

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

**Statewide Citizens' Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect Committee Meeting Minutes**

December 15, 2021, 9:30 AM to 12:00

Via WebEx

Meeting number (access code): 177 949 9907 Meeting password: QJxcfvah382

**Call to Order** – Vea Crawford, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:38 AM and turned the roll call over to Kenneth Leggin.

**Introductions/Roll Call**- The following members were attending via Web-ex: **Present (11 participants)** Veatrice Crawford (Chair), Elaine Bailey-Johnson, Mary Bennett, Judie Bradley, Jaclin Davis, Mary Jane Forney, Nancie Brown, Denise McCaffrey, Delilah Nelson, Jackie Sharp, Alice Staley

**Absent (9):** James Davis, Ann Deuel, Mary Hardy-Hall, Joe Hemphill, Shauna McGuire, Judge Ericka Sanders, Cynthia Savage Brown, Diane Scruggs, Lisa Vinson

**DCFS Staff:** Kara Hamilton (Associate Deputy Director, External Communications and Advisory Groups), Kenneth Leggin (Cook County Regional Administrator – Child Protection), Shirley Davis-Barsh, Fayette Coleman-Gill (Cook County Associate Regional Administrator – Permanency), Traci Massey (Administrative Assistant II to Chief Deputy Director, Child Protection & SCR)

*A quorum was not present. 11 out of 21, were in attendance. This meeting was held virtually through WebEx in compliance with changes to the Open Meetings Act in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic.*

Meeting was called to order at 9:38 AM- Vea extend a thank you to DCFS staff. She reiterated that the meeting was being recorded per the Open Meetings Act requirements. She also apologized for the lateness of the meeting notice and disbursement of the minutes.

**Update from Meeting with Director Smith:** DCFS was questioned about the links that were promised to be sent out. Ken Leggin agreed to follow-up on this issue.

**DCFS Legislative Updates:** No updates to report.

**File Review:** DCFS provided speakers: Fayette Coleman-Gill, Cook County Associate Regional Administrator for Permanency provided the group with a synopsis of the Welcome Center. The Welcome Center is a streamline from the old shelter system to alleviate youth from staying in the offices. The gatekeeper for the Division of Permanency works with DCP - CAPU. Youth in care are placed in the Welcome Center through the

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- All votes must now be recorded via roll call

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1901 documentation form and 1452 location form - stabilization for youth. The question was raised as to how these youth in care come to be – Fayette explained that they are youth that DCP has taken into custody or there has been a permanency disruption. She provided the group with names of the Welcome Center's for each region: Cook has UCAN (dormitory style), Threshold, Lawrence Hall, Aunt Martha's; Northern has Allendale; Southern has STAC; and Central does not have one available.

Fayette also discussed the use of a few Department acronyms:

- DCP – Division of Child Protection
- CWS – Child Welfare Services and/or Child Welfare Specialist
- YAP – Youth Advocate Program/Worker (Alicia Ozier, Deputy Director – Clinical Practice)
- IPS – Intensive Placement Stabilization (DCFS and POS partners utilize a resource referral form – locate provider lan or zip code to provide individual therapy.

Tim Snowden's name was given as the Chief Deputy Director of Permanency and the group was informed that his unit does have a bed utilization tracking, they use for the Welcome Center stays.

The question was raised as to how these youth in care get to the Welcome Center's. The response was the assigned worker takes the youth to the Welcome Center. A member of the group asked what the definition of disruptive placement was – the group was given a response of examples as: a youth on run, foster parent no longer wants youth in home, youth no longer going back to TLP, disruptive behaviors, or children discharged from hospital. The Welcome Center's are for youth in need of placement and all resources have been exhausted.

Central Region uses beds in Cook and Northern due to lack of Welcome Center's in that region but only on extreme cases.

It was asked if there was a waiting list for youth that need services. Response was there is no waiting list.

There are gatekeepers in each region, and they are the Regional Administrators.

There are Emergency Foster Homes and Interim Foster Homes that are utilized.

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Welcome Center name came about because they wanted to get away from the stigma of shelter and when shelter bed contracts were lost.

Fayette will be forwarding to the group bed utilization documents.

It was asked if we are testing for COVID – response was yes, and it has to be negative. CQC is a quarantine center for youth in care that test positive. Asked if vaccinations were mandated – response was vaccinations are not mandated.

Regarding the file review – it was asked if the group would see any youth care worker notes – response was yes.

A small break was taken at 10:30.

Ken resumed the meeting with investigations and Welcome Center's. He informed the group when taking PC of youth – we try to place youth in care with family members. If family members cannot be located, then we look at family friends. Background checks and home checks are completed. If unable to provide a family member or family friend, there is a list of foster homes. We try to prevent youth in care from going to the Welcome Centers.

File review – There will be 2 or 3 to review. It was asked if they would partner with someone – response was yes. Run through the process – virtual – January 19<sup>th</sup> date selected for review. DCFS is working to pull files. It was asked how long it will take to review cases – response was depending on complexity of the case. Will there be a checklist of what should be in the file – response was yes. In-person would be preferred and a discussion of how the virtual review would look. DCFS staff person would hold up pages of file for them to review – not a good way to do a review was expressed by a member.

It was asked if it was a possibility to visit Welcome Center's virtually – response was needed to check with Jassen Strokosch.

A member wanted to know what the ramifications were of not doing a review this year – response was that the Department is working to do this year. Chief of Staff, Jassen said it is doable – not ideal but doable.

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The virtual tour of Welcome Centers – build that into a report. Maybe 1 or 2 people willing to do a review. Denise McCaffrey (Chicago), Jackie Sharp and Nancie Brown (Springfield) – willing to do in-person. Presentation – Virtual Tour – Set-up room in Chicag/video.

It was asked if there will be an issue with having copies made for reviewers – response was no.

Mary Jane made a motion to have presentations presented back in written format - virtual tours – minimum of 3 people to file review on Welcome Center. All combined into one report. Nancie Brown 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. There is no quorum so Ve a sending out to committee for vote.

**Prevent Child Abuse Conference:** Conference was held in October virtually. Over 100 participants. Well received and evaluations were very good. Next year, if in-person, Springfield – October 13&14 - no further details at this time.

### **New Business:**

- A request was made to invite a Children Justice Task Force person and Child Death Review person to the meetings on a regular basis.
- Recommendations sending out to committee what we support.
- Bylaws committee together to approve what goes in by laws.
- Need committee going forward to plan for these meetings.
- Working on welcome packet.

All will get to review prior to annual report due date. February meeting - ? Sending out dates.

### **Comments:**

Denise – not able to attend - the Family First Initiative – asked if committee interested in DHS & DCFS collaboration on home visiting. Support expressed.

Presentations – Judge w/court system – present ideas and go forward.

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Neonatal responsibility – get someone talking about.

Jacklin Davis (sending out flyers to group)

- Cook Juvenile Justice
- Free Restorative Practice
- Pandemic Mental Wellness Counseling

Motion to adjourn – 2<sup>nd</sup> motion. Meeting Adjourned 11:35 AM.

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