

Juvenile Justice Policy Commission

Per House Bill 2320 (2023)

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Oregon Criminal Justice Commission

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The mission of the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission is to improve the legitimacy, efficiency, and effectiveness of state and local criminal justice systems.

Introduction

During the 2023 Regular Legislative Session, House Bill (HB) 2320 established the Juvenile Justice Policy Commission (Commission).¹ The Commission is established within the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) and will provide a centralized and impartial forum for statewide juvenile justice policy development and planning. The goal of the Commission is to provide data-driven policy recommendations to strengthen public safety and improve youth outcomes in the juvenile justice system in Oregon. This report outlines the progress of the Commission and satisfies reporting requirements set forth in HB 2320, Section 5. It concerns the Commission's membership and the initial meeting and preliminary objectives for the 2025-2027 biennium.

Commission Membership

The Commission consists of 17 members appointed as described in Section 1(2) of HB 2320. Table 1 provides a list of the confirmed members, their titles, affiliations, and the section of HB 2320 their membership fulfills. As of this writing, there are five vacant commission seats, with two positions expected to be filled following Senate confirmation in September.

Table 1. Commission Membership

Member	Title	Affiliation	Section
Joe O'Leary	Director	Oregon Youth Authority	1(2)(a)(A)
Mary Geelan	Family First & Integrated Policy Manager	Oregon Department of Human Services	1(2)(a)(B)
Vacant		Oregon Department of Education	1(2)(a)(C)
Kyla Armstrong-Romero (Chair)	Juvenile Services Director	Multnomah County Department of Community Justice	1(2)(a)(D)
Molly Rogers	Juvenile Director	Wasco County Youth Services	1(2)(a)(D)
K.O. Berger	Deputy Juvenile Defense Counsel, Trial Division	Oregon Public Defense Commission	1(2)(a)(E)
Brendan Murphy	Senior Deputy District Attorney	Marion County District Attorney's Office	1(2)(a)(F)
Lisa Kay Williams	Senior Juvenile Public Defender	Youth, Rights, and Justice	1(2)(a)(G)
Vacant		Victim advocacy organization	1(2)(a)(H)
Vacant		Member of federally recognized Indian tribe	1(2)(a)(I)
Pablo Rojo (Vice-Chair)		Lived experience	1(2)(a)(J)
Laurie Davala		Lived experience	1(2)(a)(J)
Vacant		Member of the Senate	1(2)(b)
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Tom Andersen	Representative	Oregon House of Representatives; District 19	1(2)(c)
Charlie Conrad	Representative	Oregon House of Representatives; District 12	1(2)(c)
Manuel Perez	Judge	Marion County Circuit Court	1(2)(d)

¹<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2023R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB2320/Enrolled>

Initial Meeting and Preliminary Objectives

The Commission convened their first meeting on July 30, 2024. During this initial meeting, the members reviewed the duties of the Commission, identified an initial plan of action to fulfill these duties, and appointed a vice-chair.

There are three core duties of the Commission, which are defined in HB 2320. First, the Commission shall analyze the juvenile justice system at the state and local levels and across branches of government in Oregon to provide recommendations for improvements in law, policy, practice, and appropriation to improve public safety, youth outcomes, and system disparities. The Commission shall oversee data-driven and qualitative analysis in nine areas that are outlined in HB 2320. Second, the Commission may then use these analyses for a variety of actions, such as recommending legislation, assessing the impact of current legislation, develop training and materials for state agencies, and overseeing funding for pilot projects and other initiatives. Third, the Commission must provide a report to the Legislative Assembly by September 1st of every even-numbered year.

To begin fulfilling these duties, the Commission plans on receiving technical assistance on national trends and best practices in juvenile justice policy development. This assistance will expand the Commission's knowledge of juvenile justice policy and guide them in the identification of up to five key areas of juvenile justice policy to prioritize. Some areas currently being considered include points of system entry, dually involved youth, gun violence, minimum age for prosecution, and the impact of drug possession sentencing changes (HB 4002²). Moreover, the Commission intends to collaborate and partner with various statewide entities to compile a comprehensive inventory of all committees and workgroups engaged in juvenile justice related initiatives (e.g., System of Care Advisory Council (SOCAC), Oregon Juvenile Department Directors Association (OJDDA) Legislative Committee, Youth Development Oregon, Juvenile Delinquency Improvement Program (JDIP), and future committees from HB 4086³). Lastly, the Commission will work to establish itself as a centralized forum to analyze the connections and impacts of Oregon's juvenile justice related initiatives, as well as provide objective expertise on any legislative proposals in 2025.

Moving forward, the Commission will begin compiling an inventory of statewide juvenile justice related initiatives. They will explore technical assistance and available resources to assist in the compilation of this inventory. The Commission will then use this inventory to aid in their identification of key priority areas for the 2025-2027 biennium. In addition to any technical assistance and outside resources, the Commission will receive support from two full time staff that will be hired by the CJC. Finally, the Commission aims to fill the remaining vacant seats.

² <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2024R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB4002/Enrolled>

³ <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2024R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB4086/Enrolled>