

## **Behavioral Health Sub-Committee**

Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission  
Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division  
Connecticut Office of Policy and Management

**January 9, 2025**

**9:30 am – 11:00 am**

**(Russell Hall, CVH, Room 217-A; and TEAMS)**

### Minutes

1. Introductions/Roll call
  - a. Present: Reena Kapoor (DMHAS), Chris Burke (DMHAS), Jessica Waggoner (DMHAS - new Director of Forensic Services), Judy Dowd (OPM), Bill O'Connor (Public Defender), Thomas Burr (NAMI CT), Alex Tsarkov (Sentencing Commission), Kirk Lowry (CLRP), Michael Aiello (CSSD), Kathryn Thomas (invited guest - Yale SEICHE Center)
2. Approval of draft minutes of meeting on November 14, 2024 → Approved without changes.
3. Kathryn Thomas stated that the SEICHE Center and Sentencing Commission are partnering on a study of formerly incarcerated people to understand the barriers they face to accessing mental health treatment in the community. She asked about ways to reach research subjects to be interviewed (in person or virtually), especially in more rural areas of the state. The group suggested sending a request to probation staff, DMHAS jail diversion staff, CLRP clients, DOC reentry counselors, and DOC reentry centers, as well as putting up flyers in courthouses.
4. Legislative matters
  - a. Supervised Diversionary Plan proposal (Sentencing Commission) → Alex Tsarkov reported there have been a few discussions with DDS and DSS, and the agencies still have fiscal concerns. The Sentencing Commission will vote on the draft proposal today (1/9/25), and then Alex will reach out to relevant Commissioners to convene a work group.
  - b. Pretrial Intervention Program (DMHAS) → Chris Burke reported that DMHAS has proposed draft language so that health insurance can cover some costs of treatment in PTIP, which is now called the First-Time Offender Program.
  - c. Psychiatric medication in competency restoration cases (Public Defender) → Bill O'Connor reported that the Division of Criminal Justice is considering a proposal

to limit the appointment of Special Limited Conservators to competency restoration cases where the defendant is facing felony charges.

5. Agency updates: Chris Burke gave an update on the Enhanced Forensic Respite Bed (EFRB) program, stating that 9 of the 12 beds in Bridgeport and 2 of the 4 beds in New Haven were full. There were no other agency updates.
6. CJPAC: Next meeting TBD
7. BHS: Next meeting scheduled for March 13, 2025, 9:30am – 11:00am [Russell Hall, CVH, Room 217-A and Teams for those unable to attend in person], pending transition of DMHAS Director of Forensic Services.