



National Association of Sentencing Commissions

Summer 2016

Join us in Salt Lake City, Utah For the NASC 2016 Conference August 7-9, 2016

Time is running out! The early bird registration fee (\$325 for full conference, \$200 Monday, or \$175 Tuesday) expires on July 16, 2016. Prices will then increase. Additionally, the special hotel room rate of \$199 expires July 15, 2016.

[Register on-line](#) for the conference and call [Little America Hotel](#) at 800-437-5288 (mention NASC) to reserve a room.

The conference kicks off with a town hall meeting and reception at the University of Utah's SJ Quinney College of Law at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, August 7th. A panel will discuss collaborative approaches to reverse the school-to-prison pipeline.

The conference sessions will be held at the hotel, 500 South Main Street, in Salt Lake City. The focus is sentencing policy and practices, and the interaction between the two.

Plenary sessions include:

- Evidence-based short-term interventions for lower level offenses

Breakout sessions include:

- How do sentencing commissions stay relevant
- The role of guidelines in delivering procedural justice
- Lessons learned from large-scale reform
- Evaluations of recently implemented sentencing reforms
- Basing release decisions on more than gut instinct alone
- Sentencing guidelines and probation

The conference includes the all members update (Monday) and business meeting (Tuesday). The Rick Kern Memorial Speaker will present during Monday's luncheon.

- Public attitudes toward criminal history enhancements
- An overview of recidivism among federal offenders
- How high profile cases impact sentencing policy

Salt Lake City's [International Airport](#) is located just six miles from downtown. [TRAX](#) (light rail service) leaves the airport regularly for downtown, and [other ground transportation](#) is available.

Please join us for the 2016 NASC Conference. It is the only national conference that centers on sentencing and its related issues.



NASC Conference – Activities Around Salt Lake City

Many conference attendees will be arriving early or staying after the conference. Below are some suggestions (with links) from the locals for activities to enjoy around Salt Lake City, from the city to the mountains.

[Hike and Bike](#)

[Hear the Mormon Tabernacle Choir](#)

[Visit Breweries](#)

[See the Natural History Museum](#), and [other Museums](#)

[Enjoy the Restaurants](#)

[Take in a Baseball game](#)

[Check out the Soccer Team](#)

Results of the NASC Bylaw Survey

As a result of discussion during the 2016 NASC Business Meeting, the Executive Committee surveyed members regarding any limitations for election to the Executive Committee. Specifically, it sought clarification on whether Committee members should be limited to Sentencing Commissions or Councils and whether there should be a geographic limitation.

The survey was sent electronically in May 2016. There were responses from 31 members.

The majority of respondents voted that membership should not be limited to individuals serving on, employed by, or affiliated with a sentencing commission or council (77%). Of those that felt it should not be limited, the vast majority (93%) voted to limit the number of seats held by non-commissions or councils. The limitation was split between one and two seats, with a small number suggesting a limitation to 3 seats.

As to geographic limitations, the majority (76%) voted for a geographic limitation. The vote reflected a slight edge for not more than one Executive Committee seat to be held by an individual state or district.

Additionally, many respondents took time to add additional comments and feedback.

The Executive Committee will draft language for bylaw changes in accordance with the survey results for consideration and a vote at the 2016 NASC Conference Business Meeting. It is anticipated that information will be provided in advance of the conference.

The Committee appreciates the time and thought provided by the members in completing the survey.

Interested in Serving on the NASC Executive Committee?

Are you interested in helping to make NASC a better organization? NASC is currently accepting nominations for the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee is responsible for planning the annual conferences, maintaining the organization's website, and managing the general administration of the NASC organization. The committee primarily meets on a monthly basis, with a few additional meetings as needed to finalize the conference agenda.

Serving on the Executive Committee allows you to form relationships with staff from other sentencing commissions and organizations. It is a great way to stay current on what is happening in the world of sentencing policy.

If you are interested in running for election, please submit your name and contact information to admin@thenasc.org or directly to the NASC President, [Kelly Mitchell](#). If you have questions about membership, feel free to contact any of the current executive committee members listed on our [website](#).

Elections for open seats on the Executive Committee will be held at the NASC 2016 Annual Conference in Salt Lake City.



Highlights from Utah Sentencing Commission

Since passage of JRI legislation in the 2015 General Legislative session, the Utah Sentencing Commission (USC) has fully incorporated the directives and principles into what are the most significant revisions to the Utah Sentencing Guidelines in over 30 years.

More than 30 statewide training sessions have been conducted since August 2015 on the revised Guidelines. The USC's website has been substantially updated as well, including updated [interactive forms](#), [PowerPoints](#) utilized in trainings, a "[User Guide](#)" for the Response and Incentive Matrix, an "[FAQ](#)" [Sheet](#) answering many preliminary questions regarding the revisions; and an ongoing series of "[Notes and Votes](#)" from various subcommittees of the USC during the Interim. The USC is also actively participating in the JRI Implementation Task Force to make data-driven adjustments as needed.

Beginning in June of 2016, the USC is again actively engaged with the Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice and the Pew Charitable Trusts for a comprehensive review of Utah's Juvenile Justice System. The USC anticipates a package of reforms likely to impact the Juvenile Disposition Guidelines in 2017.

The USC takes great pride in the various pieces of legislation developed and advanced each year, which are intended to incorporate legal and evidence-based practices into sentencing in Utah:

During 2015, a collaborative effort resulted in [Senate Bill 167](#), which established a presumption against shackling juvenile offenders, reaffirmed juvenile offenders' right to counsel pursuant to *Graham*, narrowed the provisions by which a juvenile can be transferred to adult court, and expanded housing/placement options for juvenile offenders who are convicted in adult court.

In 2016, [House Bill 405](#) eliminated life without parole as a sentencing option for juvenile offenders. In addition, 41 Class C Misdemeanor offenses were reclassified as Infractions pursuant to [Senate Bill 187](#) in furtherance of a proportionality review of misdemeanor offenses and the impact of those offenses on local jurisdictions' resources. "Treatment" for domestic violence offenders shifted from a "shall" to a "may," providing judges greater discretion in ordering supervision and treatment consistent with the risk and need level of the individual offender pursuant to [Senate Bill 206](#). This Senate bill also addressed the review, extension, approval, and expiration of jail release agreements in order to ensure due process. Finally, [House Bill 404](#) also advanced greater consistency in determining restitution regardless of whether the offender is placed on probation or parole.

Congratulations are extended to the Director, Jennifer Valencia, for [receiving the 2016 Governor's Award of Excellence](#) for Outstanding Public Service and the 2016 Utah Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice's Annual Award for her role in directing the efforts.

"[Jennifer Valencia](#) established herself as a leader in Utah's criminal reform efforts during 2015. Following passage of a comprehensive criminal justice reform bill during the 2015 General Session, Jennifer directed the efforts of the Utah Sentencing Commission in changing the approach of sentencing guidelines to one based on research and best practices. She also directed the effort to implement a new method of supervising criminal offenders, also based on research and best practices. Jennifer accomplished in less than five months what would normally take one to two years. Thanks to Jennifer's efforts, Utah's sentencing guidelines are based on sound principles, policies, research and are specifically crafted to impose appropriate punishment while also providing services and treatment that will reduce the risk of additional criminal offenses, thereby increasing public safety."