

# PARTNERS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE

## BACKGROUND

In January 2010, Foster Care Redesign was conceived by DFPS leadership and stakeholders as a new community-based model. To ensure the success of this model, the Public Private Partnership or PPP was formed. Since its inception, the PPP has advised DFPS on both the rollout and implementation of Foster Care Redesign as well as the transition to Community-based Care.

Separately, as the system of DFPS licensing and contracting developed and gave rise to a core community of residential providers, the agency and providers began meeting regularly. By 2012 the Committee on Residential Practices (CARP) was formed to discuss and stay abreast of legislative, legal, and regulatory developments.

Both PPP and CARP were a part of the foster care discussion and review of DFPS by the Sunset Advisory Commission in 2014. The staff report recommended that both committees be formalized, which was done and followed by their inclusion in the Texas Administrative Code in 2016.

Both committees have provided extremely valuable input, insight and a variety of viewpoints that have contributed to the growth of redesign and the transition of residential licensing authority from DFPS to HHSC.

Much has changed since the committees were formed, respectively in 2010 and 2012: Foster Care Redesign is now Community-based Care (CBC) and its expansion is now underway. As our Single Source Continuum Contractors (SSCCs) grow in number, they occupy more of the residential provider landscape.

In recent years, the issues tackled by the PPP and CARP have converged – and in many cases overlapped. Their meetings have become joint proceedings, at times indistinguishable.

But the hard work – and frequent setbacks – have paid off. While there are obviously still many areas of legacy foster care, they will continue to shrink as CBC is the present and future of Texas foster care. That single, unified vision calls for a single primary advisory committee: Partners in Advancing Practices for Children and Families.

This is an exciting time for Texas foster care. The Legislature has *fully funded* rate modernization – now known as Texas Child-Centered Care (T3C). For the first time, providers will be paid the actual cost of providing care and services to our foster children and youth.

A single committee will provide a constant global viewpoint with clarity of vision – supplemented by the extensive subject matter expertise of multiple subcommittee members. In fact, the new structure allows for *more* subcommittees, encouraging a diverse range of voices and experiences. This proposed merger allows the committee to amplify the impact of partnership and continue making a difference to the children, youth, and families of Texas.

## PROPOSED CHANGES FOR CONSIDERATION

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Partners for Children and Families committee is to explore, study, and recommend innovative practices that affect the Texas Child Protection system. The Committee also advises DFPS, SSCCs, and HHSC on the evolution of the child protection system to its model of Community-Based Care and the impact on the child protection system at large.

### **STRUCTURE**

The new Partners for Children and Families committee will consist of a core committee and multiple subcommittees.

#### *CORE COMMITTEE*

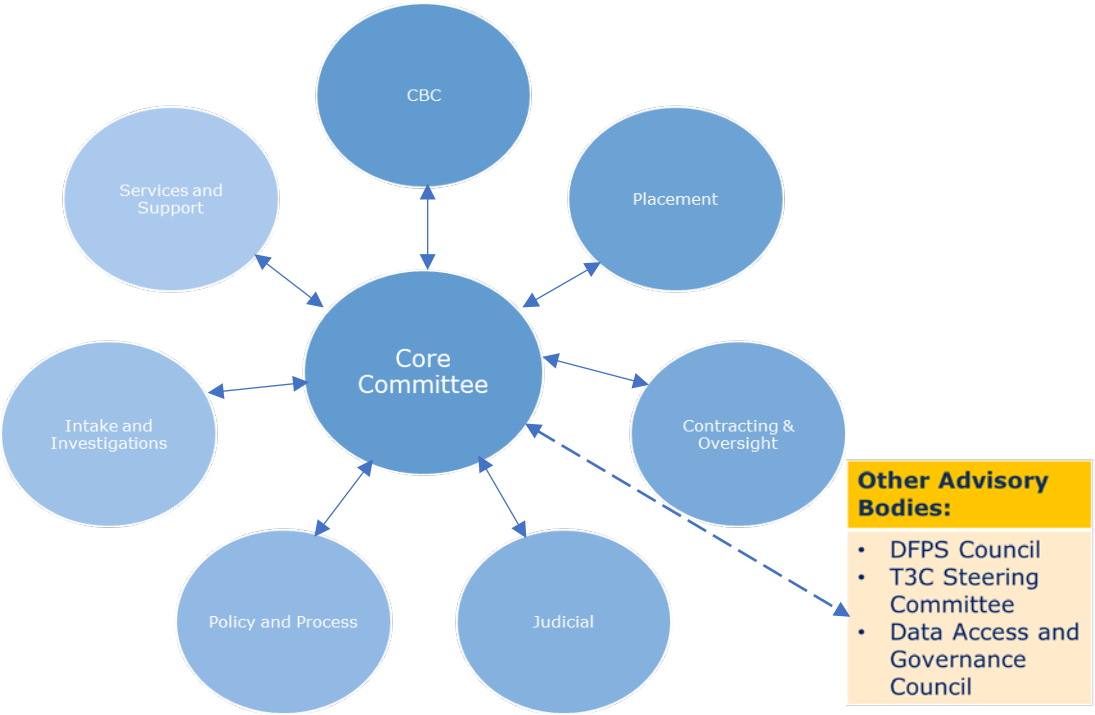
The committee makes recommendations to DFPS, HHSC, and the SSCCs through quarterly meetings and performs other tasks consistent with the committee's purpose. The committee votes to create ad hoc subcommittees to research specific topics of interest, as needed.

#### *STANDING SUBCOMMITTEES*

Standing subcommittees will study, report on, and make recommendations back to the core committee, on issues deemed appropriate to the charge of the core committee. We will have the following subcommittees with the opportunity to add additional ad hoc subcommittees, as needed.

- Additional subcommittees may be added as needed by vote of the core committee.

Subcommittee	Topics
Community Based Care	Operations, Expansion, and Transition,
Placement	SSCC capacity, Legacy provider capacity and shared capacity
Contracting and Oversight	Multiple-entity contracts, Heightened Monitoring
Legal	Judicial and Legal concerns
Policy and Process	Provides feedback to DFPS on practices, policies, and procedures
Intake and Investigations	Intake and Investigations
Services and Support	Behavioral Health, Family Support Services, Aging/Older Youth



## **MEMBERSHIP TERM**

Members serve for a four-year term (change from current rule which specifies two-year terms) and may be appointed for one additional term. Will have staggered terms of 2 years for initial committee selection.

## **MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS**

DFPS proposes to combine the membership requirements of the two current committees and specify that "parent" category should include foster parents and kinship families.

- Members have demonstrated a commitment to the children, youth, and families of Texas and have knowledge and experience with the Texas child protection care system.

Members will include:

- Providers and provider associations
- Youth formerly in foster care
- Members of the judiciary and legal system
- Child welfare advocacy groups
- Foster parents and kinship families
- Other child welfare stakeholders

Department staff will focus on creating a diverse committee based on:

- Gender
- Race/Ethnicity
- Representation of all regions in the state
- Professions
- Type of provider

## MEMBER SELECTION

Anyone interested in serving on the core committee or subcommittee will apply for appointment using an established application process. If interested in membership on a subcommittee, applicants will submit a preferred ranking of subcommittee interest. Applications will be reviewed for compliance with membership requirements and committee diversity.

## CORE COMMITTEE

Members will be selected through initial recommendations by a DFPS review committee, with final selection by the Commissioner.

The Partners for Children and Families committee will be led by a Presiding Chair. For the inaugural selection, the chair will be elected by the current PPP and CARP committees to lead the newly merged committee. The chair will lead membership, preside over meetings, and select subcommittee chairs in consultation with Department staff. A vice-chair will be selected after the selection of the core committee members. The core committee will have 15 members.

The following organizations will have standing core committee membership:

- Texas Alliance of Child & Family Services
- Texas Network of Youth Services
- Children's Commission
- Texas CASA

## STANDING SUBCOMMITTEES

Each subcommittee will have a subcommittee chair who must be a Core Committee member. Subcommittee chairs are selected by the Presiding Chair, in consultation with Department staff. If the subcommittee determines a need for a co-chair, that position can be filled by a subcommittee member.

Subcommittee members will be selected by subcommittee chairs. If selected for a subcommittee assignment, the subcommittee interest ranking submitted at the time of application will be taken into consideration for subcommittee selection.

Other than the chair position, subcommittee members are not members of the core committee. Subcommittees will have no less than 3 members, with a maximum of 12 members.

In addition, if a subcommittee is dissolved or ceases to exist, a subcommittee member remains eligible to be assigned to a new subcommittee for the duration of their term.

Subcommittee member representation is likely to include the following membership requirements and may include other members as necessary to accomplish the goals of the committee. DFPS and HHSC staff may be included as appropriate:

Subcommittees	Membership Representation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Based Care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Providers (SSCC or Legacy Providers)</li> <li>○ Trade Organizations</li> <li>○ Judicial/Legal</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Providers (SSCC or Legacy Providers)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contracting and Oversight</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Providers (SSCC or Legacy Providers)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy and Process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Providers and provider associations</li> <li>○ Youth formerly in foster care</li> <li>○ Judicial/Legal</li> <li>○ Child welfare advocacy groups</li> <li>○ Foster parents and kinship families</li> <li>○ Other child welfare stakeholders</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intake and Investigations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Judicial/Legal</li> <li>○ Providers (SSCC or Legacy Providers)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services and Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Providers (SSCC or Legacy Providers)</li> <li>○ Family Support Services</li> <li>○ Youth formerly in foster care</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Judicial/Legal</li> <li>○ Child welfare advocacy groups</li> </ul>

\*Open meetings

If the subcommittee has enough members that it would result in a quorum of the full committee, then the meeting must be posted to comply with the Texas Open Meetings Act as both a full committee meeting and a subcommittee meeting (this is also true if a quorum of the full committee is in attendance period).

The Open Meetings Act includes two definitions of "meeting." 165 Section 551.001(4)(A) uses the term "deliberation" to define "meeting": (A) a deliberation between a quorum of a

governmental body, or between a quorum of a governmental body and another person, during which public business or public policy over which the governmental body has supervision or control is discussed or considered or during which the governmental body takes formal action... A purely advisory body, which has no authority over public business or policy, is not subject to the Act, unless a governmental body routinely adopts or “rubber stamps” the recommendations of the advisory body.

Document changes

Page 3 Purpose- added “impact to child protection system at large”
Page 4- Subcommittee name- Changed Judiciary to Legal
Page 5- Changed Members of the judiciary to include “and legal system”
Page 6 Core Committee: Added standing positions for outlined organizations
Page 7 Changed Judiciary to Legal

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Feedback/Suggestions</u>	<u>DFPS response</u>
<b>Meeting Operations/Logistics</b>	Allow for virtual meetings and subcommittee meetings	Virtual meeting options are being explored; sub-committees can determine
<b>Meeting Operations/Logistics</b>	Provide meeting materials in advance	Noted for meeting logistics
<b>Meeting Operations/Logistics</b>	Uniformity in reports from the SSCC	To be determined by the committee, can have common reporting elements while leaving flexibility in the report out
<b>Meeting Operations/Logistics</b>	Allow for public comment at the Core Committee meeting	Public attendees will be able to submit comments via established mailbox, the DFPS council meeting offers an avenue for public comment



<u>Topic</u>	<u>Feedback/Suggestions</u>	<u>DFPS response</u>
<b>Meeting Operations/Logistics</b>	Provide transparency and access to consistent data metrics	The core committee chair and sub-committee chairs can request data and reports as needed.
<b>Meeting Operations/Logistics</b>	Limit the number of subcommittees a person can serve on	Members can serve up to two subcommittees or up to the discretion of the chair if a member's expertise would be beneficial to the subcommittee.
<b>Committee Structure</b>	Consider a new name: Partners for Children and Families Committee- PCFC	Suggestion accepted.
<b>Committee Structure</b>	Expand purpose statement to apply not only to providers but to the broader child welfare system.	Suggestion accepted
<b>Committee Structure</b>	Clarify decision-making and voting structure for both committees and subcommittees	Will be discussed further with the selection of the core committee and subcommittee chairs.
<b>Committee Structure</b>	Provide clear parameters for each subcommittee charge so that the work of the subcommittee will be productive and substantive	Will be discussed further with the selection of the core committee and subcommittee chairs.
<b>Committee Structure</b>	Establish standing positions for the following organizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Texas Alliance of Child &amp; Family Services</li> </ul>	Suggestion accepted

<b><u>Topic</u></b>	<b><u>Feedback/Suggestions</u></b>	<b><u>DFPS response</u></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Texas Network of Youth Services</li> <li>○ Children’s Commission</li> <li>○ Texas CASA</li> </ul>	
<b>Committee Structure</b>	Eliminate term limits so that renewal of the term is not guaranteed and subject to review at regular intervals.	Term limits allow for diversity on the committee, to bring in new perspectives on a rotating basis. Also allows for a consistent knowledge transfer. Will keep term limits.
<b>Committee membership</b>	Core committee members should mirror the representation of children in care	Applications will be reviewed for compliance with membership requirements and committee diversity.
<b>Committee membership</b>	<p>Include attorneys in the membership structure.</p> <p>The “members of the judiciary” category should be expanded to include attorneys as members of the core committee and subcommittees as the bar has distinct insights into the rollout and implementation of CBC.</p>	“Members of the judiciary” is reflective of the current TAC code. “And legal system” to reflect inclusion of attorneys was added to this document. Category renaming will be noted for updates to the TAC.
<b>Committee membership</b>	Allow more flexibility for subcommittee membership.	Subcommittees are likely to include identified membership requirements, but member representation may include other members as necessary to accomplish the goals of the committee.