



news

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Colorado Supreme Court approves initial recommendations made by its Bail Blue Ribbon Commission

DENVER – The Colorado Supreme Court has approved the initial recommendations of its Bail Blue Ribbon Commission to improve Colorado’s pretrial release practices statewide.

The Commission’s work began on March 5, 2018, when then Chief Justice Nancy E. Rice tasked the commission with reviewing and evaluating the state’s pretrial release practices and submitting recommendations for improvement to the Supreme Court for consideration.

“I am extremely proud of the Commission members’ dedication and hard work toward this very important project,” said Colorado Supreme Court Justice Carlos A. Samour, Jr., who serves as chair of the Commission. “I am also pleased my colleagues on the Court have endorsed the Commission’s work. There is still a lot of work ahead, but the Commission is looking forward to continuing to make progress and anticipates making additional recommendations in the future.”

Over the course of many months and numerous meetings, the Commission has heard comments from a wide variety of stakeholders, including district attorneys, public defenders, sheriffs, county commissioners, pretrial services programs, victim advocacy groups, and the Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice.

Jan. 30, 2019 **Colorado Supreme Court approves initial recommendations made by its Bail Blue Ribbon Commission (continued)**

The Commission proposed five initial recommendations, all of which the Court has approved. The recommendations are that:

- Pretrial release services programs and judicial officers should be required to use an empirically developed and validated risk assessment instrument in making recommendations and decisions concerning pretrial release.
- Pretrial release services programs should be established in every county in Colorado and should operate based on uniform protocols.
- The Judicial Branch should serve as an alternative operator of pretrial release services programs in limited circumstances.
- The State Court Administrator's Office in the Judicial Branch should provide centralized support for the development, implementation, and operation of pretrial release services programs throughout the state.
- The State Court Administrator's Office in the Judicial Branch should operate a statewide program to remind defendants of upcoming court dates.

In addition to Justice Samour, members of the Commission include:

- Mindy Masias, Chief of Staff, Colorado Judicial Department, Vice-Chair
- Chief Judge Mark Thompson, 5th Judicial District
- Chief Judge Pattie Swift, 12th Judicial District
- Chief Judge Patrick Murphy, 17th Judicial District
- Chief Judge James Hartmann, 19th Judicial District
- Chief Judge Ingrid Bakke, 20th Judicial District
- Glenn Tapia, Director of Probation Services, Colorado Judicial Branch
- Jeremy Botkins, Senior Assistant Legal Counsel, Colorado Judicial Branch
- Terry Scanlon, Legislative Liaison, Colorado Judicial Branch
- Brad Kamby, Director of Arapahoe County Pretrial Services

The full report of the Commission's initial recommendations to the Supreme Court has been posted to the Commission's webpage:

https://www.courts.state.co.us/Courts/Supreme_Court/Committees/Committee.cfm?Committee_ID=44