

Michigan Indigent Defense Commission Meeting Minutes

The meeting was held in person at the Michigan Bankers Association building in Lansing, Michigan. Remote access via Zoom was available for Commissioners and, upon request, for members of the public. The MIDC website and meeting notice included information for members of the public on how to contact the MIDC to obtain the Zoom link for participation. Commissioners were able to participate remotely if they qualified for an exemption under the Open Meetings Act or if they requested an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 USC 12131 *et. seq.*, and Rehabilitation Act, MCL 395.81 *et. seq.*, pursuant to Attorney General Opinion No. 7318.

February 12, 2026

Time: 1:00 PM

Michigan Bankers Association
507 S. Grand Ave, Lansing, MI 48933

Commission Members Participating

The following members participated in person:

- Chair Tracey Brame
- Thomas Adams
- Andrew DeLeeuw
- Judge James Fisher
- Christine Green
- Charissa Huang
- Loren Khogali
- James Krizan
- Judge Paula Mathes
- Margaret McAvoy
- Tom McMillin
- Alicia Moon (non-voting member)
- Alan Vanderberg
- Rob VerHeulen

The following Commissioners were absent:

- Michael Carter
- Coriann McMillen

The following members requested accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act to participate via Zoom:

- Gary Walker (Marquette City, Marquette County, Michigan)

Chair Brame called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

Public Comment

The following people provided public comment:

- Tobi Lake
- Pete Menna
- Natalie Erickson
- Robin Dillard Russaw
- Melanie Doughty
- Karen Moore

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Adams moved that the proposed agenda be approved. Judge Mathes seconded. The motion carried.

Consent Agenda

Judge Mathes moved that the consent agenda containing the December 16, 2025, meeting minutes be adopted. Commissioner McAvoy seconded. The motion carried.

Chair Report

Chair Brame reported that the Commission has had several resignations in the last few months. Commissioners Buddin, Jones, and Simmington have resigned and all provided valuable contributions to the Commission.

Chair Brame welcomed Commissioner Coriann McMillen who was appointed to represent organizations whose primary mission or purpose is to advocate for minority interests. Chair Brame assigned Commissioner Coriann McMillen to the Performance Standards committee and the Data Collection committee.

Chair Brame created an ad hoc committee to study attorney shortages in Michigan and identify solutions and best practices for Commission action. The following Commissioners have been appointed to this committee: Commissioner Walker (Chair), Commissioner Carter, Judge Mathes, Commissioner Huang, Commissioner Tom McMillin, and Commissioner Khogali.

Executive Director Report

Ms. Staley announced two new additions to MIDC staff. Joseph Kanan will serve as the Western Michigan Regional Manager. Shunkea Brown returns to the MIDC as a Grant Analyst.

Executive Committee

Chair Brame stated that the committee met to review the agenda and review ad hoc committee recommendations.

Indirect Cost Committee

Commissioner VerHeulen provided an overview of the committee's work and proposed grant manual language that will be an action item later in the meeting. The committee identified four principles:

1. The MIDC understands the utility and integrity of the process by which local units of

government use cost allocation methodology. However, the MIDC operates in accordance with its originating statute and must conduct its analysis under its statute and not any other standard.

2. The MIDC Act provides that the Commission shall not approve a cost analysis or portion of a cost analysis unless it is reasonably and directly related to an indigent defense function. MCL 780.993(4).

3. Our Assistant Attorney General opined that our past pattern is not necessarily at odds with the type of services that we have approved to date as “indirect costs” but suggests utilizing the phrase “administrative costs.”

4. As a general rule, the total request for administrative costs should never exceed 10% of the personnel and fringe benefits costs for employees funded by the MIDC grant. However, in rare and exceptional cases requests in excess of the 10% will be considered made on an annual, case-by-case basis.

Proposed Grant Manual language: “Administrative Costs: Systems seeking to include administrative costs for employees are allowed. Funding that exceeds 10% of the personnel and fringe benefit (total) is allowed only in rare and exceptional instances, subject to additional review that will be made on an annual, case-by-case basis.”

MIDC 2025 Annual Impact Report

Marla McCowan provided an overview of the Annual Impact Report. Judge Fisher moved that the report be approved. Commissioner Krizan seconded. The motion carried.

MIDC Standards Implementation

FY 2025 Year End Reporting

Training Analyst Deborah Mitchell provided a Standard 1/CLE Update.

Training Director Susan Prentice-Sao gave an overview of the Byrne JAG and OJJDP Youth Defense programs.

Grants Director Rebecca Mack gave an update on FY25 year-end numbers.

Resubmissions

Ms. McCowan provided an overview of the resubmissions received by the MIDC from the following systems: Clair County, Lake County, Mecosta County, Oceana County, and Osceola County. MIDC senior staff recommends disapproval of these third submissions, consistent with prior Commission action. Commissioner Adams moved that the resubmissions submitted by Clair County, Lake County, Mecosta County, Oceana County, and Osceola County be disapproved. Commissioner Green seconded. The motion carried.

Ms. McCowan provided an overview of Wayne County’s resubmission. Senior Staff recommends disapproving the resubmission. Commissioner Vanderberg moved that the resubmission submitted by Wayne County be disapproved. Commissioner McAvoy seconded. The motion carried, Commissioner Adams voted nay.

FY 2027 Compliance Planning Resources

Ms. McCowan provided an overview of the changes to the FY27 compliance plan application and cost analysis. Commissioner Krizan moved that the Commission accept and publish the FY27 compliance plan and cost analysis with submissions due March 27, 2026. Commissioner Huang seconded. The motion carried.

Grant Manual revisions including assessment rubric

Ms. McCowan reviewed the changes made to the grant manual. Commissioner Adams moved that the MIDC Grant Manual be accepted and published. Commissioner McAvoy seconded. The motion carried.

Chair Brame adjourned the meeting at 3:15 pm.

The next meeting will be June 10, 2026.