

# By-Laws

## **Article I Name**

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the Children, Youth, and Families Statewide Citizen Review Panel.

## **Article II Purpose**

Section 1. The Citizen Review Panel (CRP or Panel) will review the practices, procedures, and policies of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) while making recommendations for improvements of the child protection services system.

Section 2. The Statewide Citizen Review Panel is a mandated group of community members that represent the broad diversity of the state and are responsible for determining whether DCYF is effectively discharging its child protective responsibilities pursuant to:

- (a) The child protection standards set forth in section Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), as amended (42 U.S.C. 5101 et seq.); and
- (b) Any other criteria that the panel deems important to ensure the protection of children.

## **Article III Membership**

Section 1. The Panel shall be comprised of at least 8 members and no more than 15 members. Panel members will complete an application and before the panel votes on appointment. Appointment is confirmed after simple majority vote.

Section 2. The Panel shall accept application throughout the year. The panel will open the application review process in July and January of each year. During this open session the panel will review and vote on prospective members to join the panel.

Section 2. The Panel shall consist of community members that have a professional or personal understanding of the child welfare system and/or expertise in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

Section 3. Panel membership is voluntary and is expected to represent the diversity of the state and of the communities served by DCYF.

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Section 4. New Panel members must complete an onboarding process that includes a detailed orientation of the roles and responsibilities of the CRP.

Section 5. The initial term of a CRP member will be two-years.

Section 6. Lived experts that serve on the CRP are provided a stipend per CAPTA and DCYF guidance.

Section 6. A Quorum of the Panel is 51% of current panel membership.

Section 7. Panel members must submit resignation in writing via the CRP Facilitator 30 days prior to the effective date of resignation.

Section 8. Panel members can be removed from appointment after simple majority vote for failing to disclose a conflict of interest that impacts their work on the Panel, violating the confidentiality agreement, failure to participate in four consecutive Panel meetings or activities without contact with the Panel Co-Chair and/or Facilitator, disrespectful action toward Panel members, Facilitator, or invited guests after written notice was provided to correct behavior, and any other violation of the Policies and Procedures and By-Laws of the Citizen Review Panel.

Section 9. Alternate members: An alternate member will act in the place of the member during a member's absence. The member will inform, in advance, the chair/co-chair of the alternate member designation. The co-chairs will appoint the alternate member to a term lasting no more than 6 months. If there is a committee vote, the alternate member's vote will represent the member. Alternate's may be assigned committee duties by the co-chairs. Members do not have to have an alternate designated during a leave of absence.

## Article IV Officers

Section 1. Officers consist of two Co-Chair positions and a Secretary as deemed necessary by the panel.

Section 2. The Co-Chair positions shall preside at all meetings of the CRP panel, establish other committees as needed and appoint their members, and assume any other duties established by a majority vote of the membership. The Co-Chair shall serve as an *ex officio* member of all committees.

Section 3. The Secretary, if appointed, shall coordinate with the Facilitator and perform the duties that may be delegated by the Co-Chair or by a majority vote of the membership. The Secretary shall serve as scrivener on committees as needed.

## **Article V DCYF Responsibility**

Section 1. DCYF shall provide advice, guidance, technical assistance, and information regarding the expected role and function of the CRP in accordance with Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), as amended (42 U.S.C. 5101 et seq.).

Section 2. DCYF shall provide a Facilitator to assist and facilitate CRP meetings, workgroups, and site work as necessary.

Section 3. The CRP facilitator shall, keep CRP members apprised of all meeting schedules and distribute meeting minutes and other necessary documents for CRP members to fulfill their responsibilities.

Section 4. DCYF shall in accordance with Section 106(c)(5) of CAPTA provide information and data that is available and has been determined necessary for the CRP to carry out its functions.

Section 5. The CRP Facilitator will act as a liaison between the CRP and DCYF Leadership to facilitate communication on CRP business.

## **Article VI Committees**

Section 1. The Panel may establish such committees as may be necessary to carry out its mandate.

Section 2. Members of Panel committees shall be appointed by either Co-Chair. Committees shall include members of the Panel and shall be chaired by Panel members. Committees may utilize the expertise or consultation of individuals as needed and on a short-term basis.

Section 3. Committees shall utilize lived experts to fulfill their mandate. Lived experts are provided a stipend under DCYF guidance.

Section 4. Committees shall meet as often as necessary to fulfill their particular mandate.

Section 5. The CRP may establish written protocols to guide its work

## **Article VII Duties of Panel Members**

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Section 1. The Panel shall evaluate the extent to which DCYF is effectively discharging its child protection responsibilities in accordance with the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). This should include DCYF's work with children at risk of abuse or neglect, children under the care of DCYF, and individuals and families receiving services from DCYF.

Section 2. The Panel will conduct outreach and solicit public comment to assess the impact of current policies, practices, and procedures of DCYF on children and families in the State of Washington, as appropriate.

## **Article VIII Panel Meetings**

Section 1. The Panel will meet at least four (4) times in a calendar year.

Section 2. The Co-Chair and Facilitator can call special meetings, workgroups, or site work as necessary for the work of the Panel.

Section 3. A quorum consists of 51% of Panel members in attendance; in person, by phone, virtual meeting, or email.

## **Article IX Non-Discrimination**

Section 1. There shall be no discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, families with children, sex, marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, or the presence of any sensory mental or physical disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. There shall be special efforts to identify persons who have disabilities and persons from ethnically, economically, and racially diverse groups to participate in the Panel and conduct the Panel's business.

The Citizen Review Panels are an inclusive organization with diverse members. The CRPs welcome everyone and will continue to work to promote inclusivity. The CRPs will continue to support efforts to combat prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination. All Panel members are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights of others.

The Citizen Review Panels commit to creating an equitable and inclusive environment. The CRPs respect the fundamental rights and dignity of all people.

## **Article X Amendments**

Section 1. Amendments to the by-laws of the CRP shall be made by simple majority of the quorum of the Panel present at any meeting of the Panel, but only after notification in writing to the full membership at least two (2) weeks in advance.

## **Article XI Confidentiality**

Section 1. The Citizen Review Panel shall safeguard and not disclose confidential information (whether acquired through verbal communication, written record or observation) pertaining to any child, relative or friend of any family under review of the Citizen Review Panel. In addition, the Panel shall safeguard information pertaining to individual staff or Panel members, and information which may have a detrimental effect on families or the community at large, obtained or shared among members during Panel and committee meetings. This clause shall specifically exclude formal reports, media releases, and other information approved by the Panel or to meet mandatory reporting guidelines.

Section 2. Panel members shall sign a confidentiality agreement at the start of their term, and each year thereafter, which shall apply as relevant in Panel matters, meetings, circumstances and events.

Section 3. Failure to uphold confidentiality will result in the member's termination from the panel.

## **Article XII Conflict of Interest**

Section 1. Panel members and appointees for membership shall disclose any personal or professional relationships that may represent or may appear to represent a conflict of interest with the Panel. These conflicts can include financial and material interests or a potential for financial or material interest.

## **Article XIII**

### **Code of Conduct**

Section 1. The members of the Citizen Review Panel are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that represents their position as leaders and role models for the people of Washington.

Section 2. The Citizen Review Panel is committed to maintain a positive collaborative environment.

Section 3. The work of the Panel will be conducted with respect, professionalism, fairness, and sensitivity to the many differences and strengths of the Panel members and guests.

Section 4. Panel members will communicate constructively and avoid demeaning or insulting behavior to other Panel members and guests.