

Montgomery County Citizens Review Panel (MCCRP)

February 11, 2025 Meeting

Minutes

Members Present:

Laura Brown, Technical Advisor
Laura Coyle
Laura Erstling, CYFS Liaison

Kay Farley, CRBC Representative
Stacey McNeely, Chair
Elizabeth Simon

Ms. Stacey McNeely called the meeting to order. Ms. McNeely welcomed Laura Erstling to the meeting as Lisa Merkin's representative.

Review and Approval of the Minutes

The draft minutes of the December 10, 2024 meeting were distributed prior to the meeting so no business was conducted. Ms. Elizabeth Simon made the motion to approve the minutes. Ms. McNeely seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

The draft notes of the January 7, 2025 meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. There was no quorum at that meeting Ms. McNeely made the motion to approve the notes. Ms. Simon seconded the motion. The notes were approved.

Agency Update

Ms. Laura Erstling presented the data for January 2025.

Data Element	Sept 2024	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025
Assessment					
Number of calls to Screening Unit	932	1078	968	917	894
Reports of Child Maltreatment (referrals)	757	803	707	667	666
Number of new Alternative Response (AR) investigations	82	91	89	52	70
Number of new Investigation Response (IR) investigations	64	71	73	67	59
New non-CPS cases	86	63	52	66	49
Number of completed IR investigation findings – allegation indicated	39	54	34	52	46
Number of completed IR investigation findings – allegation unsubstantiated	14	17	17	21	20
Number of completed IR investigation findings – allegation ruled out	29	40	33	28	53
Out of Home					
Number of new out of home placements (entries)	4	15	7	7	14
13Total children who left care (exits)	6	7	20	5	11
Total out-of-home children in care at month's end	330	338	325	327	330

Placement					
Number of children in foster care	211	212	205	205	199
Number of children placed with relatives	79	85	78	81	87
Number of children in residential placement	40	41	42	41	44
Length of Stay					
Average (mean) length of stay in foster care (months)	33.5	32	32.5	32.5	32.5
Median length of stay in foster care (months)	28	26	24	24	23.5
Resource Homes					
Number of licensed regular foster homes (does not include restricted/relative homes)	115	115	113	109	108
Number of newly assigned regular home studies	2	1	3	1	2
Number of recruitment inquiries	34	37	43	34	32

A question was asked about whether the new federal immigration policy is impacting the number of reports of suspected abuse. Ms. Erstling advised that there has been no impact thus far. The agency is monitoring to see if the new policy does have an impact on the child protection system.

Sub-panel on Developing a Culture of Support for Agency Staff

Ms. McNeely advised that Lisa Merkin has selected two speakers recommended by the MCCRP to make presentations to the agency staff - Dr. Patricia Carrington, a psychiatrist who works with children and adolescents, and a play therapist. At least one presentation will be offered in March, which is Social Worker Month. If both presentations cannot be scheduled in March, the other session will be scheduled in the Spring.

The work of this subpanel seems complete. Ms. McNeely will contact Lisa Merkin to inquire about other potential topics for the MCCRP to undertake.

Sub-panel on Support for Transitioning Youth

Ms. McNeely, chair of the Sub-panel, advised that has begun a review the reports submitted by other advisory panels and commissions to the Montgomery County HHS Committee in October 2024 to see if other groups have a shared interest in this issue.

Laura Brown has conducted research on the web for effective and promising practices but has not found much information.

Panel Vacancies

The County posted a MCCRP vacancy notice in December. Three applications were received. Ms. Merkin is working to schedule interviews with the applicants.

Recent departures from the MCCRP include Kenneth Beale, Ronald Whalen, and Tinuade Akinshola. This is also the last Board meeting for Laura Coyle.

Ms. McNeely will work with Ms. Merkin to repost the vacancy notice.

Ms. McNeely thanked Ms. Coyle for her years of service and her many contributions to the MCCRP.

Panel Training Requirements

Ms. McNeely reminded members to make sure they have completed the required training sessions and uploaded their certificates of course completions.

Panel Availability for March 11, 2025 Meeting

The next meeting will be March 11th.

The meeting adjourned.