

# Megan McCoy

Hunter Jones  
Department of Sentencing Policy  
625 Fairview Drive, Suite 109  
Carson City, NV 89701

July 13, 2023

Dear Members of the Nevada Sentencing Commission,

I am a Paralegal in the Legal Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and I am excited to apply for the position of Executive Director of the Department of Sentencing Policy. I am the ideal candidate for this position because the missions of the Department of Sentencing Policy and the Nevada Sentencing Commission align directly with my personal and career goals. Additionally, my time working at the Legislative Counsel Bureau and the Carson City District Attorney's Office, as well as my educational experiences and background, give me a unique set of qualifications for this position. As you'll see from my résumé, what motivates me is working toward general and specific improvements to both sentencing and corrections policies within the State of Nevada through data-driven and collaborative efforts. I would welcome the opportunity to bring my skills and experience to the Department.

My unique combination of education, skills and work experience has allowed me to develop my knowledge and understanding of the criminal justice system and policies, recognize disparities within that system and research the impact of factors such as socioeconomic status and access to education on various data sets relating to the arrest, prosecution, sentencing and release of persons. Because of my varied background of work and volunteer experiences and educational pursuits, I have a passion for researching methods of improving the criminal justice system as a whole, and specifically increasing access to work, skills and educational programs within prisons to reduce recidivism rates and increase the successful re-entry of formerly incarcerated persons into their community.

I have been employed in the Legal Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for over 5 years, becoming familiar with the laws and regulations of the State of Nevada, including Assembly Bill No. 236 from the 2019 Legislative Session, the Open Meeting Law and the Nevada Public Records Act. In those 5 years, I have spent almost every work day reading, interpreting, understanding, researching and applying the laws and regulations of the State of Nevada, including during the 80th, 81st and 82nd Legislative Sessions and the 31st through 35th Special Sessions. Additionally, during my employment with the Legal Division I have watched and followed the policymaking process of the Legislature, including watching meetings and work sessions of legislative committees and commissions and Senate and Assembly Floor Sessions, following the status of bills and amendments.

Prior to my employment with the Legal Division, I was employed by the City of Carson in the Carson City District Attorney's Office, beginning by doing data entry of arrest information, being promoted to Office Specialist and ending my career there as a Legal Assistant managing, preparing and closing out cases consisting of gross misdemeanor and felony charges, including preparing discovery, jury trials and appeals, managing and organizing large caseloads, including supreme court arguments and juvenile cases, entering dispositions and keeping open communication with defense attorneys, local and state law enforcement agencies and law enforcement agencies and courts outside of the State of Nevada. Additionally, I was responsible for the gathering of arrest, conviction and sentencing data each year to compile reports required pursuant to NRS 178.750 and 179.515, as well as various other data-gathering reports for use within the District Attorney's Office.

My educational experiences include:

- Over 6 years focusing on researching the impact of work, skills and educational programs within prisons, such as GED programs and the Saddle Horse Training Program at the Northern Nevada Correctional Center.
- Over 3 years focusing on the causes of disparities within the criminal justice system, including socioeconomic status and access to education, including ride-alongs with members of local law enforcement agencies, touring local jails and interviewing detention staff and formerly incarcerated persons.

My volunteer experiences include:

- Over 15 years in preparing presentations and demonstrations for training purposes, policymaking, problem solving, data gathering, management and leadership of diverse groups of people during high-stress and low-stress situations, including during natural disasters, and budgeting and approving expenditures of a 501(c)(3) organization as the Director of the Board.
- Over 10 years interacting with incarcerated persons during and after incarceration through the connection of the 501(c)(3) and the Prison Horse Training Program at the Northern Nevada Correctional Center and supporting formerly incarcerated persons after release through employment and training relating to horses.
- Over 6 years maintaining communication with local governmental agencies and governmental agencies outside the State of Nevada for emergency response and training, including communication during rescue responses with law enforcement, the Nevada Department of Agriculture brand inspectors, County Managers and other stakeholders.

The issues the Department and Commission are dedicated to addressing are complex and there is not a “one size fits all” solution, but I have a demonstrated interest in and passion for improving and resolving those issues and I believe I have the natural ability to communicate and collaborate with stakeholders as well as colleagues to develop improved policies, procedures and organizational structures. I can be a valuable addition to the Department and support the goals of the Department and the Commission.

I greatly appreciate your consideration and look forward to meeting with the Commission on August 4 to further discuss my qualifications for this position.

Best regards,

Megan A. McCoy

# Megan McCoy

## Work Experience

### **Legislative Counsel Bureau, Legal Division**

*Paralegal, January 2018-Present*

- During the 2019, 2021 and 2023 regular Legislative Sessions and five Special Sessions:
  - Reading, evaluating, researching and editing drafted bill draft requests.
  - Reading, evaluating, researching and editing amendments to bills.
- After each regular and special Legislative Session and during each interim:
  - Searching for all terms, phrases and names changed during each Legislative Session and address and change each one in all existing Nevada Revised Statutes and, as applicable, Nevada Administrative Codes.
  - Reading, evaluating, researching and editing proposed and adopted regulations.
  - Codification of legislation after each regular and special Legislative Session.
  - Codification of regulations after they are filed with the Secretary of State.
  - Researching and editing opinion letters.
  - Updating annotations in the Nevada Revised Statutes.
  - Various research projects utilizing WestLaw and the Official Nevada Law Library for data collection.
- Maintain organized and frequently updated checklists for all tasks.
- Maintain an organized workspace.
- Work quickly and efficiently under pressure and after having worked many hours.
- Work as a team to ensure everything is completed by the necessary deadline.
- Communicate with the attorneys in the Legal Division to plan for upcoming workloads.
- Communicate among team members to ensure that all members of the team have the opportunity to catch up on sleep while others work.

### **Carson City District Attorney's Office**

*Legal Assistant (Felony and Gross Misdemeanor Cases), 2016-January 2018*

- Assigned to cases with felony and gross misdemeanor charges, jury trials and appeals.
- Certified to access criminal history and Department of Motor Vehicles records.
- Trained new employees on handling of data input, discovery, sending subpoenas, case management and the report entry and tracking system (Justware).
- Provided discovery to defense attorneys.
- Communicated with federal and local law enforcement agencies about active cases.
- Assisted with the drafting of pleadings, including criminal complaints and motions, for filing with the Carson City Justice and Municipal Court, the First Judicial District Court and the Nevada Supreme Court.
- Disbursed and tracked witness subpoenas.
- Kept attorneys updated about the status of each open case.

- Acquired a large case load that was unorganized and had missed multiple deadlines, had everything caught up and accurate within three weeks.
- Communicated with The Nevada Department of Corrections and organized transportation for persons in their custody for hearings.
- Collected arrest, prosecution and sentencing data for reports required pursuant to NRS 178.750 and 179.515.
- Collected arrest, prosecution, plea bargaining, disposition and sentencing data for reports utilized to track charging, negotiation and sentencing trends and patterns within the District Attorney's Office.
- Supervised data entry position when the Office Manager was out of the office.

*Office Support Specialist, 2014-2016*

- Collected arrest, prosecution and sentencing data for reports required pursuant to NRS 178.750 and 179.515.
- Collected arrest, prosecution, plea bargaining, disposition and sentencing data for reports utilized to track charging, negotiation and sentencing trends and patterns within the District Attorney's Office.
- Worked with the Assistant District Attorney and the Victim Services Administrator to create the District Attorney Witness Guide (DAWG) program in 2014, under which I brought a trained and certified therapy dog to the District Attorney's Office each day to provide support to children who were victims of violent crimes during interviews and testimony.
- Provided support to the Legal Assistants with case preparation, creating subpoenas, creating witness lists and covering for absences.
- Managed real property forfeiture notifications and follow up contact for qualifying drug-related arrests and prosecution.
- Tracked new arrests that included crimes against a person and notify the Victim's Advocates.
- Trained in and granted access to the Carson City Sheriff's Office report entry and tracking system (Tiburon).
- Trained new employees on the report entry and tracking system used by the District Attorney's Office (Justware).
- Trained attorneys and support staff to utilize report entry and tracking system (Justware) to its full extent, including gathering a full history of defendants, dispositions of cases and documents produced by the District Attorney's Office.
- Developed training for new data entry staff.

*Data Entry (part-time), May 2013-2014*

- Input data from probable cause sheets for all new arrests in Carson City.
- Input data from complete police reports for arrests on new charges and arrests for violations of parole and probation.
- Input data from warrant and review requests from the Carson City Sheriff's Office.
- Took on administrative and clerical tasks to assist the Office Manager.
- Created new organizational structure to track arrest reports and warrant request reports.

## **City of Carson, Recreation**

*Recreation Lead, May 2010 - 2014*

- Managed elementary and middle school sites of over 50 children and Community Center sites of over 150 children.
- Trained staff in child care and conflict resolution.
- Supervised staff and utilized supportive performance plans for employees struggling to meet the expectations of their position.
- Budgeted for school and summer camp programs
- Communicated with employees and parents for event information and behavioral incidents.
- Participated in the hiring of staff and volunteers.
- Communicated with local governmental agencies and small business owners to set up tours and activities.

## **Education**

**Grand Canyon University, Phoenix, AZ**

July 2020-Present

- Approximately 50 percent through the Master of Science in Criminal Justice, Emphasis on Legal Studies, online program.
- Focus of multiple papers include the links between diversionary and alternative sentencing practices during early contact in the criminal justice system and the reduction of further offending, as well as the links between restorative justice, access to education and job skills programs within prisons during incarceration and the reduction of prison populations and recidivism.

**University of Nevada, Reno, Reno, NV**

Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice, May 2020

- Some courses taken at Western Nevada College during this time
- Was recommended for a summer internship with a Nevada Assemblyperson in Washington, DC, unable to accept due to health.
- Focus of multiple papers include the “why” behind the criminal behavior and the socioeconomic and geographic influence on childhood growth and development.

**Western Nevada College, Carson City, NV**

Associate of Science, May 2013

## **Volunteer Experience**

### **Least Resistance Training Concepts (LRTC), nonprofit organization (<http://www.whmentors.org/clo/contact.html>)**

*Member, 2005-Present*

*Director of the Board, 2019-Present*

- Voting on expenditures, including expected expenditures, incidental expenditures and maintaining a specific amount in the account and equipment acquisition, maintenance and improvements.
- Assisting and leading training of team members.
- Teaching persons how to gentle and train wild/feral horses through individual training, group training and workshops.
- Supporting formerly incarcerated persons who participated in the Saddle Horse Training Program at Northern Nevada Correctional Center, including meeting and supporting them while they were going through the program and supporting them with job assistance and skills training after release. Multiple former participants are still training and trimming horses as a career.
- Creating and updating policies and safety protocols to conform to insurance requirements and standard best practices.

### **Technical Large Animal Rescue Team Member (under LRTC nonprofit organization <http://www.whmentors.org/evac/index.html>)**

*Team Member/Mounted Team Member, 2011-Present*

- Part of the ground response and mounted teams for 12 years.
- Trained in missing persons search techniques and crime scene preservation with Lyon County Search and Rescue.
- Team with the highest average rate of emergency calls in the United States (500/year).
- Respond to calls related to range and domestic horses, cattle, goats and sheep, upon request by federal, state, tribal and local authorities.
- Certified both as a Technician and an Operator, including utilizing life-size horse mannequins in low angle and swift water rescue, rope rescue techniques and safety and cattle guard extractions.
- The highest-certified female civilian in the State of Nevada in Technical Large Animal Rescue.
- Work with local law enforcement and firefighting agencies during emergency calls.
- Train staff of governmental agencies in the State of Nevada and the State of California on the standards and techniques of Technical Large Animal Rescue.
- Work in cooperation with other trained rescue teams to respond to large-scale emergencies.
- Acted as Incident Commander on at least 50 emergency call outs and as the Safety Officer on at least 100 emergency calls in the last 5 years.
- Conduct evacuations of large animals and small animals during fires, floods, mudslides and other disasters upon request by governmental entities.

- Communicate in a clear and concise manner to all team members before, during and after each incident and with any involved agencies and dispatch.
- Brainstorm and implement ideas for solving complex rescue scenarios in real time.
- Work as a team to produce the best result.

## References

- Laurel Armbrust  
Paralegal Manager, Legislative Counsel Bureau, Legal Division
- Asher Killian  
Chief Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legislative Counsel Bureau, Legal Division
- Amy Steelman  
Senior Deputy Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General, Medicaid Fraud Control Unit
- Ali Banister, PhD  
Chief of Juvenile Services, Carson City  
Professor at the University of Nevada, Reno and Western Nevada College
- Willis Lamm  
Least Resistance Training Concepts, President  
Technical Large Animal Rescue Team Field Supervisor



July 17, 2023

To: The Nevada Sentencing Commission  
625 Fairview Drive, Suite 109  
Carson City, NV 89701

Re: Letter of Recommendation for Megan McCoy

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to provide my strongest possible support for the application of Megan McCoy to the position of Executive Director of the Nevada Department of Sentencing Policy.

I first met Ms. McCoy when I began working as a Deputy District Attorney in Carson City. She served as the Office Specialist, which was a sort of catch-all assistant office management position. Her place in the organizational chart was flexible enough that the person holding that position could be involved in nearly every aspect of the office's work. For a non-attorney, one could hardly imagine a better place to learn the intricacies of Nevada's criminal justice system, and to simultaneously see both the big picture elements of that system and the day-to-day details of individual cases.

Ms. McCoy aggressively took on that opportunity to learn everything she could. She understood that philosophical questions of policy, such as the various purposes and limitations of incarceration, were incredibly important, and so she learned them. She likewise understood that philosophy matters very little if practical matters in individual cases aren't attended to, and so she learned those as well. This integrated knowledge allowed her to improve not just the efficiency of the office, but also to assist the prosecutors and their legal assistants to secure more just outcomes. And she did all of this while working successfully with the strong personalities of attorneys and sometimes hidebound bureaucratic inertia of the office staff.

I worked with Ms. McCoy extensively during this time. In our discussions, she showed a deep intuitive understanding of the need to balance retribution with rehabilitation for defendants, and the further duty to individual victims of crime and society at large. She was unafraid to speak up when she felt something wasn't right, and that sort of courage is all too rare.

Later, during staffing shortages, she took on a more direct role as a legal assistant. She was diligent and hard working. But more importantly, she understood the big picture, with the ability to think and plan ahead as a member of an integrated prosecution team. She would catch things the attorneys missed, and knew what was needed before we asked. When she got things wrong, she would learn from that, too, and rarely made the same mistake twice. This work let her see



and know the facts of thousands of individual cases, the decision-making process of plea negotiations, and how the outcomes in those cases impacted everyone involved.

Ms. McCoy and I both left that office for other opportunities around the same time. Since then, however, I know she has never lost her passion to make the criminal justice system a more efficient, fair, and just one.

For myself, I left government prosecution work and started a private criminal defense practice in 2019. Prior to my time as a prosecutor, I also worked as a public defender in Washoe County. Just and fair sentencing policy is not merely academic to me, but it impacts each and every one of my clients. And because I also am raising my family in our community, I care deeply and personally about public safety. From both perspectives, I would be very glad indeed to know Ms. McCoy is helping shepherd great policy in our criminal justice system.

Ultimately, the old saw that “personnel is policy” is very true. In order for the Sentencing Commission to do its job well, its staff – and of course, its Executive Director – must understand and embrace not just the hard work, but also the mission and vision of this important organization. I strongly believe Ms. McCoy has the right set of skills and temperament to excel in the Executive Director position, and to make Nevada a safer and more just place for defendants, victims of crime, and our communities as a whole. I hope very much you will ultimately select Megan McCoy for this position.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,



Orrin J. H. Johnson, Esq.

# Kristin N. Luis

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July 26, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my privilege to write a letter of recommendation on behalf of Megan McCoy for the position of Executive Director for the Nevada Department of Sentencing Policy. I had the pleasure to work with Megan at the Carson City District Attorney's from January 2015 to January 2018. During that time, I held the position of Assistant District Attorney and Megan initially held the position of Office Support Specialist and was promoted to the position of Legal Assistant because she demonstrated the knowledge and capability for the position.

In my position at the Carson City District Attorney's Office, I interacted regularly with Megan and she often performed work for my review. I observed Megan to be interested in her work, motivated to do a good job and responsible to meet deadlines. Megan demonstrated proficient knowledge of the criminal justice system, the various types of criminal charges and the hearings required for each type of charge. Megan worked well with others in the office and demonstrated good communication skills with staff, city departments, attorneys and the public.

In connection with this letter, I have reviewed the position description and specific duties and qualifications. I believe that Megan possesses the education and work experience you are seeking in a successful candidate. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding this letter of recommendation or if you need further information.

Sincerely,  
  
Kristin N. Luis