

FALL 2025

TRIAL SKILLS TRAINING AGENDA

Thursday, September 4, 2025

Virtual Instruction

12:30 – 12:45 p.m.	Welcoming Remarks and Review of Program <i>Jamie Bernstein and Renee Castillo</i>
12:45 – 1:00 p.m.	Introduction of Participants, Faculty, and Commission Staff <i>Renee Castillo</i>
1:00 – 1:45 p.m.	Burdens of Proof and Required Efforts Findings in Child Welfare Cases <i>Judge Robert Falkenberg and Michele Surratt</i>
1:45 – 2:30 p.m.	Preparing for the Initial Contested Hearing: Requests for Court-Ordered Participation in Services and Adversary Hearings <i>Tiffany Reedy and Belinda Roberts</i>
2:30 – 2:45 p.m.	Break and Move to Breakout Groups
2:45 – 3:30 p.m.	Breakout Session: Required Efforts Practice Scenario <i>TST Faculty</i>
3:30 – 3:45 p.m.	Break and Move to Breakout Groups
3:45 – 4:15 p.m.	Case Strategy Brainstorming Sessions: Identifying Good and Bad Facts for the Initial Hearing <i>TST Faculty</i>
4:15 – 4:20 p.m.	Move back to Plenary
4:20 – 4:50 p.m.	Bringing it all Together: Adversary Hearing Prep Q&A Session/Participant Quiz <i>TST Faculty</i>
4:50 – 5:00 p.m.	Closing Remarks and Announcements <i>Renée Castillo</i>

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TRIAL SKILLS TRAINING AGENDA

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Virtual Instruction

12:30 – 12:45 p.m.	Welcome and Overview <i>Renee Castillo</i>
12:45 – 1:30 p.m.	Identifying, Designating, Preparing, and Presenting Your Witnesses: Lecture and Discussion <i>Mauro Valdez and Rob Galvin</i>
1:30 – 2:15 p.m.	Conducting a Successful Cross-Examination Lecture and Demonstration <i>Amanda Lockhart and Hon. Charles Griffin</i>
2:15 – 2:30 p.m.	Break
2:30 – 3:00 p.m.	Preparing for Impeachment of a Witness Using Prior Inconsistent Statements <i>Diane Sumoski</i>
3:00 – 3:05 p.m.	Move to Breakouts
3:05 – 3:35 p.m.	Case Strategy Session: Preparing for Direct Examination of a Lay Witness <i>TST Faculty</i>
3:35 – 4:05 p.m.	Case Strategy Session: Preparing for Cross-Examination of a Lay Witness <i>TST Faculty</i>
4:05 – 4:20 p.m.	Break and Move to Plenary
4:20 – 4:50 p.m.	Bringing it all Together: Cross-Examination and Impeachment Prep Q&A Session/Participant Quiz <i>TST Faculty</i>
4:50 – 5:00 p.m.	Closing Remarks and Announcements <i>Renée Castillo</i>

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TRIAL SKILLS TRAINING AGENDA

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

In-Person Instruction

8:00– 8:30 a.m.	Welcome, Announcements, and Introduction of Participants, Faculty, and CC Staff <i>Judge Piper McCraw and Renée Castillo</i>
8:30 – 9:15 a.m.	Conducting a Successful Direct Examination: Lecture and Demonstration <i>Judge Elizabeth Watkins</i>
9:15 – 10:00 a.m.	Lay Witness Panel Discussion <i>Judge Piper McCraw and CPI Caseworkers</i>
10:00 – 10:15 a.m.	Break
10:15 – 11:15 a.m.	Foundations and Objections: Demonstrations and Q&A Session/Participant Quiz <i>Judge Piper McCraw, Michele Surratt, Mark Zuniga, and Jack Sigman</i>
11:15 – 11:20 a.m.	Move to Breakouts
11:20 – 12:05 p.m.	Practice Sessions: Drills on Laying the Foundation and Admitting Documents <i>TST Faculty</i>
12:05 – 1:05 p.m.	Lunch
1:05 – 1:10 p.m.	Move to Breakout Groups
1:10 – 2:40 p.m.	*Practice Sessions: Direct Examination of Caseworker and Kathy Price <i>TST Faculty</i>
2:40 – 2:55 p.m.	Break
2:55 – 4:25 p.m.	*Practice Sessions: Cross Examination of Caseworkers and Kathy Price <i>TST Faculty</i>
4:25 – 4:30 p.m.	Move to Plenary
4:30 – 5:00 p.m.	Bringing it All Together: Direct and Cross-Examination of a Lay Witness Participant Debrief and Q&A Session <i>Judge Piper McCraw and TST Faculty</i>
5:00– 5:10 p.m.	Closing Remarks & Reminders <i>Judge Piper McCraw and Renée Castillo</i>

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5:30- 7:30 p.m.

Reception

*** Session is filmed. TST Faculty will review the video with participants and provide one-on-one feedback during the training, and individual performances may be provided to each participant, upon request, for their independent review after the training concludes.**

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TRIAL SKILLS TRAINING AGENDA

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

In-Person Instruction

8:00 – 8:15 a.m.	Morning Announcements and Introduction of Witnesses <i>Judge Piper McCraw and Renée Castillo</i>
8:15 – 8:45 a.m.	Lecture: Expert Witnesses: How to Qualify and Disqualify Expert Witnesses <i>Doug Lowe and Jack Sigman</i>
8:45– 9:15 a.m.	Demonstration: How to Qualify Your Expert Witness <i>Judge Elizabeth Watkins</i>
9:15– 9:45 a.m.	Demonstration: How to Conduct a High-Level Cross-Exam of the Opposing Expert Witness <i>Rob Galvin</i>
9:45 – 10:30 a.m.	Expert Witness Panel Discussion <i>Judge Piper McCraw and Expert Witnesses</i>
10:30 – 10:45 a.m.	Break and Move to Breakouts
10:45 – 11:15 a.m.	Case Strategy Sessions: Preparing for Direct and Using Exhibits to Your Advantage with Your Expert <i>TST Faculty</i>
11:15 – 12:45 p.m.	*Practice Sessions: Direct Examination Using Exhibits with Pediatric Fellows and Parent Therapists as Experts <i>TST Faculty</i>
12:45 – 1:45 p.m.	Lunch
1:45 – 2:15 p.m.	Case Strategy Sessions: Preparing for Cross Examination and Using Exhibits to Your Advantage with Your Expert <i>TST Faculty</i>
2:15 – 3:45 p.m.	*Practice Sessions: Cross Examination and Impeachment of Experts Using Exhibits with Pediatric Fellows and Parent Therapists <i>TST Faculty</i>
3:45 – 4:00 p.m.	Break and Move Back to Plenary

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4:00 – 4:30 p.m. **Bringing it all Together: Direct and Cross-Examination of an Expert Witness
Q&A Session**

Judge Piper McCraw and TST Faculty

4:30 – 4:45 p.m. **Closing Remarks & Reminders**

Judge Piper McCraw and Renée Castillo

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September 18, 2025

In-Person Instruction

8:00 – 8:15 a.m.	Morning Announcements <i>Judge Piper McCraw and Renée Castillo</i>
8:15 – 9:15 a.m.	Motions Practice in Child Welfare Cases <i>Judge Piper McCraw, Tracy Harting, Amanda Lockhart, Tiffany Reedy</i>
9:15 – 10:00 a.m.	Child Welfare Bench Trials Lecture <i>Judge Watkins, Drake Mikeska, and Rob Galvin</i>
10:00 – 10:15 a.m.	Break and Move to Breakouts
10:15 – 10:45 a.m.	Case Strategy Sessions: Preparing Your Required Efforts Argument for the Final Hearing <i>TST Faculty</i>
10:45 – 12:15 p.m.	*Practice Sessions: Reasonable Efforts Arguments at the Final Hearing <i>TST Faculty</i>
12:15 – 12:20 p.m.	Move to Plenary
12:20 – 12:50 p.m.	Bringing It Together: Courtroom Practice Debrief and Q&A Session <i>Judge Piper McCraw and TST Faculty</i>
12:50 – 1:00 p.m.	Closing Remarks – Announcement of Objection Winners, and Evaluations <i>Judge Piper McCraw and Renée Castillo</i>