



## STAFFING AND OVERSIGHT REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE

Marygrace Billek, Chair  
Lisa Chapland, Co-Chair

"In compliance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, notice of this meeting was given by way of notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Trenton Times and the Newark Star Ledger and posted at the Department of State, 125 West State St., 1st Floor, Trenton, New Jersey."

*\*Please note the meeting was recorded for the transcription of minutes.*

December 19, 2024

Meeting Minutes

### Attendance:

- Marygrace Billek, Committee Chair, Public Member
- Lisa Chapland, Committee Co-chair, Kinship Resource Parent
- Traci Telemaque, Office of the Law Guardian
- Angie Waters, CASA of New Jersey
- Linda Porcaro, Department of Social Services of Somerset County
- Elizabeth Sherwood, Division of Law

### Guest:

- Colleen McCauley, Camden Coalition

### Staff:

- Bethany D'Amelio, Department of Children and Families

### 1. Introduction:

- The meeting was convened to address critical issues affecting children and families, as part of the Committee's ongoing efforts towards service improvement and statutory compliance.

### 2. Main Discussions:

- **Statutory Compliance:** Discussion on fulfilling obligations under current law by sending necessary documents to legislative bodies and relevant stakeholders.
- **Outreach Strategy:**
  - Ensured dissemination plans involving presentations and PowerPoint slides were established for stakeholders.
  - Planned interactions with the governor's office and press to increase engagement and transparency.

### 3. Presentations and Reports:

- Overview of recently compiled reports highlighting major achievements and pending issues.
- Pending presentation from Angela Phillips on Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) to review current service performance.

#### **4. Policy and Operational Updates:**

- Updates on financial allocations, with increased focus on addressing housing needs for families.
- Examination of external factors affecting family support systems, which are beyond direct committee control.

#### **5. Future Plans:**

- Developing actionable tasks for the upcoming January meeting, including inviting vendor participation for specific operational tasks.
- Strengthening partnerships with other governmental entities and wider community groups for enhanced collaboration.

#### **6. Challenges and Resolutions:**

- Addressed delays in psychological evaluations, which may add months to service delivery.
- Acknowledged the need for improved investigative measures regarding child abuse and neglect. While it was found that DCP&P completed investigations on all children reported to the child abuse hotline and a majority of these investigations were completed in a timely manner, the quality of DCP&P's investigations was down from the previous year.
- Investigations of abuse and neglect involve caseworkers completing risk assessments to determine the likelihood of children being maltreated in the future. In the reporting period more than half of caseworkers' risk assessments were of substantial and complete quality, however, the percentage of complete, quality assessments decreased from the prior year.

#### **Conclusion:**

The committee emphasizes its commitment to improving outcomes for children and families, ensuring effective communication and action plans are in place for all identified issues. Continuous partnership with various stakeholders remains pivotal in strategic advancements moving forward.

*This memo aims to maintain transparency and provide the public with an overview of the task force's recent deliberations. The committee values community input and engagement as we collectively strive to enhance the welfare of children and families across New Jersey. For further information or queries, the public can reach out via the contact channels provided by the Department of Children and Families.*