



State of Kansas

## Office of Special Counsel

Kansas Judicial Center

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June 24, 2024

Robert G. (Bob) Bethell Joint Committee on Home and Community Based Services and  
KanCare Oversight

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Special Counsel to the Chief Justice

Chairwoman Landwehr and members of the joint committee, my name is Marisa Bayless and I am the Special Counsel to the Chief Justice. The judicial branch has one item on the issues spreadsheet.

In the last update, I provided an update on family treatment courts. This includes some information on the goals, standards, partnerships, and the timeline for implementation. The three pilot court locations are in Cowley, Miami, and Lyon counties and we are still scheduled to begin these courts this fall.

As a brief review, specialty courts are treatment courts or problem-solving courts. They are designed to lead people out of the cycle with the criminal justice system into treatment programs. Specialty courts are selective. Not every individual who comes through the court system will be eligible or meet the qualifications for specialty courts based on their criminal history, the degree of severity of past convictions and charges, and their willingness to participate.

Family treatment courts (FTCs) are a new model for Kansas, but this model has been established nationally and has best practice standards established by the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare. The FTC model is a family-centered, collaborative approach to serve families with substance use disorders involved in the child welfare system. Like all specialty courts, FTCs use multidisciplinary teams to coordinate services in a non-adversarial environment.

The judicial branch submitted grant applications for coordinators for all three pilot FTC programs. We are awaiting the announcement of recipients of those grants. If the judicial branch is successful in being awarded these grants, coordinators will assist with the management of the multidisciplinary team and provide assistance to the judges overseeing the specialty court.

Additionally, experts from Children and Family Futures, a nonprofit organization that provides technical assistance, strategic planning, and training specifically for those working in the intersection of child welfare, substance use and mental disorder treatment, and the court systems will be providing in-person training to all three of our pilot teams at the end of July.

The judicial branch has worked hand-in-hand with the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) in developing FTCs and getting our teams ready for implementation. KDADS approved budget includes \$1.5 million to assist with providing treatment to FTC participants which will be critical to help participants succeed.