

STEERING COMMITTEE ON DATA-BASED COURT PERFORMANCE AND DATA STANDARDS

December 3, 2025

1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Hybrid Attendance - In Person and Zoom Webinar
MINUTES

Members Present: Hon. James Beene, Hon. Robert Brooks, Ms. Rachel Cameron, Hon. Thomas L. Chotena, Ms. Jennifer Curtiss, Ms. Niltza Flores, Ms. Shawn Friend, Ms. Tina Mattison, Hon. Douglas Metcalf, Ms. Donna McQuality, Hon. Heidi Owens, Hon. Michael Peterson, Ms. Nancy Rodriguez, Hon. Don Taylor, and Hon. Trevor Ward

Members Absent: Mr. Jeff Schrade

Presenters and Guests: Ms. Sharon Yates, Ms. Jennifer Ferguson, and Mr. Daniel Paulson

Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) Staff: Ms. Jennifer Jones, Mr. Michael Malone, Ms. Laura Ritenour, and Mr. Michael Wise

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Welcome and Opening Remarks

The December 3, 2025, meeting of the Steering Committee on Data-Based Court Performance and Data Standards was called to order by the Chair, Justice James Beene, at 1:30 p.m. Justice Beene conducted member roll call, established a quorum, and mentioned the meeting was being recorded.

B. Approval of the September 3, 2025, Minutes

The draft minutes from the September 2025 meeting of the Steering Committee on Data-Based Court Performance and Data Standards were presented for approval. Justice Beene called for any corrections to the minutes, and none were made. A motion was made by Judge Michael Peterson and seconded by Niltza Flores to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

I. REGULAR BUSINESS

C. Call to the Public

Justice Beene announced that the Steering Committee on Data-Based Court Performance and Data Standards moved the "Call to the Public" section to the beginning of its meetings to ensure everyone has an opportunity to speak. Justice Beene made a call to the public for comments. There was no answer.

D. Follow-up Reports on Criminal Case Management Efforts in Superior Courts

Sharon Yates from Coconino County presented updates on criminal case management efforts. She reviewed the criminal caseload plan, noting it was modeled after the civil tiered process and recently updated with the new felony time standards. In the updated process, case management conferences occur after settlement conferences, and cases that are not resolved then or do not meet plea agreements are moved to the trial track tier. Fiscal year data over the past three years showed improvements across all time standards tiers of about 10%.

Challenges discussed included cultural change within the courts, a significant increase in filings, limited judge availability, and increased caseloads for county attorneys. Committee members discussed the overall success of the project from 2022 to the present and noted the benefit of having outside observers provide insight. The private bar has been supportive of efforts to move cases more efficiently. Work is ongoing on a continuance policy for limited jurisdiction misdemeanors, and settlement conferences are intended to be final.

Todd Zweig from Pinal County is scheduled to present at a future meeting.

E. Update on Implementation of Administrative Order 2025-67 – Revisions to Time Standards

Laura Ritenour presented an update on AO 2025-67, which affects DUI, felony, and juvenile cases. All limited jurisdiction courts implemented the DUI changes by the end of Fiscal Year 2025. Felony reports in AJACS are scheduled for release this month, and updates for Agave and iCIS case management systems are expected within the next few months. Changing the start date from filing date to arraignment held date has posed some challenges, and courts are working to ensure their systems are ready. Completion of these updates is anticipated by March 2026, with timelines fully implemented by next July.

F. DUI Time Standards and Caseload Management Training Workgroup

Laura Ritenour reported on AO 2025-187, which requires all limited jurisdiction judges to watch the Chief Justice's Time Standards training video and attend either the 2025 GOHS Conference closing plenary panel or the 2026 Judicial Conference panel. Pro-tem judges who cannot attend must watch recordings of one of the panels. The Chief Justice's Time Standards Overview video was

shown, and the outline for the GOHS Conference panel was presented. Michael Malone noted that a few exemption requests had already been submitted by judges.

G. Update on Time Standards Report Accuracy Workgroup

Justice Beene stated that Judge Napper is chairing this workgroup. Laura Ritenour reported that additional members, including family law judges, had been added to the workgroup. Laura and Jeff Fine conducted site visits to Pinal and Gila counties to gather insights from court and clerk staff and a second survey was distributed to gather further information from court administrators. Staffing shortages and training gaps were identified as the primary concerns affecting accuracy in time standards reports. Workgroup meetings are scheduled for January, February, and March 2026, with results and recommendations expected to be presented at the June steering committee meeting.

H. Discussion on New Requests for Excluded Time Scenarios on Time Standards Reports

Laura Ritenour opened a discussion on how to determine what qualifies as “outside of the court’s control” when considering new requests for excluded time on Time Standards reports. She noted recent examples submitted by courts, such as deceased defendants and remote hearings involving out-of-state defendants. Committee members discussed how they handle these situations and emphasized avoiding exclusions that might reduce the urgency to resolve cases. Bankruptcy matters were cited as a clear example of circumstances truly beyond the court’s control.

I. Data Standardization Advisory Committee (DSAC) Update

Mike Malone reported that the committee recently approved new statewide codes, including a case category for interstate compact for juvenile cases, affidavit arrest warrants under Senate Bill 1232, and third-party litigation funding. He noted that case type and subtype updates were implemented to improve standardization across general and limited jurisdiction courts, and the 2027-2030 Draft Required Data Elements checklists were shared at the December advisory meeting.

J. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

II. NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE

The next meeting is Wednesday, March 4, 2026, and is hybrid format, with attendees and members appearing either in-person at the State Courts Building or over Zoom webinar. In-person attendees and members should come to Room 331 at the State Courts Building, 1501 W. Washington, Phoenix AZ 85007.