

Illinois Forensic Science Commission

Drugs Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

February 17, 2026, 12:00 p.m. meeting

- I. Call to order
Subcommittee Chairperson Jillian Baker called the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 p.m. The meeting was held via Web Ex.

- II. Roll-call
The following people were present:
 1. Jillian Baker, FS Commission Member, Subcommittee Chairperson
 2. Jenna Cervantes, Subcommittee Member
 3. Jason George, Subcommittee Member
 4. Gail Gutierrez, Subcommittee Member
 5. Gina Havlik, Subcommittee Member
 6. Eryn Maltese, Subcommittee Member
 7. Amanda Shanbaum, Subcommittee Member
 8. Brianna Simpson, Subcommittee Member
 9. Peter St. Andre, FS Commission Member, Subcommittee Member
 10. Amy Watroba, Executive Director-Forensic Science Commission

- III. Approval of minutes from January 28, 2026 meeting
 1. The minutes from the January 28, 2026 meeting were approved.

- IV. Discussion:
 1. New and emerging drugs updates

Ms. Shanbaum provided an update about the Emerging Drugs Working Group. The group is gathering information about what they have already seen and reported as a starting point. She then shared topics the Working Group is discussing to solicit input from subcommittee members. Subcommittee members then discussed options for sharing information about new and emerging drugs that are identified. The subcommittee decided to ask the Commission at its March meeting to allow the subcommittee to post data on new and emerging drugs on the Commission's website and to update it as needed. If the information is publicly available, then any lab systems analyzing seized drugs can access it. Ms. Shanbaum also solicited feedback on the topic of identifying drugs trends, emerging substances, or substances of interest.

The subcommittee discussed starting with a shared spreadsheet where lab systems can populate information. The Working Group will continue to work on this process and update the subcommittee at the next meeting.

2. Reconciling the Illinois Controlled Substances Act with the Federal Register

The subcommittee continued its discussion from the last meeting about needed updates to the Illinois Controlled Substances Act and the possibility of conducting a side-by-side comparison with what is controlled at the federal level. The ILCSA does have a mechanism for the Department of Human Services to control substances at the state level once they are controlled federally, but that process does not seem to be keeping up with the federal changes. We do not know if this is intentional, unintentional, or an omission. The work DHS is doing also may be geared more towards issues with prescribers than issues with criminal prosecutions.

There also is an option to designate substances as controlled substances in Illinois via administrative rule. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that prosecutors generally are not prosecuting cases where a substance is controlled by administrative rule rather than the ILCSA. Subcommittee members then discussed pending bills related to controlled substances that could impact some of the relevant language in the ILCSA. The subcommittee believes it would be worthwhile to conduct a side-by-side comparison showing what substances are controlled federally but are not controlled in Illinois to initiate future conversations or actions with the legislature or other interested parties about this issue. The subcommittee discussed how particular legislators historically are interested in legislation related to controlled substances and how trailer bills are often met with less resistance once an initial bill passes.

The subcommittee discussed how to conduct the side-by-side comparisons. DEA maintains a tabular list of what is controlled on the federal register. Using AI to conduct a first comparison between the federal and Illinois lists was discussed. The subcommittee discussed the fact that having the data and identifying where deficiencies exist is a starting point to guide next steps and to get the necessary conversations started with other entities or parties.

3. Short-term goals and tasks

Ms. Havlik and Mr. Andre will begin work on the spreadsheet for substances of interest. Mr. George will begin work on the comparison between Federal and Illinois controlled substances.

The subcommittee discussed pending legislation related to controlled substances (HB4796, SB3221, SB3160, HB4737). The subcommittee also discussed how the subcommittee and Commission might engage more actively with the legislature about legislation related to controlled substances going forward. The subcommittee will review the bills and discuss further at the next meeting.

V. Old Business
None.

VI. New Business
None.

VII. Public Comment
No public comment offered.

VIII. Next Meeting/Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1 p.m. The next subcommittee meeting will be held via Web Ex at 1 p.m. on March 17, 2026.