

## Advanced Certification in Child Welfare

The following courses are administered by the North Carolina Judicial College at the UNC School of Government. All district court judges presiding over juvenile proceedings are welcome to attend. In courses where space is limited, priority will be given to district court judges who (1) preside over juvenile proceedings and (2) are seeking a certification as a juvenile court judge or one of the advanced juvenile certifications or are currently certified as a juvenile court judge and seeking the mandatory continuing judicial education hours addressing juvenile law.

**The following two courses for district court judges are required for the Advanced Certification in Child Welfare and the Advanced Certification in Juvenile Justice.**

- **Mental Health Issues in Juvenile Court**: This multiday course focuses on children with mental health needs who are the subject of district court proceedings, including delinquency; abuse, neglect, dependency; judicial review of a minor's voluntary admission; or involuntary commitment. This course will (1) examine the laws governing these proceedings that enable a court to enter orders addressing a child's mental health needs, (2) explain the procedure for determining a juvenile's capacity to proceed in a delinquency action, (3) identify common mental health issues children who are the subject of these various types of court proceedings experience, and (4) discuss the North Carolina behavioral health delivery system and services that are available within that system.
- **Educational Issues for Systems-Involved Youth**: This multiday course explores the connection between juvenile court proceedings and the education system, with an emphasis on the educational rights of children. Topics for discussion include, but are not limited to, school enrollment and educational stability for children in foster care; special education; school discipline and school-justice partnerships; the role of law enforcement in schools; the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA); and information sharing between juvenile court and schools, including access to school records.

**Four additional courses are required for the Advanced Certification in Child Welfare.**

- **Dispositions in A/N/D Court: Structuring Court Ordered Plans**: This 1.5 day course is offered in a hybrid format (one day in home jurisdiction and half day online) and will provide attendees with a simulated experience in working a case plan. The course focuses on dispositional orders that are entered in an abuse, neglect, or dependency action for respondent parents. The objectives are for judges to understand the respondents' experiences in meeting expectations and learn how to enter orders that are designed to allow a parent to succeed so that reunification is more likely to be achieved.
- **A Closer Look at Termination of Parental Rights**: The 2-day course will focus exclusively on termination of parental rights proceedings, both when there is and is not an underlying abuse, neglect, or dependency proceeding. The course will highlight procedural and substantive issues that often present in termination of parental rights cases and requirements for the court orders that are entered in these proceedings. There will be an emphasis on the recent North Carolina Supreme Court jurisprudence in this subject area. The course provides judges with the

opportunity to learn more about the process to terminate parental rights and to raise issues for further discussion with their peers.

- Two additional juvenile law electives designated as eligible for advance certification in child welfare. Additional courses and topics to be determined.
  - Indian Child Welfare Act: This 2.5 day course provides a small group of district court judges the opportunity to travel to Cherokee, NC to learn about (1) the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and its application in abuse, neglect, dependency and termination of parental rights (TPR) actions in North Carolina and (2) Cherokee culture and how the tribe addresses abuse, neglect, dependency, and TPR cases for their children. Participants will observe a juvenile tribal court session and will visit landmark sites including the New Kituwah Academy and the Museum of the Cherokee People.
  - Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) : This half-day, online class will address the law and regulations that apply to interstate issues related to the placement of juveniles in out-of-state foster and/or preadoptive homes when an out-of-home placement arises in an abuse, neglect, or dependency case. Topics include when the ICPC applies, how the ICPC process works, challenges with the ICPC, and North Carolina appellate opinions addressing the ICPC.