



JUSTICE PATH ADVISORS

Brett M. Peterson

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & CORE EXPERTISE

Nationally recognized juvenile justice and child welfare expert with an unrelenting commitment to evidence-based system improvement. Serving as a gubernatorial appointee for two different administrations, he directed the Utah Division of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services, managing a \$100 million budget, a statewide continuum of care, and over 900 employees. He brings firsthand experience shaping every facet of a juvenile system, from frontline operations to complex policy frameworks. Currently serving as a Court-Appointed Monitor and subject matter expert for the USDOJ, he leverages his background as a licensed attorney to provide tested insight into conditions of confinement, use of force, sexual assault, abusive practices, and institutional accountability.

Core Areas of Expertise:

- **Conditions of Confinement & Use of Force:** Evaluation of facility conditions, critical incidents, and use of force policies. Expertise includes sexual assault prevention, having established the Sexual Assault and Victimization Elimination (SAVE) policies and served on the PREA committee for the Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators.
- **Facility Operations & Behavior Management:** Systems improvement across detention, shelter, residential treatment, and secure settings.
- **Executive Leadership & System Accountability:** Directed statewide agency operations encompassing over 900 employees and a \$100M budget. Expert in organizational restructuring, staffing models, workforce training, and establishing internal investigatory frameworks to ensure staff accountability.
- **Regulatory Compliance & Policy Reform:** Implementation of sweeping legislative changes, internal investigations, and licensing frameworks.

COURT APPOINTMENTS & EXPERT TESTIMONY

- **Court Appointed Deputy Monitor**, Los Angeles County Juvenile Facilities (current).
- **Trial Witness & Monitoring Team**, The People of the State of California, ex rel. Xavier Becerra v. County of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County Office of Education (2025).
- **Witness/Subject Matter Expert**, Commonwealth of Virginia Commission on Youth,

- providing testimony on juvenile facilities (2025).
 - **Subject Matter Expert**, USDOJ, evaluating conditions, policies, and use of force incidents in juvenile justice settings.
 - **Congressional Witness**, United States Congress, House Judiciary hearing "Juvenile Justice and the Road Back to Integration" (2021).
 - **Legislative Witness**, Utah State Legislature (2018–2026). Testified frequently before appropriations and policy committees as State Director regarding juvenile justice operations, system reform, and agency budgets.
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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Principal | Justice Path Advisors | Salt Lake City, UT | Jan 2022 – Present

- Consultant for a Midwest state HHS department, building strategies to improve operational excellence in child welfare and juvenile justice, including specific operational shifts in youth serving facilities.
- Technical assistance consultant for large California County Probation Department and Child Welfare, providing direct TA on operations, policy, use of force, conditions of confinement, behavior management, and leadership strategies.
- Technical assistance provider for Upper Midwest state, evaluating behavior management approaches in detention.
- Technical assistance provider examining use of force, conditions of confinement, and educational offerings in multiple large county detention systems.
- Provided cohort and one-on-one training for over 50 state, territory, and county jurisdictions across the U.S. focused on improving conditions of confinement and strategic operations.
- Developed, facilitated, and led the "Brighter Futures: Transformational Leadership in Youth Justice" program at the University of Georgetown, Center for Youth Justice.
- National Criminal Justice Training Center trainer, developing curriculum for law enforcement interacting with juvenile justice.
- CJJA Facility Superintendent Training keynote on leadership for juvenile justice superintendents across the U.S.

Director | Division of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services, State of Utah | Salt Lake City, UT | Nov 2018 – July 2025

- Managed a division with over 900 employees statewide and a \$100 million budget.
- Responsible for the operation and management of the continuum of care including early intervention, shelter, detention, residential treatment, long-term secure settings, and parole.
- Established the Sexual Assault and Victimization Elimination (SAVE) regulations, policies, and practices for the Utah juvenile system.
- Established statewide internal investigations unit, along with procedures for all incident review, reporting, and investigations.

- Established statewide vocational and higher education programs for youth and young adults in juvenile justice settings.
- Responsible for the implementation of significant changes in the laws and policies governing juvenile justice and child welfare in Utah, beginning with Utah House Bill 239 (2018).
- Led agency in implementing Medicaid Justice waiver.

Senior Advisor | Department of Corrections and DHHS, State of Utah | Salt Lake City, UT | Nov 2022 – Aug 2023

- Named project lead and senior advisor to the executive directors for the transition of all clinical and healthcare services from the Utah Department of Corrections to the Utah Department of Health and Human Services.
- Successfully built the governance structure for the transition, including the legal, operational, financial, and legislative elements required.
- Facilitated the development of the strategic vision, mission, and communications strategy for the transition.
- Coordinated both agencies' interactions and strategy during the 2023 Utah General Legislative Session.
- Drafted the memorandum of understanding formalizing the shift and partnership management.
- Drafted and responded to the Correctional Healthcare audit issued by the Utah Office of Legislative Audit General.
- Successfully transitioned all operations for the Division of Correctional Health Services in July 2023.

Director | Office of Licensing, State of Utah | Salt Lake City, UT | Mar 2018 – Nov 2018

- Led regulatory agency impacting service providers across the human services continuum of care, including juvenile justice and child welfare settings.
- Directed licensors, background screening unit, and investigations personnel for the Utah Department of Human Services.
- Increased investigatory capacity and developed operational framework to consider, review, and investigate critical incidents with licensed providers.
- Oversaw external and internal regulatory policies for human service providers in Utah.

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Assistant Attorney General | Utah Attorney General's Office | Salt Lake City, UT | Sep 2016 – Mar 2018

- Advised and represented client agencies in all legal matters; directly advised Executive Director of the Utah Department of Human Services.
- Advised agency on implementing a significant settlement agreement between the Utah State Hospital and the Disability Law Center.

- Advised child welfare, juvenile justice, licensing, and behavioral health agencies on safety, compliance monitoring, controls, and policy.
- Advised Department and Juvenile Justice Services on implementing and interpreting Utah's omnibus juvenile reform bill, HB 239.
- Served as a lead advisor on strategic design and implementation of an integrated, system-wide, performance-based approach to service delivery.
- Represented agency in civil and administrative proceedings, including multiple divisions/offices in District and Federal Court.

Attorney | State of Utah, Department of Corrections | Draper, UT | Sep 2015 – Sep 2016

- Developed, drafted, and negotiated Department contracts and agreements.
- Developed internal policies as a member of the Department Policy Committee.

Attorney, Owner | Peterson Law Firm | Ogden, UT | May 2012 – Sep 2015

- Areas of Practice: criminal law and general business law.

Associate Attorney | Johnson Law Firm | Ogden, UT | April 2010 – May 2012

- Areas of practice: criminal law, real property, and general business law.

EDUCATION & LICENSURE

- **Juris Doctor (J.D.)**, University of Utah, S.J. Quinney College of Law (May 2010).
- **B.S., History (cum laude)**, Weber State University (May 2007).
- **Bar Admission:** Active member of the Utah State Bar since 2010, licensed to practice law.

BOARD MEMBERSHIPS & ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Current Memberships:

- Board Member, Human Rights for Kids.
- Board Member, Friends of the Children Utah.
- Committee Member, PREA committee, Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators.
- Board Member, Utah Board of Juvenile Justice.

Past Memberships:

- Chair, Utah Commission on Crime and Juvenile Justice.
- Immediate Past President, Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators (CJJA).
- Juvenile Chair, American Correctional Association.
- Chair, Utah's Juvenile Justice Oversight Committee.
- Board Member, Utah Criminal Justice Center at the University of Utah.
- Member, Utah School Safety and Security Task Force.
- Member, Utah Substance Use and Mental Health Advisory Council.

- Member, Utah Crime Victims Council.
 - Member, Utah Sentencing Commission.
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PRESENTATIONS, PANELS & KEYNOTES

2025

- Keynote, Opening Session, Alabama Juvenile Justice Summit.
- Panelist, Human Rights for Kids webinar: "The childhood trauma-to-prison pipeline".
- Presenter, National Criminal Justice Training Center webinar: "Beyond Offense: Recognizing and Responding to CSEC (commercial sexual exploitation of children) Victimization in Juvenile Justice".
- Facilitator, "Brighter Futures: Transformational Leadership in Youth Justice" program at the University of Georgetown, Center for Youth Justice.
- Facilitator, Juvenile Justice Leadership Network at the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform.

2024

- Keynote, National Partnerships for Juvenile Services Symposium.
- Instructor, California Association of Probation Institution Administrators.
- Leadership Instructor, Utah Department of Health and Human Services Leadership Retreat.
- Panelist, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, annual Missing Children's Day event.
- Panelist, The Sentencing Project webinar: "Strategies to reduce youth incarceration".

2023

- Lead Presenter & Instructor, "Ending Isolation in Youth Facilities Certificate Program," Georgetown University Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR). Provided technical assistance to national jurisdictions on safely reducing room confinement, utilizing alternative behavior management tools, and shifting overall facility culture.
- Panelist, OJJDP webinar: "Solutions and Support for Reducing Revocation and Keeping Young People in their communities".
- Keynote, Utah State Board of Education, "Do the Write Thing" challenge awards ceremony.
- Panelist, CJA Leadership Institute.

2022

- Instructor, "Youth in Custody Certificate Program," Georgetown University Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR). Taught alongside other national experts on essential facility reform topics, including behavior motivation systems and crisis response.
- Panelist, Council of State Governments webinar: "Staffing Crisis in Juvenile Justice".
- Panelist, Plenary session, Coalition of Juvenile Justice Annual Conference.

2021

- Panelist, "Strategies to Reduce Sexual Victimization in Secure Juvenile Facilities," American Correctional Association Summer Conference.
- Panelist, "Keeping Kids out Isolation During COVID," presented by CJJA and CJJR at Georgetown.
- Panelist, "Taking Juvenile Justice Seriously," presented by Utah Criminal Justice Center at University of Utah.
- Instructor (2021–2024), Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators (CJJA) Facility Superintendent Trainings.

2020

- Panelist, "State Trends: Winning the Campaign," presented by Campaign for Youth Justice.
- Panelist, "Rural Quick Chat," presented by OJJDP, in partnership with CJJR and CJJA.
- Panelist, "What will we keep? New and sustainable practices for juvenile justice systems in wake of COVID-19," presented by Pew Charitable Trusts at CJJA Summer Business Meeting.
- Panelist, "In Search of Equity: Utah's Journey of Juvenile Justice Reform," presented by OJJDP and Utah's Indigent Defense Commission.
- Speaker, "Treating Kids like Kids," University of Utah Neuropsychiatric Institutes Critical Issues Conference.
- Panelist, "JJJPA Reauthorization: The Latest on Jail Removal Reforms," presented by the Coalition for Juvenile Justice.
- Panelist, "Navigating the Impact of COVID-19 on juvenile justice policy and practice," presented by CJJR and CJJA.
- Presenter, "Operational change: A Focus on Dosage," Positive Youth Outcomes Committee with CJJA.
- Presenter, Utah Prosecution Council annual conference.
- Presenter, Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Learning Exchange, facilitated by Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Casey Family Foundation.
- Presenter, "Operational Change: a focus on dosage," American Correctional Association Winter Conference.
- Presenter, "Operational Change: a focus on dosage," CJJA Winter Conference.
- Presenter, "Child Welfare: Juvenile Justice Intersection and Collaboration," presented with Noah Bien from Pew Charitable Trusts at ACA Winter Conference.

2018–2019

- Panelist (2019), "Practical Efforts by OJJDP Grantees to Reduce Out-of-Home Placement and Improve Community Supervision," presented by ICF, OJJDP.
- Panelist (2019), Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Learning Exchange, Annie E. Casey and Casey Family Foundations.
- Keynote Speaker (2019), National Symposium on Juvenile Services presented by National Partnership for Juvenile Services.
- Presenter (2018), Utah Ops Conference presented by Governor's Office of Management.
