

Montgomery County Citizens Review Panel (MCCRP)

August 12, 2025 Meeting

Minutes

Members Present:

Tinu Akinshola	Lisa Merkin, CYFS Liaison
Laura Brown, Technical Advisor	Elizabeth Simon
Kay Farley, CRBC Representative	Jane Yamaykin
Stacey McNeely, Chair	

Ms. Stacey McNeely called the meeting to order.

Review and Approval of the Minutes

The draft minutes of the July 8, 2025 meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. Ms. Elizabeth Simon made the motion to approve the minutes. Ms. McNeely seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Agency Update

Lisa Merkin presented the July 2025 data.

Data Element	Mar 2025	Apr 2025	May 2025	Jun 2025	July 2025
Assessment					
Number of calls to Screening Unit	1044	938	1152	789	675
Reports of Child Maltreatment (referrals)	814	674	825	561	458
Number of new Alternative Response (AR) investigations	104	90	105	56	41
Number of new Investigation Response (IR) investigations	60	67	82	54	54
New non-CPS cases	65	59	77	56	56
Number of completed IR investigation findings – allegation indicated	37	57	27	64	62
Number of completed IR investigation findings – allegation unsubstantiated	23	31	57	35	48
Number of completed IR investigation findings – allegation ruled out	37	25	37	42	52
Out of Home					
Number of new out of home placements (entries)	13	11	8	6	9
Total children who left care (exits)	6	11	2	8	12
Total out-of-home children in care at month's end	333	333	339	337	334
Placement					
Number of children in foster care	197	203	202	192	190
Number of children placed with relatives	93	86	93	101	101
Number of children in residential placement	43	44	44	45	43
Length of Stay					

Average (mean) length of stay in foster care (months)	33	33	33	33.5	33.5
Median length of stay in foster care (months)	24	25	24	25	24
Resource Homes					
Number of licensed regular foster homes (does not include restricted/relative homes)	103	101	102	94	96
96Number of Kinship Homes	61	63	68	69	72
Number of newly assigned regular home studies	0	0	0	4	2
Number of recruitment inquiries	28	24	25	30	18

The new fiscal year (FY26) began July 1, 2025. The numbers for reports and new investigations are down as school is not in session. Nine children entered care in July. More than half of the children in custody are currently placed with relatives.

Panel Topic Discussion

Multi-Complex Services

Ms. Jane Yamaykin reported that she had reached out to contacts in Pittsburgh, PA and Detroit, MI. There did not seem to be much available in Pittsburgh but there may be relevant services in Detroit. She will follow up.

Ms. Laura Brown reported that Anne Arundel County has navigator services. She was not sure if navigator services, local coordination teams, and/or care teams were the kinds of services that the agency staff are interested in.

Ms. Merkin advised that they are trying to address youth with severe mental and behavioral health problems who come to the agency's attention when they are hospitalized. When agency staff talk with the parents, often the parents sought and used the existing services in the community. Hospitalization is the last resort after the available services have not met the youth's needs.

Ms. Merkin said the problem is two-fold. First, how can the community identify the youth's needs earlier in the system? Second, how can the community serve the youth's needs, so the youth does not have to enter the child welfare system?

It might be a matter of resource development or possibly more beds for youth. The MCCRP could explore what the array of services should look like and how to identify children with severe mental and behavioral health problems earlier in the system.

Years ago, there was a Home Visiting Program that was not connected with reports of abuse and neglect. Intense family services could be provided to families for up to 6 to 12 months.

Ms. Simon suggested looking at availability of support groups for parents and for children and how easy is it for parents to access different types of therapy.

Resource Home Recruitment

Ms. Merkin will invite Hilary Laskey to a future MCCRP meeting to talk about the agency's existing recruitment efforts.

Ms. Brown will re-circulate the list of resources for outreach that the MCCRP previously developed. Members are asked to review the list for possible additions.

A new angle might be to explore whether kinship families might be resource homes for other youth. This might be something to look at in early 2026 after the agency has a full year of experience with the increased number of kinship families.

Kinship providers are eligible for membership in the Foster Parent Association and some are members.

The MCCRP may want to reach out to the Foster Parent Association again for a follow-up survey.

The agency does regularly ask for resource home feedback – each year as part of the recommitment process to continue as a resource home and when a resource home closes.

Panel Vacancies and Interviews

Ms. Merkin will follow-up to see if the County has approved the applicant interviewed as a result of the second vacancy positing.

The county has issued a third vacancy posting for this Panel. It appears that ten people applied as result of that posting. Ms. Merkin should be receiving the resumes within the week.

Ms. McNeely advised that her current term expires in October 2025. She is not eligible to reapply. She asked for members to let her know if they have interest in being the new Chair.

Panel Availability for September 9, 2025 Meeting

The next meeting will be September 9th.

The meeting adjourned.