

Illinois Forensic Science Commission- Public Policy Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

January 23, 2026, 12 p.m. meeting

- I. Call to order
Ms. Watroba called the meeting to order at approximately 12:04 p.m. The meeting was held via Web Ex.
- II. Roll call
The following subcommittee members, staff, guests and members of the public were present:
 1. Dr. Ponni Arunkumar, FS Commission Member, subcommittee member
 2. Jillian Baker, FS Commission Member, subcommittee member
 3. Claire Dragovich, FS Commission Member, subcommittee member
 4. Katherine Drummond, FS Commission Member, subcommittee member
 5. Dr. Cris Hughes, FS Commission Member, subcommittee member
 6. Carrie Ward, FS Commission Member, subcommittee member
 7. Amy Watroba, Executive Director-Forensic Science Commission
- III. Review/Approval of Minutes
 1. The Meeting Minutes of 11/14/25 were approved, with one member abstaining from the vote.
- IV. Discussion:
 1. Discussion and possible action- new subcommittee chairperson:
 - i. John Hanlon served as subcommittee chairperson since the inception of the subcommittee. With Mr. Hanlon's departure from the Commission, the subcommittee will need to select a new chair. The subcommittee decided to postpone the topic until the next meeting.
 2. Continued discussion on issues related to THC Testing at UIC AFTL and complaint resource document:
 - i. Ms. Watroba provided a summary of the Quality System Subcommittee's pending work related to AFTL. She also shared information about legislation that may be introduced during this legislative session related to the Commission's scope and the topic of complaints for awareness and possible issues of continuity. The subcommittee discussed creating a complaint resource document that

provides basic information about complaint mechanisms required for ISO 17025 accredited labs, contact information for each accredited lab to submit complaints, and information about each lab's accreditation certificate. Ms. Drummond inquired about labs' internal mechanisms for resolving complaints and Ms. Dragovich summarized general requirements and possible processes based on different scenarios. Accredited labs are assessed both on their compliance with complaint procedures and the underlying content of a complaint. The subcommittee also discussed different scenarios involving complaints or non-conforming work in pending cases, discovery procedures, and different types of legal challenges to evidence, some of which have nothing to do with allegations of non-conforming work. The subcommittee also discussed the next possible steps for complainants who are dissatisfied with a lab's internal handling of a complaint.

- ii. The subcommittee agreed that creating a document that provides basic information about existing mechanisms in place at labs for complaint resolution would be a valuable resource for stakeholders and that the document could be amended or supplemented in the future if needed in response to any legislative changes. Educating the public on the fact that accredited labs are required to have processes for documenting and addressing complaints also increases transparency on the topic. The subcommittee discussed that, in addition to posting the resource document on the Commission's webpage, it could be distributed through organizations such as bar associations to increase awareness.

V. Old Business
None.

VI. New Business

- i. Dr. Hughes shared that there is a bill which may be introduced related to the use of genetic genealogy in assisting Illinois residents of African American descent in reconnecting with genetic relatives. Dr. Hughes suggested that the Public Policy Subcommittee and the FIGG Subcommittee may want to track the bill in case there is cross-over with the use of FIGG for law enforcement purposes. The subcommittee discussed how the Commission might engage with groups related to the bill, if needed. Dr. Hughes will provide both subcommittees with updated information as it becomes available.
- ii. Ms. Watroba raised the issue of free-standing local DNA databases as a possible topic for the subcommittee to study and follow based on

recent changes to the FBI QAS for the use of Rapid DNA technology on crime scene samples and Kane County's presentation about their possible use of Rapid DNA technology. Ms. Watroba and subcommittee members shared background information related to the development and use of Rapid DNA technology and free-standing local DNA databases in other jurisdictions. Ms. Watroba indicated that she will attend presentations related to Rapid DNA at the AAFS conference and report back any relevant information. Ms. Ward expressed appreciation for discussion on the topic of Rapid DNA and free-standing local DNA databases because of possible downstream impacts on evidence related to sexual assaults and victim DNA.

VII. Public Comment
No public comment offered.

VIII. Next Meeting/Adjournment

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 25, 2026 at 1 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:01 p.m.