

UTRSOL WEEKLY

Utah for Rational Sex Offense Laws

Week of September 21 – September 25, 2026

This week, we advanced AfterMath Alliance's path toward formal state recognition as a peer support program, tracked two state appointment vacancies relevant to our work, published new policy journalism pieces, and met with state criminal justice leadership. We also continued building out the coalition partnerships that support these programs day to day. Taken together, these threads reflect an organization operating at full capacity across policy, programs, and partnerships alike. Here's the rundown, track by track.

AFTERMATH ALLIANCE: TOWARD STATE RECOGNITION

This week, we continued laying the groundwork for AfterMath Alliance's path toward formal recognition as a population-specific peer support program under Utah's administrative code governing peer support certification. We plan to petition the state's Office of Substance Use and Mental Health for population-specific guidelines once AfterMath Alliance has established six to twelve months of programming, with a target filing date of April 2027. The program's current group facilitators, both in-person and virtual, are Certified Peer Support Specialists under Utah's existing credentialing framework, giving the program a strong clinical foundation as it works toward recognition.

COALITION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

We sat down this week with leadership at the Department of Criminal Justice to talk through UTRSOL's ongoing engagement with the state's criminal justice commissions. The conversation was constructive, and together we affirmed UTRSOL's multi-track approach across housing, employment, clinical research, and public communications. The discussion also gave us a clearer read on how these commissions are currently operating, which will help shape our approach in the months ahead. We came away with a clearer shared understanding of how to keep engaging these bodies productively going forward.

APPOINTMENTS WE'RE TRACKING: BOPP AND USBE VACANCIES

We continue to track two state appointments relevant to our work. On the Board of Pardons and Parole, the Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice's subcommittee narrowed a pool of roughly 46 applicants down to five finalists and sent that list forward under the Commission's direct-recommendation authority to Governor Cox. Board member Melissa Stirba resigned June 18 and CCJJ released its list of five applicants August 26. We are hoping to hear back from the Governor's Office within the next few weeks, with an announcement expected sometime this fall. We'll share the appointee's name here as soon as it's made official, as well as a review of the selected appointee.

Separately, a vacancy opened on the Utah State Board of Education in District 2 (Weber County) following a board member's resignation on September 21. Filling a USBE vacancy follows a different process than the Board of Pardons: the Governor appoints a qualified replacement to serve out the unexpired term, the appointee will come from three nominees advanced by the Utah Republican Party's central committee, that appointment then requires confirmation by the State Senate. The sudden departure of the Republican incumbent reshapes the race for District 2, leaving Democrat Kacee Weaver as the sole certified candidate on the ballot for the November elections.

POLICY JOURNALISM: NEWS FROM THE WIRE

We published a two-part policy piece on News From The Wire this week examining how citizen and independent-advocate representation on Utah's criminal justice commissions has changed in recent years. Part One, [The Legislature Wants Its Voice, Not Its Citizens](#) documents which seats were removed and when; Part Two, [An Agency With No Independence From Its Creator](#) offers our interpretation of what that pattern means for how these commissions function today. Together, the two pieces draw on findings from our own Institutional Analysis publication alongside public meeting records spanning several legislative sessions. Together, the two pieces trace a pattern that cuts across ideological lines, affecting victims, registrants, and ordinary citizens alike.

LOOKING AHEAD

Wednesday September 30 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [Virtual]

- Email communications@utrsol.org or call 801-871-5215 to learn more

Thursday October 1 — Utah State Board of Education Public Comment

October

- October 5 — UDC Second Chance Career Fair (Ogden)
- October 14 — Salt Lake Valley Coalition to End Homelessness (SLVCEH)
- October 15 — Sex Offense Task Force (SOTF) Quarterly SOTP provider training
- October 21 — Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interim Hearing
- October 21 — Presentation to UDC's Second Chance Employer Network, The Hive

AfterMath Alliance

- October 9 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [In-Person]
- October 14 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [Virtual]
- October 23 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [In-Person]
- October 28 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [Virtual]

UTRSOL is an evidence-based policy research and advocacy organization. This newsletter is distributed to external partners, coalition members, and stakeholders to share updates on our research, legislative activities, and organizational initiatives.