2020

The Honorable Tony Evers
Governor of Wisconsin

Dear Governor Evers,

As you are aware, the Governor's Juvenile Justice Commission (GJJC), re-created by Executive Order #43, serves as the State Advisory Group (SAG) to the Governor and the Legislature on matters critical to juvenile justice, under the Federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA). The GJJC is comprised of juvenile justice professionals, including law enforcement, corrections professionals, attorneys, judges, mental health practitioners, and non-profit organizations dedicated to youth programming. The GJJC also includes justice involved youth members and individuals with experience in the juvenile justice system.

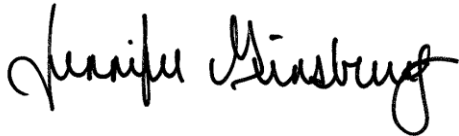
In this capacity, the Commission recommends state and county agencies to evaluate the policy and practice shifts resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The GJJC recognizes these shifts as valuable opportunities to examine ways to improve outcomes for youth and families in Wisconsin.

- Health and Safety
 - The top priority of the GJJC is to protect the physical, emotional, and mental health of all youth, family members, and youth justice professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - The GJJC supports the ongoing efforts and health precautions state and county agencies are taking to keep everyone safe.
 - The GJJC encourages awareness-building and increased access to virtual physical, emotional, and mental health support through 2-1-1 Wisconsin: <https://211wisconsin.communityos.org/>
- Diversion and Detention
 - A decrease in youth detention admissions and an increase in youth detention releases have resulted from safety precautions guiding decision making during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - The GJJC supports the use of diversion opportunities being utilized by agencies to keep youth from coming into the system and affirms that only youth that present serious public safety concerns should be in detention facilities at this time.
 - The GJJC recommends that youth justice professionals and stakeholders examine the use of detention moving forward and ways to continue downward trends of detention and increase diversion programming once statewide health restrictions are lifted.
 - The GJJC recommends that data and documentation of youth diverted from detention must be collected to ensure that racial and ethnic disparities within the youth justice system are not heightened due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Data collection will offer insight into the equal application of diversion strategies and support racial and ethnic disparity reduction-efforts moving forward.

- Technology
 - The GJJC recommends increasing the use of technology to connect youth, family members, and youth justice professionals, which has emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic as a positive shift in practice.
 - The GJJC recommends continued use and expansion of video-sharing platforms to engage family members in court proceedings, meetings with social workers, and youth visitation.
 - The GJJC recommends increased use of technology to deliver ongoing and individualized education for youth involved in the juvenile justice system, as in-person instruction has concluded for health and safety reasons.
 - The GJJC acknowledges communities that face economical and geographical challenges in obtaining devices and internet access. The GJJC recommends additional support and funding for families and regions of the state that lack broadband internet and tools for video-sharing.
- Resources and Support
 - The GJJC encourages youth and families to utilize and follow COVID-19 resources provided by the following state agencies:
 - Department of Justice: <https://www.doj.state.wi.us/covid-19>
 - Department of Health Services: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>
 - Department of Corrections: [https://doc.wi.gov/Pages/COVID19\(Coronavirus\)/COVID19.aspx](https://doc.wi.gov/Pages/COVID19(Coronavirus)/COVID19.aspx)
 - Department of Children and Families: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/covid-19>
 - Department of Public Instruction: <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/2019-novel-coronavirus>
 - Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention Board: <https://preventionboard.wi.gov/Pages/Homepage.aspx>

The GJJC understands that state and county agencies are continuously navigating the complexities of this public health crisis. As the pandemic and impacts are not over, the GJJC will continue to recommend and guide youth justice policy, practice, and cultural shifts necessary to better serve and support youth and their families during these unprecedented times.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Ginsburg, MSSW, LCSW
Governor's Juvenile Justice Commission Chair, on behalf of the Commission

cc: Wisconsin Legislature
Wisconsin Senate President, Roger Roth
Wisconsin Assembly Speaker, Robin Vos
Attorney General Josh Kaul
DHS Secretary Andrea Palm
DOC Secretary Kevin Carr
DCF Secretary Emilie Amundson
DPI State Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor

Attachment:
GJJC Commissioner List



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Wisconsin Governor's Juvenile Justice Commissioner List

May 18, 2020

1. Secretary Emilie Amundson, Department of Children and Families
Designee: Shelby McCulley, Bureau of Youth Services Director
2. Judge Carl Ashley, Milwaukee Circuit Court
3. Monika Audette, Barron County Restorative Justice Program Operations Leader
4. Samuel Benedict, Former Regional Attorney Manager, State Public Defender's Office, Waukesha
5. Secretary Kevin Carr, Department of Corrections
Designee: Ron Hermes, Division Administrator of Juvenile Corrections
6. Jennifer Ginsburg, Executive Director, Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center
7. Ben Gonring, Assistant State Public Defender, Madison
8. Jessica Jimenez, Youth Member
9. Thomas Mann, Former JusticePoint Representative
10. Sharlen Moore, Youth Justice Milwaukee Director
11. Tweed Shuman, Sawyer County Board Chairman, Lac Courte Oreilles Tribal Council Member
12. David Steinberg, La Crosse County Juvenile Detention Superintendent
13. Melinda Tempelis, Outagamie County District Attorney
14. Charles Tubbs, Sr., Director, Dane County Emergency Management
15. Revelle Warren, Milwaukee Constituent Services Director, Office of the Governor
16. Sean Wilson, Smart Justice Statewide Organizer, ACLU of Wisconsin
17. Marcus Williams, Youth Member
18. Youth Leadership Team Member, Department of Children and Families
19. Youth Leadership Team Member, Department of Children and Families