

**Montgomery County Citizens Review Panel (MCCRP)**

**November 7, 2022 Meeting**

**Minutes**

**Persons Present:**

Laura Brown	Stacey McNeely, 2022-2023 Chair
Laura Coyle	Lisa Merkin, CWS Administrator
Kay Farley, CRBC Representative	Ron Whalen

**Welcome**

Ms. Stacey McNeely called the meeting to order.

**Introduction of New Panel Member**

Ms. McNeely advised that Shaoli Katana has been appointed to serve on the MCCRP.

**MCCRP Committee Vacancies**

As vacancies still exist and the first terms of three members were ending, Ms. McNeely noted that the vacancies were re-announced in October. She and Laura Brown have reapplied. Wilma Brier did not reapply for a second term. That announcement closed on November 4<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Lisa Merkin will follow-up on the applications. If new candidates have submitted application, Ms. McNeely will ask for volunteers to assist with the interviews.

**Review and Approval of the Minutes**

The draft minutes of the October 11, 2022 meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. Mr. Ron Whalen made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Laura Coyle seconded the motion, which was approved.

**Agency Update**

Data

Ms. Lisa Merkin reviewed the agency’s data for September 2022.

<b>Data Element</b>	<b>Jul-22</b>	<b>Aug-22</b>	<b>Sep-22</b>	<b>Oct-22</b>	<b>Nov-22</b>
<b>Assessment</b>					
Number of calls to Screening Unit	599	604	1011		
Reports of Child Maltreatment (referrals)	386	383	628		
Number of new Alternative Response (AR) investigations	57	38	75		
Number of new Investigation Response (IR) investigations	57	47	64		
New non-CPS cases	49	56	67		
Number of completed IR investigation findings – allegation indicated	45	29	28		
Number of completed IR investigation findings – allegation unsubstantiated	35	29	14		

Number of completed IR investigation findings – allegation ruled out					
<b>Out of Home</b>	41	45	30		
Number of new out of home placements (entries)	3	10	5		
Total children who left care (exits)	3	6	13		
Total out-of-home children in care at month's end	347	351	343		
<b>Placement</b>					
Number of children in foster care	206	218	220		
Number of children placed with relatives	76	73	70		
Number of children in residential placement	65	60	53		
<b>Length of Stay</b>					
Average (mean) length of stay in foster care (months)	33	33	34		
Median length of stay in foster care (months)	29	30	30		
<b>Resource Homes</b>					
Number of licensed regular foster homes (does not include restricted/relative homes)	130	128	129		
Number of newly assigned regular home studies	4	4	0		
Number of recruitment inquiries	45	44	44		

The increase in calls to the Screening Unit and reports of maltreatment relates to schools being back in session. Historically, the greatest number of calls and reports occur in October and November.

The agency is looking at trying to improve data collection around how people hear about the opportunity of being a resource home, e.g., website, public service announcement, friends, etc.

Staff Vacancies

The two supervisor positions have been filled. That, however, led to two new social worker vacancies. There is also an open posting for two manager positions. That posting closes in a couple of weeks. The overall vacancy level is steady.

How MCCRP Can Assist with Resource Home Recruitment

Ms. Merkin shared three resource home recruitment flyers with the MCCRP. MCCRP members can assist with recruitment by circulating the flyers with their contacts.

Foster Parent Survey Update

Ms. Laura Brown shared the draft report of the survey findings with Mr. Whalen. He has provided feedback and edits, which Ms. Brown will incorporate in the draft.

**Next Steps: Ms. Brown will circulate the revised draft report to all MCCRP members for review.**

Once the report is final, Ms. Merkin suggested bringing in agency staff for planning purposes.

## Report to Montgomery County HHS Committee

Ms. McNeely provided testimony to the Montgomery County HHS Committee on October 26, 2022. The testimony focused on the MCCRPs two priorities – recruitment of resource homes and the handling of LGBTQ cases. Committee members provided three points of feedback to the MCCRPs.

- The MCCRPs might consider looking at the MoCo Re-Connect drop-in center for youth ages 16-24.
- The MCCRPs might contact the National Association of Counties (NaCO) regarding the work it is doing related to funding for aging-out youth.
- The MCCRPs might look at how to support the transition out of foster care for older youth, so the brunt of the responsibility does not fall on the resource home parents.

### Collaboration Opportunities

- Montgomery County Collaboration Council regarding the MoCo Re-Connect drop-in center (contact - Elijah Wheeler, Jr.)
- NaCO regarding its work related to aging-out youth (contact - Rachel Mackey)
- Montgomery County Board of Social Services
- Montgomery County Mental Health Advisor Committee (contact – Diane Linder)

Mental health has an impact on both of the MCCRPs priorities. LGBTQ youth have a higher incidence of mental health issues. One of the challenges that resource homes face is dealing with children with mental health issues. As such, there was consensus to prioritize working with the Board of Social Services and the Mental Health Advisory Committee (MHAC).

**Next Step: Ms. McNeely will follow-up with the Montgomery County Board of Social Services and the MHAC to invite them to meet with the MCCRPs.**

The meeting adjourned.

**Next Meeting: December 13, 2022**