



State of Illinois
JB Pritzker
Governor



Tracey B. Fleming
Director

Human Rights Authority
Legal Advocacy Service
Office of State Guardian

MINUTES

Illinois Guardianship and Advocacy Commission

Board Meeting **Friday, September 19, 2025, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm**

Chicago: Michael A. Bilandic Building, 160 N. LaSalle, 5th floor, Room N-505

Springfield: 830 S. Spring Street, ICDD Conference Room

Commissioners Present

Paula A. Basta, M.Div, *Chair*

Ava George Stewart, Esq., *Vice-Chair*

Representative William Davis

Donald J. Dew

Kathryn E. Eisenhart, Esq.

Dean Cassandra L. Hill

Representative Bob Morgan

Executive Staff Present

Tracey B. Fleming

Teresa Parks

Anthony E. Rothert, Esq.

Spencer A. Campbell

Angela Herron

Taneka Hye Wol Jennings

Veronique Baker, Esq.

Barry Lowy, Esq.

Adrian Pollock

Atul Chokshi

Florence Martin

Director

Deputy Director and Director, Human Rights Authority

General Counsel

Chief Fiscal and Financial Officer

Director, Human Resources

Director, Legislative and External Affairs

Director, Legal Advocacy Services

Director, Office of State Guardian

Private Secretary to the Director / Springfield

Private Secretary to the Director / Chicago

Confidential Assistant to the Director

The meeting was called to order at 10:09 am by Chair Basta. A roll call of members was taken. A quorum of members was not present, so the Commission proceeded with its agenda.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

160 N. LaSalle Street • Suite S-500 • Chicago, IL 60601-3115 • (312) 793-5900 • FAX (312) 793-4311

830 S. Spring Street • Springfield, IL 62704 • (217) 785-1540 • FAX (217) 524-0088

Statewide Toll-Free Intake (866) 274-8023 • Statewide TTY (866) 333-3362

Chair's Report/Comments

Paula A. Basta, M.Div., Chair

The meeting began with informal comments by Chair Basta and a roll call of members. Pending arrival of quorum, Chair Basta expressed appreciation to the members of the Board for entrusting her the responsibility of Chair through its actions at the June 13, 2025. Since then, she met with both Director Fleming and Deputy Director, Teresa Parks. and has been briefed on the operations and priorities of the Agency. She plans to visit the Agency's Springfield location and looks forward to meeting the staff there in person.

At 10:15, Vice-Chair, Ava George Stewart arrived and was added to the roll. Quorum having been established the meeting proceeded with taking action as noted below.

ACTION ITEMS

- **Approval of June 13, 2025, Regular Board Meeting Minutes**
 - Motion was made by Vice-Chair George Stewart, and 2nd by Commissioner Morgan, motion passed, and the minutes were unanimously approved.
- **Approval of June 13, 2025, Closed Session Minutes and authorize for public inspection**
 - Motion was made by Commissioner Morgan, and 2nd by Commissioner Dew, motion passed, and the minutes were unanimously approved and authorized for public inspection.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Tracey B. Fleming, Director

Director Fleming began by extending appreciation to the Agency's staff. During his first three months, he completed his initial visits to all nine regional offices, with plans to visit the satellite locations in the future. He announced several staff transitions, and the Agency's philosophy of fostering growth and talent among its staff members. He spoke about spending time with members of the executive team and thanked them for their efforts to help him in his new role. He believes they are strong leaders and is looking forward to supporting them personally and professionally.

As for future Board meetings, Director Fleming expressed that his vision is the Board will hear substantially from members of the executive team frequently. Written reports will still be distributed, but also a focused discussion topic at each meeting. This will give a more in-depth view, and take advantage of the Commissioner's knowledge, expertise and interests in the Agency's work.

He then introduced Taneka Jennings, the Director of Legislative and External Affairs, who started in June, and brings an ability to organize and synthesize information in ways that will be invaluable in the upcoming legislative season and beyond.

Discussion Topic

Taneka Hye Wol Jennings, Director, Legislative and External Affairs

- Preliminary Legislative and Regulatory Priorities – Spring 2026

Director Jennings outlined regulatory agendas, proposed rule changes, and legislative initiatives for 2026.

- Supported Decision-making expansion
- Right to marry for individuals under guardianship
- Updates to the Office of State Guardian (OSG) fee structure
- Power of attorney revocation processes
- Mental Health treatment best practices, including statutory definitions and testimony eligibility
- Non-controversial statutory cleanups

ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROGRAM REPORTS

Deputy Director's Report

Teresa Parks, Deputy Director

Director Parks reported on work being done since the last meeting:

- The upcoming Illinois Guardianship Association (IGA) conference will be held in person in Springfield on October 30, with an option for virtual attendance. It is a collaboration between the Guardianship and Advocacy Commission (GAC) and the IGA. Discussions include guardianship related topics, is an opportunity for individuals to earn free CEUs and CLEs and is open to the public.
- The Agency provided four presentations on Supported Decision-Making to various adult disability service provider and family groups, totaling 13 presentations in 2025 to date. There is also a podcast on Supported Decision-Making, on the Agency's website, and, in collaboration with the Self Advocacy Alliance, YouTube videos in English and Spanish have been created focusing on supported decision making.
- The Sex Education mandate is gradually being implemented. The Agency received word that the Department of Public Health (DPH) is proposing new rules to include sex education in the rules that govern immediate care facilities for persons with disabilities that will increase monitoring in those settings.
- All positions in the Human Rights Authority (HRA) are filled, with one anticipated vacancy due to a retirement at the end of the calendar year. The HRA staff met and reviewed HRA rule revisions, legislative proposals and other items of HRA concern.

Office of State Guardian

Barry Lowy, Director, Office of State Guardian

Director Lowy discussed challenges in the initial introduction of the guardianship of the person training in having it be outward facing in a secure manner. He would like the training not to be presented from a lawyer's point of view, but rather a lay-person's point of view. The targeted audience are families and friends of individuals who often assume the responsibility of being a guardian but may not fully understand those responsibilities. He is working with staff member Jeff Ohlson who has a long history of being an estate worker and extensive experience with the NGA, to create a rough draft. Once that is developed, he will involve attorneys for information on estate work is done in Cook County and downstate. Once an initial rough draft is done, he will work with DoIT to have it migrated from written word into an online/OneNet format where a certificate of completion can be generated that can be filed with the court.

He then asked the Board to focus on the provided statistics regarding Adult Protective Service referrals for the Agency. Approximately 16% of the Agency's referrals come from the APS system. He believes that OSG is going to be faced with the challenge of APS going to court, particularly in certain geographic areas, and ask that OSG become guardian of the estate, which is very taxing on the Agency. Additionally, Public Guardians are asking about increasing the threshold, so they won't have to handle up to \$50,000 to \$100,000 estates, so those larger estates would become the responsibility of OSG creating further staffing challenges.

Commissioner Dew raised a question regarding complaints in the category of jails, whether it includes Illinois Department of Corrections facilities and local jails. Deputy Director Parks responded that over the years the Agency has received increasing complaints about jails, mainly focused on accommodations for their disabilities, not getting access to medications, counseling services, etc. The Agency has been working to make policy and procedural changes to ensure persons in those settings get access to the things they need. Complaints are beginning to come from the prison system as well, which is an area that hasn't had as much public awareness. If public awareness increases, there's a concern that the Agency would get many complaints, but there are steady referrals from jails.

Fiscal Report**Spencer A. Campbell, Interim Chief Financial Officer**

CFO Campbell reported that he is currently focused on the FY24 and FY25 audit. It is an extensive process that has also involved much of the executive team. The Agency is also developing framework for the FY27 budget. He thanked Adrian Pollock who has agreed to assume the responsibilities of the fiduciary role. She has gained a good grasp of what is needed in that area and has allowed him to fully focus on his transition to CFO.

Commissioner Davis inquired about lapsed funds from FY25. CFO Campbell replied that there will be more lapsed funds than in past two years, due in part, to the transition from the previous CFO. Director Fleming added that there are also timing issues in terms of hiring staff, how many vacancies there are, etc. Because of those timing issues and the unexpected separation of the previous CFO on July 31, there will be a substantial lapse in funds. He believes that going forward the Agency is well positioned and establishing the right contacts so, with Mr. Campbell's leadership this will not be a significant issue moving forward.

Human Resources Report**Arlene Herron, Director Human Resources**

Director Herron reported that the Agency's current headcount was 131 employees, with four vacancies. One of those vacancies was due to an internal promotion and was posted on September 15, 2025. Of the remaining positions, two are pending updates through the state's internal classifications system.

Other Business

Chair Basta noted that there was no business to consider under the "Other Business" section of the agenda.

Public Comment

Chair Basta then asked if there were members of the public seeking to make comments. There were none.

Commissioner Morgan motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Dew seconded. Motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:24 am.

Next meeting: Friday, December 5, 2025