

PAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Rewa Zakharia, Proxy for Attorney General Russell Coleman
Courtney Baxter, Commonwealth's Attorney, 12th Judicial Circuit
Jackie Steele, Commonwealth's Attorney, 27th Judicial Circuit
Carrie Ovey-Wiggins, Commonwealth's Attorney, 56th Judicial Circuit
Martin Hatfield, Pulaski County Attorney
Jennie Haymond, Madison County Attorney
Jenny Oldham, Hardin County Attorney
Joe Ross, Logan County Attorney

PAC/OAG STAFF PRESENT

Bobby Stokes
Harry Rothgerber
Tricia Wise
Tish Baker
Julie Cox
Penny Quatman
Gina Carey
Susan Blake
Samantha Willey

GUESTS PRESENT

Mike VanMeter, Commonwealth's Attorney, 6th Judicial Circuit
Kelli Kearney, Commonwealth's Attorney, 14th Judicial Circuit
Kimberly Baird, Commonwealth's Attorney, 22nd Judicial Circuit
Gerina Whethers, Commonwealth's Attorney, 30th Judicial Circuit
Mike Lindsey, Commonwealth's Attorney, 49th Judicial Circuit
Anna Roberts-Smith, Jessamine County Attorney
Karen Young, 30th Judicial Circuit
Catherine Maines, 55th Judicial Circuit
Dudley Cotton, Jefferson County Attorney's Office

Pursuant to KRS 15.100(2), Executive Director, Bobby Stokes called the roll. After the roll was called, a quorum was announced, and the meeting was called to order. He welcomed everyone to the May 14, 2026, Special PAC meeting and reminded attendees that, as this was a special meeting, discussions would be limited to the items listed on the agenda.

Bobby Stokes directed the Council to review the meeting minutes from April 17th, 2026 PAC meeting for approval. Jackie Steele made a motion to approve April 17th, 2026 minutes, the motion was seconded by Jenny Oldham and passed by voice vote.

ADMINISTRATIVE

TRAINING UPDATE

Susan Blake reported the one-day Evidence Bootcamp was held on April 16 with 29 attendees and 14 faculty members. The course was very positively evaluated. Summary of the evaluations were provided to Council members. Quotes for a September Evidence Bootcamp were included in the Council materials for review. After discussion and review of competing bids, a motion was made by Jennie Haymond and the motion was seconded by Jackie Steele to select the Origin Hotel, pending the instructions of the Finance Cabinet on changes to the approval process for conferences and travel, and passed by voice vote.

The *Kentucky Evidence Courtroom Manuals* discussed at the last meeting were ordered, received in PAC, and are being shipped out by PAC staff.

KPC planning is underway and PAC staff is seeking guidance from Finance as to the process going forward given the language of HB500. Gina discussed the potential limitations in HB 500 that may affect PAC training.

Gina Carey and Susan Blake met with the Louisville Marriott East to discuss the December Basic Training for County Attorneys. The County Attorneys Association and Kentucky Association of Counties have agreed to provide lunches and a reception. A contract has not been finalized pending instructions from the Finance Cabinet, but the hotel is holding the space.

A survey was sent out to gauge interest in a future Leadership Challenge Course to be held in March 2027 and the Evidence Bootcamp tentatively scheduled for September 29, 2026.

CASE MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

Gina Carey reported that she would be providing the update on Chad Coleman's behalf.

Gina reported that to date, 11 Commonwealth's Attorney offices and 12 County Attorney offices have been trained and are actively using the program. An additional 8 Commonwealth's Attorney offices and 17 County Attorney offices are currently scheduled for training.

Gina reported that Twilio will be used for text message integration. The implementation process has been challenging because Twilio required documentation to verify that the Prosecutors Advisory Council is a state agency. After providing the requested information, they believe all requirements have been met and expect the integration to be operational soon.

Chad has also been working on document creation within the system. Although the process requires the use of a unique tool, he quickly learned how to utilize it. Chad and the vendor are currently working on document development simultaneously. Approximately 30 documents have already been completed, with current efforts focused on the 22nd Judicial Circuit Commonwealth's Attorney's documents.

The data migration for the 22nd Judicial Circuit Commonwealth's Attorney is currently underway. Once that migration is complete, work will begin migrating additional JustWare instances for other offices. Meetings with the 30th Judicial Circuit regarding migration and transition are also taking place.

PAC STAFF PAYROLL CERTIFICATIONS

Bobby Stokes directed the Council to review the April 30th, 2026, PAC/UPS payroll certifications in the folders provided for approval. Courtney Baxter made a motion to approve April 30th, 2026, PAC/UPS payroll certifications, the motion was seconded by Joe Ross, and passed by voice vote.

SPECIAL AUDIT FINDINGS AND CORRECTIVE PLAN

Bobby Stokes explained that UPS/PAC has 60 days to respond to the Special Examination of the Unified Prosecutorial System audit findings. He reported that staff is working with Lisa Foley, Council citizen member, to draft an appropriate response. In the interim, he requested input from the Council and asked whether members would like to form a subcommittee to address certain items outlined in the audit report, particularly those related to asset forfeiture and ethics.

The Council discussed forming a subcommittee composed of representatives from both the Commonwealth's and County Attorney's offices. Proposed initial members included Joe Ross, Jennie Haymond, Jackie Steele, Louis Kelly, and Rewa Zakharia.

Joe Ross made a motion to form a subcommittee to develop a corrective plan addressing the special audit findings, the motion was seconded by Courtney Baxter, and passed by voice vote.

ASSET FORFEITURE EXPENDITURES

Bobby Stokes reported that questions arose during the process of the special audit regarding approved expenditures related to asset forfeiture funds and what uses are permissible. He stated that he was seeking input from the Council on two specific requests and directed members to the materials and the asset forfeiture regulation included in their meeting folders.

1. Gerina Whethers, Commonwealth's Attorney 30th Judicial Circuit requested approval to use asset forfeiture funds to renew the office manager's SHRM membership.

Courtney Baxter made a motion to approve the use of asset forfeiture funds for the SHRM membership renewal. The motion was seconded by Jenny Oldham and passed by voice vote.

2. Shannon Powers, Commonwealth's Attorney 52nd Judicial Circuit requested approval to purchase 200 challenge coins using asset forfeiture funds.

Joe Ross made a motion to deny the use of asset forfeiture funds for the purchase of challenge coins. The motion was seconded by Jackie Steele and passed by voice vote.

BUDGET

FY2026 BUDGET UPDATE

Gina Carey reported that Fiscal Year 2026 is closing out as projected, with only a few remaining items large purchases to be completed.

She noted that the Commonwealth's Attorneys' current Westlaw plan expires at the end of the month. Several individuals, including Courtney Baxter, Brian Wright, Harry Rothgerber, Madeline Wise, Bobby Stokes, and Gina Carey, participated in a demonstration of Westlaw Advantage Co-Counsel, Westlaw's artificial intelligence platform.

Gina explained that the additional cost for the Co-Counsel platform would be approximately \$58,000 annually, or less than \$5,000 per month above the cost of the current Westlaw subscription.

Courtney Baxter stated that she was very impressed with the product and believed it offered valuable capabilities. Brian's feedback was reported to be similar. Harry also expressed strong support for the platform, particularly its ability to review litigation documents, analyze pleadings, and provide comprehensive case analysis. He noted that users could upload case files and receive detailed evaluations and insights.

Discussion highlighted that the Co-Counsel platform operates within a closed system rather than searching the open internet. As a result, user searches and uploaded information remain private and are not incorporated into publicly available AI datasets. The platform also reduces the risk of inaccurate information generated from unverified internet sources.

Courtney Baxter made a motion to approve the Westlaw Advantage Co-Counsel subscription for the Commonwealth's Attorneys as presented in the materials. The motion was seconded by Jackie Steele and passed by voice vote.

Gina Carey noted that County Attorneys currently utilize the Westlaw Advantage plan rather than the Co-Counsel platform. She stated that, to her knowledge, the current County Attorneys' contract does not expire until next year. However, following discussion and expressed interest from the County Attorney Council members, she agreed to obtain pricing information for the Co-Counsel platform and present a quote for consideration at the next meeting.

Gina Carey reported that, as part of the Fiscal Year 2026 closeout process, an email was sent to offices reminding them to submit any final purchasing requests before the end of the fiscal year. She noted that several offices have submitted requests that exceed their individual operating budget allocations.

Gina explained that one of the observations in the Special Examination of the Unified Prosecutorial System identified instances where individual operating budgets were exceeded. Historically, operating budget allocations have been managed with the understanding that individual office budgets could be exceeded as long as total operating expenditures remained within the overall budget approved by the Council.

Gina requested guidance from the Council regarding whether limitations should be placed on requests exceeding individual budget allocations, whether such requests

should require individual Council approval, or whether the current practice should continue.

Council members discussed the issue and noted that the operating budget allocations are not governed by statute or administrative regulation, but are administrative allocations established based on historical spending patterns and anticipated needs. Discussion included the possibility of addressing the process through the administrative manual and allowing fourth-quarter budget adjustments when funds are available.

Following discussion, the Council agreed to continue the current practice of allowing overages to individual operating budget allocations, provided sufficient funds remain available within the overall operating budget. A motion was made by Martin Hatfield, seconded by Jackie Steele, and passed by voice vote.

Gina Carey provided an update on the Axon licensing survey for County Attorneys. She reported that a survey of offices indicated a need for approximately 135 user licenses. To allow for future growth and participation, a quote was requested for 200 licenses. The requested quote has not yet been received, and the matter will be revisited at the June meeting.

Gina also reported that the Commonwealth's Attorneys contract for Axon has completed the approval process and is currently being reviewed by Finance to finalize a master agreement from which to complete the purchase of the licenses. The Commonwealth's Attorneys' Axon system is expected to be operational next month.

Regarding information technology projects, Gina noted that the Council previously approved the Rubrik backup solution, which will replace Azure and is expected to generate cost savings. The Rubrik system is currently being built and will serve as the backup platform for Commonwealth's Attorneys' offices.

She further reported that the server replacement project for the Louisville office is underway. In addition, IT staff are in the process of deploying 12 additional servers to offices that have not yet received their replacements.

Finally, Gina reported that the temporary IT employee, Richard Awudi, who had been assisting with these projects recently accepted a position with the Commonwealth Office of Technology (COT). She expressed appreciation for his contributions and noted that he would be missed.

FY2027 BUDGET**COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEYS**

Gina Carey reported to the Council that the FY27 Commonwealth's Attorneys Budget for consideration/approval was practically unchanged from the tentative version presented at the previous meeting. She noted that approximately \$21,000 remained unallocated and had been temporarily placed in the PAC Information Technology category. On the handout provided in the materials for Council review, the highlighted budget categories remain flexible and may be adjusted throughout the fiscal year as operational needs arise. If additional funding is needed in specific categories, such as leases, funds may be transferred from PAC Staff Operating, software licenses, or other available budget lines.

Gina also presented the draft FY27 Budget letter that will be distributed to Commonwealth's Attorney offices. She explained that each office will still be required to review, sign, and return its Distribution of Staff Salary personnel budget, even though no additional personnel funding will be provided in FY27. Offices may submit requested changes; however, because the budget is a continuation budget with no salary increases or additional funding allocations, significant revisions are not anticipated.

Council members noted that offices had previously been informed that the Fiscal Year 2027 budget would be a continuation budget and that maintaining current funding levels represented a positive outcome compared to earlier budget projections.

Jackie Steele made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2027 Commonwealth's Attorney budget and accompanying budget letter. The motion was seconded by Joe Ross and passed by voice vote.

COUNTY ATTORNEYS

Gina Carey presented the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 County Attorneys' budget, noting that it closely mirrors the Commonwealth's Attorneys' budget and is likewise structured as a continuation budget.

She explained that the vacancy savings estimate was intentionally conservative due to the relatively low turnover experienced among County Attorneys' offices in Fiscal Year 2026. However, she noted that the vacancy figure may require adjustment as election

results become known following the primary and general elections with as many as twenty-one offices that could see a transition.

Gina reported that the County Attorney training budget was increased by approximately \$50,000 to accommodate the Basic Training to be held in December 2026 for the transitioning newly elected County Attorneys. She also noted that funding for National District Attorneys Association (NDAA) dues was retained in the FY27 budget as they had been provided in the FY26 approved budget.

While the budget reflects an estimated balance of approximately \$250,000, Gina cautioned against committing those funds prematurely, explaining that the remaining balance may be needed to support unanticipated requests against the salary compensation plan account.

Jennie Haymond made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2027 County Attorneys' budget and Budget letter to the County Attorneys. The motion was seconded by Jenny Oldham and passed by voice vote.

ROCKET DOCKET GRANTS

Gina Carey reported that funding for all currently operating Rocket Docket programs was included in the proposed budget as continuation funding. She also referenced performance information previously distributed to the Council, which summarized Rocket Docket activity through March 31.

Gina noted that overall case numbers had declined during the most recent quarter. However, Carol had observed that several factors, including at least two significant ice storms that resulted in court closures, may have contributed to the decrease in case activity.

Jackie Steele asked whether a final funding amount had been received from the Justice Cabinet for Rocket Docket Budget for the next fiscal year. Gina responded that she had contacted Van Ingram regarding the Senate Bill 192 funding and was advised that funding levels were still under review as part of the overall Justice Cabinet budget. Because it remained unclear whether the program's annual appropriation would be reduced from \$2 million, Gina assumed a 10 percent reduction and budgeted based on an estimated allocation of \$1.8 million. She noted that the Commonwealth's Attorneys' budget had been structured to absorb that potential reduction.

Jackie Steele stated that all current Rocket Docket programs should be required to submit renewal applications and emphasized that programs with consistently low case

activity should be evaluated carefully if funding reductions become necessary. He noted that jurisdictions reporting fewer than ten cases in a quarter could be considered for reduction or elimination before higher-performing programs. Council members agreed that available funding should be directed toward programs demonstrating strong utilization and need.

Discussion followed regarding the composition of the Rocket Docket Grant Application Review Subcommittee. Gina stated that the subcommittee previously consisted of Courtney Baxter, Jackie Steele, Martin Hatfield, and Jennie Haymond. Jackie Steele made a motion to require renewal applications for all existing Rocket Docket programs and appoint the subcommittee for review of the applications. The motion was seconded by Martin Hatfield and passed by voice vote.

Following the vote, Gina confirmed that renewal application materials would only be distributed to participating programs and that no additional new-application packets would be necessary.

COUNTY ATTORNEY OPERATING BUDGETS

Gina Carey asked whether the Council wished to make any changes to the current County Attorney operating allotments of \$8,000 per county.

Joe Ross recommended postponing the discussion until the June meeting to allow additional consideration. He further suggested that if changes are ultimately adopted, offices should be notified during Fiscal Year 2027, with implementation delayed until Fiscal Year 2028. He noted that Fiscal Year 2027 may provide greater budget flexibility, while Fiscal Year 2028 could present additional funding challenges due to anticipated office turnover following the election cycle.

Joe Ross also expressed uncertainty regarding whether changes to the current allocation process were necessary, noting that the existing system appears to be functioning effectively. He observed that unspent operating funds are being utilized efficiently, particularly through the fourth-quarter reallocation process.

The Council agreed to continue the discussion at a future meeting and took no action on the matter.

SALARY CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION REQUESTS

Bobby Stokes directed the Council to the SCCP requests located in the folders provided.

A motion was made by Joe Ross to approve the County Attorney's offices SCCP requests, the motion was seconded by Jenny Oldham, and passed by voice vote. Jennie Haymond abstained from participating in the motion.

A motion was made by Jackie Steele to approve the Commonwealth's Attorney offices' SCCP requests, the motion was seconded by Carrie Ovey-Wiggins, and passed by voice vote.

LEASES

33RD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

Bobby Stokes notified the Council that the cost per square foot for the 33rd Judicial Circuit office space had increased from \$13 per square foot to \$14 per square foot and required the Council's approval. Jackie Steele made a motion to approve the lease increase in the 33rd Judicial Circuit, the motion was seconded by Carrie Ovey-Wiggins, and passed by voice vote.

PERSONNEL REQUESTS

A. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS

1. Donna Dixon, Commonwealth's Attorney 2nd Judicial Circuit, requested approval to establish two (2) temporary quarter-time Intern positions with no additional funds, to be paid with asset forfeiture funds retroactive to May 1, 2026, through July 31, 2026.
2. Kyle Williamson, Commonwealth's Attorney 10th Judicial Circuit, requested approval to establish a temporary quarter-time Intern position with no additional funds, to be paid with asset forfeiture funds effective June 1, 2026 through July 31, 2026.

Jackie Steele made a motion to approve no additional funds requests A 1 & 2, the motion was seconded by Carrie Ovey-Wiggins, and passed by voice vote.

3. Anna Roberts-Smith, Jessamine County Attorney, requested approval to establish a temporary full-time Assistant County Attorney I position with no additional funds required effective May 16, 2026.

Martin Hatfield made a motion to approve no additional funds request A 3, the motion was seconded by Jenny Oldham, and passed by voice vote.

ADJOURN

Bobby Stokes reminded the Council that the next scheduled meeting was June 12th, 2026.

Martin Hatfield made a motion to adjourn at 10:51 AM EDT, the motion was seconded by Carrie Ovey-Wiggins, and passed by voice vote.