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MINUTES OF THE
 TENNESSEE ADVISORY COMMISSION
 ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

September 18, 2025

Meeting Called to Order

The Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations met in House Hearing Room III of the Cordell Hull Building at 8:42 a.m., Chairman Ken YAGER, presiding.

Present 18	Absent 6
Mayor Rogers Anderson	Senator Richard Briggs
Mayor Kevin Brooks	Senator Heidi Campbell
Mayor Paige Brown	Representative John Crawford
Commissioner Jim Bryson	Mayor Bob Rial
Councilman Chase Carlisle	Senator Bo Watson
Mr. Calvin Clifton	Representative Ryan Williams
Mayor Terry Frank	
County Clerk Mary Gaither	
Representative Gary Hicks	
County Executive Jeff Huffman	
Representative Harold Love Jr.	
Comptroller Jason Mumpower ¹	
Representative Antonio Parkinson	
Mr. Jeff Peach	
Commissioner Deniece Thomas ²	
Mayor Larry Waters	
Senator Ken Yager	
Senator Jeff Yarbro	

¹ Laura Bond represented Comptroller Jason Mumpower.

² Matthew Grove represented Commissioner Deniece Thomas.

1. Call to Order and Approval of the Minutes

Chairman Ken YAGER called the meeting to order at 8:42 a.m. Chairman YAGER then requested and received approval without objection of the June 2025 meeting minutes.

2. Commission and Staff Update

During the commission update, Executive Director Cliff Lippard gave the members a summary of the commission's August 28, 2025, ad hoc education finance subcommittee meeting. During that meeting, TACIR staff presented subcommittee members with information on distortions in TACIR's fiscal capacity calculation caused by virtual school student counts, the effect of Greenbelt property assessments on fiscal capacity, and the fiscal capacity of counties with large tourism industries. Following discussions resulting from those presentations, the subcommittee members voted unanimously to recommend that the full commission recommend that the Tennessee Department of Education begin collecting residency information for virtual school students. Dr. LIPPARD and Chairman YAGER told the full committee that they would hold off on voting on the subcommittee recommendation until after staff concludes further analysis requested by the subcommittee.

The additional analysis requested by the subcommittee includes

- whether out-of-state students are enrolled in virtual schools in Tennessee,
- whether other states enroll out-of-state students in their virtual schools,
- the difference in costs between serving virtual school students and brick and mortar students in Tennessee and other states, and
- whether other states account for tourism in some way in their education funding formulas.

Dr. LIPPARD next gave the staff update, acknowledging Office Manager April Scivally for achieving 20 years of service to the State of Tennessee and Information Technology Manager Mark Patterson for completing advanced training in secure development. Dr. LIPPARD reminded the members that the work that the research staff does for the commission would not be possible without the work of the commission's support staff.

3. Continuum of Care – Panel

Senior Research Associate Michael STRICKLAND presented a brief overview of the Continuum of Care (CoC) study and introduced panel participants. They included

- Scott Foster, Executive Director, The Journey Home
- Neru Gobin, Director, Office of Housing and Homeless Services, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- Victoria Lake, Director of Community Health Institute, West Tennessee Healthcare, for the TN-507 Continuum of Care
- Erin Read, Executive Director, Knoxville-Knox Office of Housing Stability, for the TN-502 Continuum of Care

- Matt Yancey, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

Mr. Scott FOSTER described his nonprofit organization in Rutherford County, The Journey Home, and the work it does for those experiencing homelessness. He said he has been involved in such work for over 20 years and that homelessness is a complex issue, in part because of varying definitions, and there are both those who may be homeless long-term but also some who experience situational or episodic homelessness. He said the CoC program was created as a forum for different stakeholders to collaborate and has been successful with planning and data collection. Where it may have been less successful, he said, was in administration or management, and as a result CoCs may not always deliver services as quickly as they could.

Ms. Erin READ said two aspects of the CoC program have been effective in Knox County. First, she said the federal mandate that CoCs have a process to select a governing body has been helpful in bringing local governments, nonprofits, philanthropy, and for-profits into the discussion around homelessness. Second, she said coordinated entry is a system for assessing the needs and vulnerability of people experiencing homelessness so they can be referred to the right services. But Coordinated Entry can be clunky, she said, and Knox County has been overhauling its coordinated entry system to improve speed and efficiency by removing roadblocks for people trying to access services while increasing the number of access points.

Ms. Victoria LAKE introduced the CoC she represents, covering West Tennessee save Shelby County. For their coordinated entry, she said they have both a hotline and online access, and last year they served over 5,000 people. She said the average time spent homeless was high at 210 days because of their focus on the chronically homeless, having received HUD funding for that purpose. When excluding that group, she said the average length of time spent homeless was between 30 and 60 days, and for victims of domestic violence it was 29 days.

Deputy Commissioner Matt YANCEY said the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services is focused on building supportive housing to provide both housing and treatment together, and community mental health providers are doing more to meet the wider needs of individuals, such as physical illnesses. He said many of those with mental illness want to work, and his department strives to help them with job placements. He said they fund roughly 300 organizations around the state and operate 15 programs under their Office of Housing and Homeless Services. Director Neru GOBIN described three of the programs. First, he said the federal Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness program involves significant street outreach and is funded by the US Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Second, he said the Creating Homes Initiative has funded the creation of some 36,000 housing units since 2000. Some of the CoCs, he said, were involved with this program. The third program he described is for recovery specialists who provide community education about housing options to those with a mental illness or substance use disorder and who may be experiencing homelessness. He said his office maintains a website with information on such housing options.

Mayor Terry FRANK asked whether there are accountability measures for CoCs. Ms. READ said that HUD assesses each CoC on seven system performance measures, such as the length of time people spend homeless and the rate at which they might return to homelessness if housed. She said these are used to keep CoCs accountable, and she wondered whether an annual state-level

report of these system performance measures might be a good starting point. Ms. LAKE added that those system performance measures are also available at the level of individual agencies, and she agreed with the suggestion for a combined state report of those measures. Chairman YAGER asked whether agencies that are not part of a CoC would be included in that performance data. Ms. LAKE said it would be on a volunteer basis, but that the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services also collects data from such agencies that do not participate in their CoC.

Mr. FOSTER said that there is no one-size-fits-all solution for homelessness and there are often multiple needs. For that reason, he said there is an element of the work in many state agencies that is relevant to homelessness, and that the Tennessee Housing Development Agency has organized monthly calls among agencies to discuss questions around homelessness services. He said that an interagency council, like the one at the federal level, would help to bring knowledgeable stakeholders together and coach nonprofit agencies about grant opportunities, partnership opportunities, and so forth. He also said that while most larger-scale agencies that receive government funding are likely involved in their CoC, other, smaller agencies—especially church and civic groups in rural areas—do much of the work in the state and yet may not be involved in their CoC. He said that the state could build from the foundations of the CoCs, such as their planning, strategizing, and data-gathering functions, and create something at a broader level to support a more unified strategy on homelessness.

Councilman Chase CARLISLE said he agreed that homelessness does not have a one-size-fits-all solution, both because of the range of options from emergency shelters to permanent housing and because of the diversity of populations such as families, veterans, and so forth. He said that in Memphis there is a lack of bed availability in shelters for families. He said a major issue is that case management so often requires moving people back and forth between different service locations, often via public transportation, and when it becomes too difficult for people to visit each service that they need they may drop out of the system. He added that Memphis has ample vacant properties that could be redeveloped in such a way as to aggregate services.

Representative PARKINSON said that he himself had experienced homelessness before he was 17. He said there should be “one-stop shops” for people needing services. He said people who are homeless are often in “survival mode” and may make different choices or work by a different mindset than someone who is housed.

Senator Jeff YARBRO asked about the challenges with working across a larger geography, as in the West Tennessee CoC. Ms. LAKE said that their coordinated entry process is run by people they refer to as housing navigators, and these navigators are distributed across the CoC so that when someone calls looking for help, they can then be referred to someone who is relatively local. She said that transportation is an issue with homelessness services in rural areas, just as it is with all social services, but that in their strategic planning they do try to account for where there may be gaps in transportation availability and to match funding to those. She said direct funding for rural areas would help. She said that transportation is an issue elsewhere as well; in East Tennessee, the mountainous terrain can be an obstacle.

Senator YARBRO asked how well state agencies communicate with CoCs about youth homelessness. Ms. LAKE said they do work directly with the Department of Children’s Services

and have housing navigators who work specifically with young people. She said youth homelessness often takes the form of “couch hopping” or living in one’s car.

Mayor Larry WATERS referred to a statistic from Ms. Lake’s presentation showing that 50% of the clients served in the West Tennessee CoC have mental health or substance abuse issues, and Sevier County had nowhere to send people having a mental health crisis. Ms. LAKE said her CoC works closely with the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, and they work with jails to divert people from being sent to jails. Deputy Commissioner YANCEY said they have been working specifically on pre-arrest diversion centers and crisis stabilization units where law enforcement can drop people off.

Chairman YAGER said he wished to echo Mayor Waters’s call for brick-and-mortar alternatives to sending people to jails, but he had been told that these treatment services have been contracted out. He asked whether such contractors were sufficient as a replacement for brick-and-mortar services. Deputy Commissioner YANCEY said that both approaches are needed. Mayor Kevin BROOKS said that Cleveland began work on a new bricks-and-mortar transitional housing facility with the use of federal funding and the support of the county.

Representative PARKINSON asked for information on the lead agencies for each CoC. Ms. READ said most of them are nonprofits. [NOTE: Staff provided a list of the lead agencies following the meeting].

4. District Attorney Staffing—Final Report for Approval

Senior Research Associate Michael STRICKLAND presented the final report on district attorney (DA) staffing in municipal courts of concurrent jurisdiction, which was prepared in response to Senate Bill 2054 by Senator Jackson and House Bill 2205 by Representative Barrett in the 113th General Assembly. The report’s first recommendation remains unchanged from the draft. It recommends that the state undertake a weighted caseload study as soon as feasible to establish the staffing needs of district attorneys based on all the courts they serve, including municipal courts with concurrent jurisdiction. The report’s second recommendation was modified in light of Public Chapter 369, Acts of 2025, which authorizes counties to adopt and levy a new court cost on defendants, with revenue required to be “used for providing support services for the purpose of promoting public safety at the sole discretion of the district attorney general.” The report now recommends that to assist with district attorney staffing needs prior to the completion of a weighted caseload study, each city with a municipal court of concurrent jurisdiction that does not already have an existing funding arrangement with its DA or that does not have to collect the new court cost under Public Chapter 369, Acts of 2025, consider negotiating a per diem payment for DA staff.

Chairman Ken YAGER moved approval of the report, seconded by Ms. Mary GAITHER, and it was approved unanimously.

5. Public Chapter 941, Acts of 2024 (Real Estate Fraud)—Final Report for Approval

Research Manager Bob MOREO presented the final report on real estate fraud for the commission’s approval. The report was prepared in response to Public Chapter 941, Acts of 2024, which directed the commission to study the prevalence of real estate fraud in Tennessee, the different schemes used to perpetrate real estate fraud, the methods used by other states to combat

real estate fraud, and the best practices for local government officials registering documents related to real estate transactions. It also directed the commission to provide suggested statutory revisions that are designed to reduce the risk of real estate fraud for property owners in this state. He said that the report's three recommendations remained unchanged.

Representative Antonio PARKINSON said he was not ready to approve the report and asked why staff hadn't recommended requiring identification for quit claim deed filings. Mr. MOREO said that they discussed several concerns regarding the registers in the report. He said the Lee County Clerk's Office in Florida has a similar pilot program, and it may be useful to wait and review an upcoming report on the program. Representative PARKINSON said that, based on his review, the report showed no opposition to the original bill and recommended postponing approval of the report until the matter is looked at. Mr. MOREO said that the team's interviews with registers were from a while back. Representative PARKINSON said that another recommendation could be to increase penalties for notaries that are part of schemes to create false quit claim deeds. Mr. Jeff PEACH said he agreed with Representative Parkinson.

Mayor Terry FRANK asked whether county commissions should be doing more to ensure they are approving reputable people to become notaries. Mr. MOREO said he didn't know whether there was something county commissions could do since that wasn't something that came up.

Mayor Paige BROWN said she was worried about how easy it is to impersonate notaries. She said sending notice to a property owner when a deed is filed on their property provides some protection to an owner. Mr. MOREO said there were a few states that specifically require that a person prove they are a notary to purchase a stamp.

Vice Chairman Kevin BROOKS made a motion to defer the matter to next month's meeting. Chairman YAGER seconded the motion. Vice Chairman Kevin BROOKS asked whether Public Chapter 941 is current law because he was talking about it as though it was repealed. Mr. MOREO said that provisions in the original version of Public Chapter 941 did not make it into the final approved legislation, and this distinction may not have been clear in his presentation.

Executive Director Cliff LIPPARD said that the commission does not meet next month, and the next meeting is likely to be scheduled for December. Vice Chairman Kevin BROOKS amended his motion and moved to defer the matter until the next commission meeting. Chairman YAGER seconded the amended motion. The motion passed.

6. Senate Bill 2877/House Bill 2961 (Capacity of Crime Labs in Tennessee)—Final Report for Approval

Senior Research Associate Madison THORN presented the commission's final report on forensic crime lab capacity for approval. Senate Bill 2877 by Senator Kyle and House Bill 2961 by Representative Hardaway, introduced during the 113th General Assembly, directed the commission to study the feasibility of establishing a crime lab in Shelby County. The bill passed in the Senate but not in the House. The report was prepared in response to Representative Ryan William's request at the May 2024 meeting that the commission undertake a broader study to evaluate the feasibility and need for additional crime labs throughout the state.

Ms. THORN said staff added information to the report in response to commission input at the June 2025 meeting, including information about the state’s digital forensics needs, crime lab funding, examples of crime lab cost estimates, and historical context on long-term crime trends. One of the draft recommendations presented has since been implemented. The draft report recommended assigning a firearms analyst in the Jackson lab to Memphis cases. Since then, Memphis and the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) agreed to dedicate two scientists—one in DNA and one in firearms—to Memphis cases. The final report’s other recommendations remain unchanged.

Senator Jeff YARBRO asked why the Jackson lab, completed in 2021, is already over capacity and how the state can plan long-term to avoid costly expansions so soon after construction. Ms. THORN said TBI’s 2024 real estate strategic plan does look forward, however, demand and staffing grew faster than previously expected, creating the need for more space.

Chairman YAGER moved approval of the report, which was seconded by Mr. PEACH. The commission approved the report unanimously.

7. Public Chapter 418, Acts of 2025 (Housing Juvenile Offenders)—Panel

Senior Research Associate Hannah NEWCOMB presented a brief overview of the study and introduced a panel on the state of housing, detention, and treatment capacity for juveniles both pre- and post-adjudication in Tennessee. The panelists included juvenile court judges and representatives for state agencies:

- Robert Philyaw, Juvenile Court Judge, Hamilton County
- Andrew Brigham, General Sessions Court Judge, Stewart County
- Sheila Calloway, Juvenile Court Judge, Davidson County
- Christy Little, General Sessions Court Judge, Madison County
- Jim Layman, Executive Director of Legislation, Tennessee Department of Children’s Services
- Matt Yancey, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

Judge Robert PHILYAW, who is also sitting president of the Tennessee Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, said the council’s position is that there is a need for additional capacity for juvenile detention. He said the council has met with several judges across the state, and the judges have consistently relayed the need for capacity. Most counties don’t have their own juvenile detention center, and when they have a child who needs to be detained prior to adjudication, they must transport them to a detention center in another county and pay that county to house the child. He said most juvenile detention centers in the state are old and outdated. Judge PHILYAW commended the legislature for their help with improving the availability of juvenile housing data, though he said that the data was still not perfect.

Judge Andrew BRIGHAM said most of the time when juvenile judges talk about detention they are referring to detaining a child prior to adjudication, which is akin to determining whether someone needs to be held in jail prior to trial in the adult system. When deciding whether to detain a child pre-adjudication, judges consider (1) risk of flight and (2) public safety. Judge

BRIGHAM said that most detention occurs when judges need to give children a 12- or 24-hour hold to determine whether they pose a risk, which he likened to cooling off periods used in domestic violence cases in the adult system. He later clarified that the detained youth is entitled to a detention hearing within 72 hours of arrest. The judge must find probable cause that the child committed the offense to continue detaining the child after that detention hearing. Pre-adjudication detention is a county expense. Stewart County has contracts with six juvenile detention centers, which charge about \$250 per child per day, and the county's annual budget for detention is \$5,000. When Stewart County had a juvenile murder suspect, they had to be detained for eight months, and Judge Brigham had to request additional funding from the county commission.

Regarding post-adjudication detention, Judge BRIGHAM said judges can order a child detained post-adjudication under state law, but this is rarely done. Instead, judges commit children to the custody of the Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS), and DCS determines whether the child needs to be detained in a secure residential facility. Judges can detain children who commit new offenses while on probation, which is a hybrid of pre- and post-adjudication and happens often.

Judge BRIGHAM described three factors affecting capacity in the juvenile system. First, he said under the state's new serious youthful offender and blended sentencing law, which went into effect on January 1, 2025, juvenile offenders can receive sentences to serve time in the adult system after they've turned 19, but this entitles them to a jury trial, and it can take a long time to go trial, which could increase the length of time they are in pre-trial detention. Second, he said under the interstate compact on juveniles, runaways from other states must be detained for up to 90 days. Third, he said threats against schools are increasing, and when a threat is made, it is common for the child to be detained until it can be determined whether the threat is real.

Finally, Judge BRIGHAM described recent instances in which lack of available detention capacity created a problem for his county. He said that, a few months ago, he was unable to detain a child seen pointing an air rifle at a passing school bus because he could not find a bed despite calling six facilities. Two months ago, he had a child who committed aggravated burglary whom he couldn't detain because he could not find a bed. In another case, it took the county eight hours of searching to find a detention center with space available to house a youth charged with DUI and car theft, and on top of that, the facility was a two-hour drive away. Judge BRIGHAM said that if it happens in a county of 14,000, it's certainly happening elsewhere.

In response to Mr. Jeff PEACH's question about how frequently judges are unable to detain violent youth because they lack capacity, Judge Christy LITTLE said this is a daily occurrence because of capacity issues, and the counties surrounding her also struggle to detain youth because Madison County does not have extra beds to offer. She said that although the overall crime rate among youth is down, the serious crime rate is increasing, and she and the director of Madison County's juvenile detention center often discuss which of two detainable youth should be placed in detention and which should be sent back home. A few months ago, they sent a child home because the parents expressed a willingness to keep the child at home on house arrest. Within a couple of days, they learned the child had been shot and killed in their driveway. She said detention is always the last resort, but her county would supplement more beds with a focus on mental health care, education, and other services.

Mayor Terry FRANK said the law allows children to be charged as adults in some cases, and she asked whether judges can place children in adult jails if they pose a serious threat to the community. Judge BRIGHAM said judges are only allowed to put children in adult facilities if there is total sight and sound separation from the adults, so generally speaking they do not use those facilities. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the state used adult facilities for youth, but that is no longer the case.

Mayor Paige BROWN said her city repeatedly sees parents who are surprised that their child was charged because the child has been released in other jurisdictions with a citation or something similar. She said her chief of police complains that they regularly cannot detain youth because there are no available detention beds in the area, and she asked whether youth can be monitored via ankle monitor when they are sent somewhere other than a detention center. Judge LITTLE said that all the judges and DCS use ankle monitors, and while they can be helpful on misdemeanor offenses, they come with several drawbacks—for example, relying on the youth to charge the battery, relying on parents to help monitor the youth, and requiring county and DCS staff to constantly monitor the youth’s location all create issues. Ankle monitors do tell you where a child is, but they don’t tell you who the child is with and what they are doing. Mayor BROWN said they often see children who have committed several offenses in other jurisdictions.

Judge Sheila CALLOWAY said that the question judges face every day is not whether they should hold children accountable, but how they should hold children accountable, and what they can do to protect the community while getting that child back on track. The wrong choice could entrench a young person further into the justice system. Judge CALLOWAY said she doesn’t want to guess when determining whether a child needs to be detained, so she uses validated risk assessment tools to determine whether the child in front of her was doing something impulsive or truly poses a danger to the community unless closely supervised. She said this means a child who shoplifts and has no prior arrests can be diverted quickly to community services, whereas children facing charges for violent crimes can be held. Risk assessments help judges prioritize detention for those who need it.

Judge CALLOWAY discussed alternatives to detention. She said programs like restorative justice, individual family therapy, violence interruption programs, and mentoring help to keep youth in school and their jobs and safely in the community, which ultimately keeps detention beds available for high-risk youth. Judge CALLOWAY said that another alternative, diversion, redirects youth into services that work better and cost less than traditional detention, holding youth responsible without creating unnecessary court expenses. She said that we need more than just concrete and steel—we need more services like intensive in-home care, trained therapists, and other models that have national data demonstrating they reduce recidivism. She said every one of these alternatives is cheaper than the \$453.70 per day it costs to house a juvenile in Davidson County’s juvenile detention center, and alternatives to detention are a necessity if we want safer neighborhoods, healthier families, and fewer youth going from the juvenile justice system to the adult system.

Judge LITTLE discussed capacity needs statewide and in West Tennessee in particular. She said there has been a rise in serious crimes committed by juveniles in recent years. West Tennessee only has 11 detention center beds available outside of Shelby County, and Madison County’s detention center, which makes up eight of those beds, was hit by a tornado and moved off its foundation, so it could close at any time. She said West Tennessee needs pre-adjudicatory

detention beds, while middle and east Tennessee may have other needs like mental health or treatment facilities, pre- and post- adjudication. She said, the answer to the question of whether the state needs more beds can't be answered in any way but "yes"; but building new detention capacity in the juvenile justice system will require funding from the state.

In response to Mayor FRANK's question about whether new capacity should be private or public and how big the facilities should be, Judge LITTLE said the proposed West Tennessee facility would be built on Madison County property, owned and operated by the county as a regional facility. It would have 48 beds and cost approximately \$70 million. The plan is for the facility to offer mental health and other rehabilitative services. Judge CALLOWAY said that in general the bigger the size of a facility the more problems it has. She said facilities that hold fewer youth provide better opportunities to rehabilitate children.

Mr. Jim LAYMAN said DCS serves as the licensing authority for juvenile detention centers and temporary holding resources in Tennessee—there are 16 detention centers in counties across the state, and four temporary holding resources. In total, there are 636 available juvenile detention center beds statewide, and 15 temporary holding resource beds. DCS visits those facilities regularly to assess their compliance with state licensing standards and works with the facilities to correct any deficiencies.

In response to Senator Jeff YARBRO's question about whether the state's approach to licensing facilities based on a checklist of requirements makes sense compared to regular monitoring of facilities' success rates across metrics like graduation, treatment, recidivism, and other rates, Mr. LAYMAN said DCS does everything they can to monitor facilities under the law. They regulate what the facilities must look like, staffing ratios, services provided, and more. DCS has been updating those standards over the last couple of years. He said educational standards are overseen by the Tennessee Department of Education. Mr. LAYMAN said juvenile detention centers are meant to be temporary in nature, so while maintaining education and treatment availability is important, it is not as substantial as post-adjudication facilities. Senator YARBRO asked commission staff to gather data on what kinds of programs work so that the state is focused on expanding the right kind of capacity. Mayor BROWN said Gallatin has a facility that houses runaway children, but the facility has had several different owners over time, and the quality of services varied greatly based on the facility's owner.

Mr. LAYMAN said youth adjudicated delinquent can be committed to DCS custody depending on the number and types of offences. As of September 8, 2025, there were 606 juvenile justice youth in DCS custody. Of those, 145 were placed in hardware secure facilities—DCS's most secure type of facility—215 were in staff-secure facilities, 40 were in juvenile detention centers, and the remainder were in some form of community placement. He said the number of youth in DCS custody fluctuates daily, but the trend has been fairly flat since 2021.

Mr. LAYMAN said DCS has capacity to hold 425 youth in secure residential facilities; 159 of those beds are in hardware secure facilities—including 147 beds in Tennessee facilities and 12 beds at a facility in Texas, though DCS does not currently have any children placed in the Texas facility—and 266 beds in staff secure facilities in Tennessee. For the most part, these facilities only house Tennessee youth, but at times, they house youth from other states. DCS contracts with 11 juvenile detention centers to hold youth temporarily while they are waiting to get a long-term placement at one of the hardware or staff secure facilities. As of September 8, 2025, there were 43 DCS youth

in detention centers awaiting long-term placements. There are also five primary assessment centers in Tennessee that DCS uses for temporary placements.

Mr. LAYMAN said more than \$300 million in funding has been appropriated to DCS in recent years for the construction of a new staff secure facility in Middle Tennessee and new hardware and staff secure facilities in West Tennessee. These projects will result in an increase of more than 150 new post-adjudication beds with room for expansion.

Deputy Commissioner Matt YANCEY described The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Service's (MHSAS) juvenile justice grant program. He said the program began in 2018 with the passage of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act, which allocated \$4.5 million in recurring funds to MHSAS to provide grants to service providers. In 2023, he said, the state allocated an additional \$1.3 million in recurring funding to the program based on its success and increased demand. The primary purpose of that grant is to expand community-based services and training to provide evidence-based treatment options for juvenile courts to utilize across the state, with a goal of diverting youth from further penetration into the juvenile justice system; establishing and expanding partnerships between courts, community providers, and other stakeholders; and ensuring resiliency, well-being, and overall connectedness to the community for justice-involved youth. He said services are available to youth regardless of payer source—youth covered by TennCare, commercial insurance, or uninsured may all receive services. The program targets children referred to juvenile court, including those at risk of commitment to DCS custody, those who have previously been on probation or diversion and have reoffended or are at risk to reoffend, and those deemed unruly or truant. Since the program began, it has served more than 7,000 youth.

Deputy Commissioner YANCEY said the program seeks to reduce the annual rate of out-of-home placement, produce cost savings, improve quality of life outcomes, and reduce recidivism. In fiscal year 2024-25, MHSAS found that after six months, 99% of clients remained in their home, and only 7% reoffended. The youth also saw increased scores in key daily living skills, such as coping, communication, and behavior norms.

In response to Mayor FRANK's question about whether judges like the MHSAS grant program, Judge BRIGHAM said detention is a last resort for judges, and they go to great lengths to avoid it because of the effect on the child and the costs to the county. He said the juvenile justice grant program has worked in Stewart County—previously he didn't have an option to provide those types of services to youth at home—and it would be great if the state would triple the funding for the program.

Senator YARBRO said that he was struck by the dilemma between detaining youth to protect public safety while also recognizing that detaining a child may be traumatic and lead the child further into the justice system. He asked how we ensure the facilities we have are rehabilitative and less likely to lead to individuals learning to be better criminals while they are in the state's custody. Judge BRIGHAM said collecting data to determine the success rates of different programs and facilities in Tennessee will be crucial. He was initially skeptical of the MHSAS grant program, but it has demonstrated statistical and anecdotal success in Stewart County and across the state. He said that evidence had removed his skepticism, and the state would benefit from the same analysis of other programs.

In response to Mr. PEACH's question about whether other states rely as heavily on local governments to operate detention facilities, Judge PHILYAW said he does not know whether there is a different model in other states, but in Tennessee, pre-adjudication detention in the juvenile system has always been a function of local government. Chairman Ken YAGER asked whether the county covers the per diem expense of housing a pre-adjudication juvenile. Judge PHILYAW said that the county covers that expense until the child has been adjudicated. Chairman YAGER asked how long that period lasts. Judge PHILYAW said it depends, but juvenile cases move faster than adult cases, and they try to resolve them within 30 days. If it's a more serious offense or a more complicated case that requires more work, sometimes he has youth in detention for 90 days. In response to Chairman YAGER's question about whether the daily cost to counties of detaining youth ranges between the \$250 and \$450 figures mentioned by the judges earlier in the panel, Judge PHILYAW said his county and Judge Calloway's county have their own detention centers, so they calculate the overall daily cost internally, but counties like Judge Brigham's do not have a detention center and therefore pay a flat per diem cost to other counties to cover the cost of housing a juvenile out-of-county. After the child has been adjudicated delinquent and committed to DCS custody, the cost falls on the state. Mr. LAYMAN said DCS pays \$184 per day to house youth in counties' juvenile detention centers. Chairman YAGER requested that commission staff collect data on the price range of housing a juvenile across the state to calculate the overall expense to the counties of pre-adjudication detention. Senator YARBRO requested that commission staff consider the long-term cost savings associated with reducing recidivism and preventing youth from entering the adult justice system.

County Executive Jeff HUFFMAN said Tipton County doesn't have places to put juveniles in its custody pre-adjudication. It is paying to house juveniles in hotels and is having to supervise juveniles in courtrooms in lieu of placing them in detention. He said law enforcement officers say juveniles are being convinced to commit crimes by adult criminals because the county does not have a place to detain juveniles, and that has contributed to some rise in crime. He asked whether judges are allowed to place children in detention centers in other states prior to adjudication. Judge LITTLE said the difference in rules and regulations could potentially prevent judges from using out-of-state detention centers, and keeping a child out of state may make it harder for a parent to visit their child. She said other states likely have their own capacity issues and are unlikely to detain those children on Tennessee's behalf at a reasonable cost. Mr. LAYMAN said he does not think there are rules that would prevent a county from using out-of-state facilities, and there are rules that regulate that kind of exchange like the Interstate Compact for Placement of Children and the Interstate Compact for Juveniles.

County Executive HUFFMAN said the length of pre-adjudication detention is increasing, and part of that is attributable to state psychiatric tests for detained children. He asked how a judge decides whether to require a test and how to speed that process up. Judge LITTLE said that when a petition is filed to determine a child's competency to stand trial, the county must perform that examination, and they take time to complete because the examiner is busy. If Madison County's new juvenile detention center is built, she plans to keep an examiner on site to complete those assessments. In response to County Executive HUFFMAN's question about whether that service would be provided by a private provider or the county, Judge LITTLE said it would be a private provider.

County Executive HUFFMAN asked what the process is to get space in existing county buildings approved to house juveniles on a temporary basis. Mr. LAYMAN said the DCS licensing team would come in and certify that the space and programming was suitable to be considered a temporary holding resource, and the Tennessee Department of Education would have to certify the education standards. Judge LITTLE said the requirements for creating a temporary holding resource are extensive; she said Madison County has been working for years to create one, and the requirements have been prohibitive.

8. Public Chapter 102, Acts of 2025 (Cosmetology and Barbering Professions) - Update

Research Associate Cameron FOX presented an update on the study of the barbering and cosmetology professions in Tennessee. Public Chapter 102, Acts of 2025, directs the commission to study the economic effect of the cosmetology and barbering professions in the state, including the revenue generated through services provided and retail sales, the number of jobs generated by the professions, training and education opportunities, and potential barriers to entry into the industry. Ms. FOX provided a preliminary overview of research regarding industry growth trends and regulatory, licensing, and training requirements and said staff will continue to collect and analyze data and interview stakeholders this fall for the study. The draft report will be presented at the January 2026 meeting and the final report at the spring 2026 meeting.

Other Business

Following discussion of potential next meeting dates, Chairman Ken YAGER adjourned the meeting at 2:35 p.m.