

July – September 2020



Alton L. “Rip” Colvin, Jr.
Executive Director

COMMISSIONERS

Diamond Litty,
Chair
Public Defender
19th Judicial Circuit

~
Kathleen Smith
Public Defender
20th Judicial Circuit

~
Brian Haas
State Attorney
10th Judicial Circuit

~
Jack Campbell
State Attorney
2nd Judicial Circuit

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The JAC EXPRESS

State of Florida – Justice Administrative Commission

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A Word from JAC’s Executive Director

After 12 years on the Commission, and with over seven years as Chair, Brad King has resigned his position on the Commission as he continues down the road toward retirement later this year or early next. Jack Campbell, the State Attorney for the 2nd Judicial Circuit, was appointed by FPAA President Phil Archer to fill the vacancy on the Commission.



Rip Colvin
JAC Executive
Director

During Chair King’s term, the JAC has made numerous improvements and advancements, including:

- Transitioning court-appointed billings to an online environment
- Improving our reviews related to court-appointed billings
- Holding two statewide conferences for the JROs
- Investing in our staff through numerous training opportunities
- Securing sufficient funding for court-appointed due process costs

I know all of you join me in wishing Chair King the best and are very appreciative of the incredible support he has shown to JAC staff over the years. This is an exciting time at the JAC as we welcome and look forward to continued success under the leadership of the newly elected JAC Commission Chair, Diamond Litty, and newly appointed Commissioner Jack Campbell.

The most recent Justice Administrative Commission (JAC) Meeting was held telephonically September 21, 2020. A date for the next meeting has not yet been determined. Meanwhile, this issue provides updates on Telework at JAC; the JAC Training Conference – Connect and Collaborate III (CNC III); Online Legal Research; FY 2021-22 Long Range Program Plan and Legislative Budget Request; Statewide Travel Management System; Public Records and the STMS; Submitting BOMS-Generated Batch Sheets to JAC via the “BOMS to JAC Web Service”; Florida PALM – Planning, Accounting, and Ledger Management; salary-related matters; Leave With Pay (unpaid hours) templates, and other items of interest.

Telework at JAC

JAC implemented our telework plan on Wednesday, March 18, 2020. JAC’s IT Section was able to get all employees working from home within three days of the plan being executed. The agency allows a limited number of employees access to the building to perform functions that cannot be performed via telework. The number one goal while JAC is teleworking is to maintain the high level of service we provide to all we serve while ensuring our staff is safe.

JAC will continue with this approach and will gradually allow staff back into the office depending on the workload, keeping employee health and safety considerations in mind.

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JAC Training Conference – Connect and Collaborate III (CNC III)

Due to concerns related to the novel COVID-19, JAC canceled the Connect and Collaborate III training conference scheduled for May 4–7, 2020. We are considering possibilities related to a rescheduled CNCIII Training Conference, either an in-person or virtual experience.

Online Legal Research

JAC can document **annual recurring savings of approximately \$410,000** by the judicial-related offices (JROs) based on our collective efforts associated with both the original online legal research contract and the contract extension we are now operating under.

Specifically related to the contract extension, on February 20, 2020, with the approval of FPAA and FPDA representatives, JAC signed an extension of our original agreement with LexisNexis. The extension allows the JROs to take advantage of enhanced service offerings from LexisNexis at an even greater reduction in price per user per month. These enhanced service offerings and reduced pricing became available to the JROs on June 1, 2020 and are the result of collaboration between a team of representatives from the JROs, JAC staff, and LexisNexis representatives. The operational changes brought about by the contract extension have been implemented without incident.

Additionally, JAC staff coordinated with the team of representatives from the JROs and LexisNexis staff to determine if prepayment resulting in further savings would be possible. Specifically, we entered into an addendum to the newly signed agreement to allow for advanced payment for services. Due to the potential size of the advanced payment, a request was made of the Department of Financial Services (DFS) for approval, and DFS approval was received. This prepayment option was implemented without incident and has resulted in an **additional total savings to the JROs of over \$17,000**.

If you have any questions, please contact Greg Cowan at Greg.Cowan@justiceadmin.org.

Updates from the JAC Budget Office

The JAC Budget Office is working with our JROs to prepare for publication of the Justice Administration Department's Long Range Program Plan (LRPP), and each budget entity's annual Legislative Budget Request (LBR) as mandated by ss. 216.03 and 216.023, F.S., in accordance with instructions outlined by the Governor's Office of Policy and Budget (OPB). The LRPP must be published to the [Florida Fiscal Portal](#) by September 30, and the LBR by October 15, 2020.





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Statewide Travel Management System

Due to COVID-19, and issues related to office closures, telework, and related challenges, the implementation of the STMS for all Justice Administration offices was delayed from the original implementation planned in the spring of 2020, to Tuesday, September 22nd. Go-To-Meeting training sessions are ongoing through the month of September and into the first week of October for all offices. All employee travel costs are required by s. 112.061, F.S., to be entered into the STMS; however, non-employee travel will continue to be processed using the current paper travel documents. STMS training dates, general information and resources are posted on the JAC website under [Accounting Services](#). Questions related to the STMS may be directed to Vicki Nichols, Director of Accounting, at vicki.nichols@justiceadmin.org.

Public Records and the STMS

JAC staff communicated with DMS staff to acquire an understanding of the DMS Public Records Policy related to the STMS. Some key elements related to DMS' Public Records Policy are:

1. DFS will release STMS records ***without notifying JAC unless one of the following conditions exists:***
 - a. An employee is marked "restricted relative" or "protected identity" in People First, or
 - b. A trip is marked "secure" in the STMS.
2. If one of the above conditions exists [*1.a.* or *b.*], DMS will notify JAC regarding the public records request.
3. When DMS notifies JAC of a public records request, JAC will contact the office involved. JAC will not make a determination whether the record should be released in whole or in part.
4. If JAC or a JRO determines that all or part of the record should not be released, that office will be expected to "defend" that decision in any subsequent litigation and bear the litigation costs.

On a related note, DMS is required by Florida law to provide a "portal" available to the public to run reports of travel data for all state agencies from STMS data. The portal is currently accessible on the DMS STMS at [website](#). Travel data marked "secure" will be blocked from the portal.

JAC Announces Courier Transition

JAC has been sending warrants and other documents out twice a week using UPS as our courier of choice for a number of years. However, with delivery problems now occurring on a regular basis, causing delays and losses that impact your offices and staff, as well as our staff, JAC has made the decision to transition to FedEx 2nd Day for our twice weekly shipments. As has been our practice, JAC will pay for the twice weekly, 2nd Day packages. If you desire a different level of service or need a more frequent shipment of your warrants and documents, please reach out to our Mail Room staff, and provide your account number for that purpose.

If you would like to continue to use UPS for your packages, we will be glad to continue to send your packages via that courier, but will ask that you provide your account number for those shipments.

If you have any questions or concerns about this change, contact Wayne Meyer at wayne.meyer@justiceadmin.org.

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Messages from the Accounting Office



JAC's IT Section, in conjunction with Computer Information and Planning (CIP), developed a secure method for submitting Batch Sheets with supporting documentation to JAC for payment of invoices. The BOMS to JAC Web Service (Web Service) is a secure and efficient method for submitting Batch Sheets to JAC. Benefits to utilizing the Web Service include:

- Secure submission – offering the most secure method for submitting Batch Sheets to JAC – little to no risk for documents (and confidential information) to be accessed or confiscated by the wrong party,
- Ease of submission from BOMS – no printing to paper and scanning for email,
- Quality of images remain – JAC receives the highest quality images – program-generated, easy to read; less chance for errors vs. scanned documents,
- Electronic signature functionality in BOMS utilized – no printing, signing, and scanning,
- CIP has provided instructions within BOMS for each office to set up BOMS for the Web Service, and
- JAC IT and Mailroom staff can more quickly route the Batch Sheets to appropriate JAC staff for processing.

Currently, 14 offices (SAs 2, 7, 9, 10, 16, and 20; PDs 1, 4, 13, 17, and 20; and RCs 1, 3, and 5) are utilizing the Web Service for Batch Sheets. JAC encourages more offices to take advantage of the Web Service, primarily because of the high level of security it offers and the level of efficiency it provides.

Please note: the Web Service is not the MyJAC portal on JAC's website.



Florida PALM is new software platform that will *eventually* replace FLAIR. DFS is spearheading the effort to transition the state to Florida PALM. JAC staff have been participating in meetings over many months to begin the process of understanding Florida PALM and to inform DFS about the 50 Offices of Justice Administration and the uniqueness of our structure. The Treasury functions will be the first to transition to Florida PALM; that transition is scheduled to occur in July 2021. This transition will affect:

- JAC Revenue staff processing receipts through the Treasury, and
- JROs using Revolving funds. The inquiry and statements will be transitioned into PALM.

Other functions will not transition to Florida PALM until July 2022 at the earliest. JAC will continue to keep all JROs informed and engaged regarding Florida PALM as needed over these next few years.

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PCard Minute

The Department of Financial Services (DFS) randomly samples PCard charges for review. Since our transition to Works, DFS has the ability to see all of the documentation provided when the charge is approved. JAC's goal is to provide sufficient information to ensure charge documentation meets the purchasing guidelines in the Reference Guide for State Expenditures. As a refresher, the following items must be on the receipt or notated in the comments section in Works:



- Vendor Name
- Description of the goods/services. Remember, the vendor description may not be clear, note additional description to clarify if needed.
- Quantity per item
- Price per each item
- Total cost of each item
- Payment information must be shown, even if noted manually by cardholder (e.g., write **“Paid by PCard”** and the date **paid** on the receipt)
- Conference and training **registrations** should include the employee's **title**, the improved efficiency or **benefit to the state**, and the **agenda**
- Justification, with the appropriate statutory authority citation, if the item purchased is outside of normal office operations (e.g., notary, etc.)
- Redaction, and specific citations for any chapter 119, F.S., exemptions, unless the entire receipt is confidential, and a JAC Confidential Receipt Form is necessary

Also, a single receipt for multiple conference registrants (e.g., PayPal, Eventbrite) must have supporting documentation to show the breakdown of the purchase. These transactions should also be divided in Works to show the costs for each employee and their Sub-Vendor ID.

If any of these items are missing on the receipt, then it is perfectly reasonable to add the information as a hand-written note, a stamp, an additional document, or in the comments field.

If no receipt is available, or if the documentation is not sufficient to explain the purchase using the above-referenced guidelines, then use the Replacement Receipt Form. This form can be used for credit transactions, international transaction fees, and for receipts that are not very clear, such as automated self-parking machine receipts or TMobile evidence thermograph receipts.

If there are questions about Pcard receipts, please contact Merry Sutton or Aleah Roddenberry via Pcard@JusticeAdmin.org.

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The Latest on Laserfiche with Michelle Dolce



When JAC started working from home, there were some challenges experienced with Laserfiche, but those have been resolved. Human Resources wasn't quite ready to use the system when the pandemic hit, but they have been champions, using it with very little intervention. Court Appointed is doing great too. I have heard very little from Circuit Accounting, Budget, and Operations. There have been a few changes to some templates, an addition to a workflow for Financial Services, and a new workflow is being discussed for the Voucher Room. I'm very proud that, with the hiccups and bumps, JAC staff has conquered them all. Thank you!

Salary Related Matters Presented by Human Resources

Salary Increases of 3% for Eligible Employees

The General Appropriations Act contained language stating the Legislature's intent that all eligible employees receive a 3% increase in the base rate of their salary, with the minimum increase being \$1,000.00. OPS employees are not eligible for this increase.

On August 14, 2020, JAC Human Resources distributed to all JROs instructions from People First regarding the 3% salary increase for all eligible employees effective October 1, 2020. In light of the short turnaround time for each JRO to review the initial mass load it receives from People First and return it to JAC, JAC Human Resources will have "all hands on deck" during that time to answer any questions and to assist JROs to ensure the accuracy of the returned file. JAC will review the files and contact a JRO if there are any questions. JAC will then combine all 50 files into a single file as requested by People First.

Leave With Pay (Unpaid Hours) Templates

Some JROs have voiced a desire to have employees incur one or more unpaid days, similar to implementing a furlough. Accordingly, JAC Human Resources contacted People First to ask if it were possible to process unpaid days using a mass upload template. This would obviate the need for multiple PARs to be processed for each employee.

People First has been in contact with its vendor, NorthGateArinso (NGA), and requested NGA to design a template so that JROs can enter all their employees and the number of hours in a particular month for which the employees will not be paid. The template is currently scheduled to be available for October payroll. However, with the 3% legislative increases occurring in October, it is highly recommended that this process not be used until November payroll.

Although we do not yet have the template, offices will need to enter the effective date and the number of hours that will be unpaid. At the JRO's option, a reason may be entered as well, but it must be the same reason for all employees on the template. As soon as the template is available, we will distribute it and instructions immediately.

Deferral of Payroll Taxes

As of this date, the Department of Financial Services has not indicated whether the state will implement a deferral of payroll taxes as contained in President Trump's Executive Order.

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The cover beach photo is
courtesy of Rip Colvin.

*Laugh. Give. Appreciate. Acknowledge. Support.
Nix the negativity and lift your spirits to new
heights.*

~ William Arruda ~

JAC In Brief

The Justice Administrative Commission administratively serves 49 judicial-related offices (JROs): 20 Offices of State Attorney, 20 Offices of Public Defender, 5 Offices of Criminal Conflict and Civil Regional Counsel, 3 Offices of Capital Collateral Regional Counsel, and the Statewide Guardian ad Litem Program. The JAC also provides compliance and financial review of court-appointed attorney fees and due process costs.

The membership of the Justice Administrative Commission consists of two State Attorneys, appointed by the President of the Florida Prosecuting Attorneys Association and two Public Defenders, appointed by the President of the Florida Public Defender Association. Although members may be reappointed, each term spans a period of two years (s. 43.16, F.S.).

JAC's Vision: To be the model of exemplary state government.

JAC's Mission: To support the entities we serve and Florida's judicial system with fiscal controls, best practices, and exemplary service.

JAC's Values: We take great pride in exemplary service, adaptability, honesty, integrity, and diversity, as well as respectful and ethical conduct.

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