

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

SCAN COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

April 20, 2022, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Via WebEx

Call to Order: Veatrice Crawford, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:42 a.m.

Introductions/Roll Call - The following members were attending via WebEx: **Present (9)** Veatrice Crawford (Chair), Judge Ericka Sanders, Mary Bennett, Mary Jane Forney, Jackie Sharp, Lisa Vinson, Jaclin Davis, Alice Staley, Denise McCaffrey

DCFS Staff: Kara Hamilton (Associate Deputy Director, External Communications and Advisory Groups), Kenneth Leggin (Regional Admin in Cook Co), Dustin Frevert

A quorum was not present (9 out of 20). This meeting was held virtually through WebEx in compliance with changes to the Open Meetings Act in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

As no quorum was present, the Chair announced that the previous minutes would be voted on at the next scheduled meeting of this committee.

Action: Minutes will be voted on at the next scheduled meeting of this committee.

I. OLD BUSINESS

A. DCFS Legislative Review – No new report

Kara Hamilton reported that the person scheduled to give the legislative presentation today had a late notice cancellation. Kara will distribute a document of legislative updates for members to view. The Chair will send a sheet to members to indicate if there are new initiatives the group would like to pursue. She also stated that the group would like to know what impact a bill will have on the Department in the future. Kara announced that Legislative Affairs would be present at the next meeting.

B. Mandatory Training Update

Kara reported that only two (2) members had completed the training. Other group members stated they had completed training, so these numbers are inaccurate. Ken will forward completion emails to Kara, and a training link will be sent to every member.

C. File Review Comments

File review comments have been approved and folded into the Annual Citizen's Review Report Recommendations.

D. By-laws Updates

The Chair explained that the meeting schedule is set one (1) year in advance, and a one-month reminder will go out to everyone. Ken mentioned that meetings are on the 3rd Wednesday of every even-numbered month and will resend the invites to all members.

E. Welcome Packet Comments

No comments received. A reminder that if there are any comments, send these to Ken Leggin, Veatrice Crawford, and Kara Hamilton.

II. New Business

A. Presentation: Child Welfare and Family Court

Judge Ericka Sanders greeted everyone and began with a brief bio of herself. She then explained to the group the process for DCFS to remove a child from home after a hotline report is made. Currently, one investigator goes into a home and decides whether to remove a child. She stated that a child should only be removed from a home if they have a place to go. She then gave examples of children being placed in bad placements.

Next, Judge Sanders explained the Placement Clearance Desk, PCD process. She stated that even if the PCD process shows prior indicated reports, that are a bar to licensure but not placement, and that the investigator and supervisor should discuss this.

Judge Sanders spoke of the need for DCFS to form a relationship with law enforcement. She stated that it is in policy and procedure to notify police when allegations rise to criminal charges, but this is not happening. She also said that DCFS workers should notify police dispatch where they will be when going into the field. She also stressed the need for investigators to carry panic buttons and that assault on a DCFS investigator should be an automatic aggravated battery charge.

Lastly, Judge Sanders explained frustrations with residential facilities under DCFS contracts. She mentioned how there are always kids sleeping in DCFS offices. She also explained the step-down placement and Transitional Living Plan (TLP) processes.

Action: Jackie Sharp, Lisa Vinson, and Veatrice Crawford agreed to work with Judge Sanders to draft recommendations to bring back to the committee.

B. Presentation: Gender Equity into Investigations, Intact Family Services, Identify Gaps

The DCFS Statewide Chief of LGBTQI, Marla Courts, was introduced to the group. Marla gave a PowerPoint presentation to the group on LGBTQI audit findings and responses. Marla will send a copy of her presentation to the Chair for distribution to absent committee members.

Question: Jackie Sharp asked Marla if youth workers would be trained?

Response: Marla explained that the Department is working on getting all workers at all agencies on the Virtual Training Center (VTC). Until then, we are working with agencies. All agencies have been trained.

Question: Mary Jane Forney asked how DCFS handles a complaint against a foster parent?

Response: Find an alternative place for the child.

Question: Mary Jane Forney asked if any Youth in Care have been killed because of gender/sexual orientation?

Response: No

Question: Veatrice Crawford asked for a copy of a compliance tool, bill of rights, and procedures/guidelines associated with distribution?

Response: The compliance tool is an internal tool, and I will see if it can be shared. The Bill of Rights is available online.

Question: Mary Jane Forney asked how often audits are conducted?

Response: This audit was from 2017/2018 and occurred in response to a situation.

Marla stated that she could give quarterly updates to this committee upon demand.

C. Discussion Topic: Introduction to Implicit Bias

Dagene Brown from the Office of Racial Equity Practice was introduced to the committee for discussion.

Question: Veatrice asked if DCFS has looked at all procedures through the racial equity lens?

Response: DCFS is currently working on this now, as it came from a recommendation from the CWAC Committee. DCFS is also looking at procedures through a trauma lens.

Question: Jackie Sharp asked Dagene if her office is tracking minority children that are not taken into protective custody?

Response: Dagene stated that this information is not currently being tracked.

Question: Mary Jane Forney asked Ms. Brown if any schools have approached her about abolishing books in Illinois.

Response: No, not in Illinois.

Question: Veatrice asked Dagene if her office has a strategic plan?

Response: No, but it will be shared with this group when the strategic plan is developed.

Question: Denise McCaffrey asked Dagene how this committee may be of help to her?

Response: Dagene explained how work often happens in silos. Her office needs help with resources for development. Dagene would love for anyone on this committee to share information, ideas, and resources. Lisa Vinson gave her willingness to help collaborate with Dagene.

Dagene also explained the Racial, Justice, and Equity Bill. This bill requires DCFS and ten (10) other state agencies to capture data on both children and parents being served by the Department.

Dagene stated that she is working on updating all DCFS websites and forms in as many languages as possible.

III. Comments /Announcements

None

IV. Public Comments

No public comments were heard.

V. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.