

# New York City Review Panels for Child Protective Services

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## Meeting Summary September 13, 2022 ○ 10:00 AM

### Attendees:

#### Eastern Panel Members

Carrie Jefferson Smith

#### NYC Panel Members

David Lansner (Chair)

Jocelyn Brown (Co-Chair)

Marion White

Carrie Jefferson Smith

Mathea Rubin

Wayne Ho

#### Welfare Research, Inc.

Darlene Ward

Liz Roberts

Felicia LaClair

#### Guests

Joyce McMillian (JMACForFamilies)

Nila Natarajan (Brooklyn Defender Services)

Jennifer Feinberg (Center for Family Representation)

Emma Ketteringham (Bronx Defenders)

Maura Keating (Center for Family Representation)

David Haase (OCFS)

### **Welcome – David Lansner (Chair)**

Mr. Lansner opened the meeting at 10:05 AM.

### **Discussion w/ Advocacy Group Guests:**

The New York City panel members and advocacy guests introduced themselves and their professional roles. David Lansner followed by providing background information on the purpose of the NY Citizen Review Panels, as well as their intent to join other advocacy groups to create joint recommendations to present to OCFS, the legislator, and other organizations, in hopes to get media coverage, and lobbying to the legislators. He noted the purpose of this meeting was to start this process.

Mr. Lansner noted one of the main focuses was “Narrowing the Front Door,” as there is a need to cut down the number of families that are unnecessarily impacted by the system. He referenced Dr. Jocelyn Brown’s mention of doctors being in difficult positions, as they would like families to gain services, however, they are unable to provide them, and many families do not want services provided by ACS. Mrs. Emma Ketteringham from Bronx Defenders, echoed Mr. Lansner’s recommendation on narrowing the front door and stated she had personally been to one of the free-standing family centers provided by ACS, but felt it was not a safe space as it was connected to ACS. It was noted that more programs and therapy aren’t the problem, but rather money for food and activities to give children a better quality of life. Joyce McMillian, founder of JMAC for Families, stated universal income would be a great way to

combat these poverty cases and help develop children. Mr. Lansner concluded with the way to reduce abuse and neglect is by providing resources and services within their communities, unrelated to ACS.

### **OCFS Updates:**

Mrs. Jocelyn Brown opened with the request for information that was recently added to child welfare training, particularly addressing racism and bias. Mr. David Haase from OCFS noted the content has been complete but has not been released and it will be implemented in upcoming virtual training. Mr. Haase reported updates on the changing of OCFS staff, as David Bach has transitioned to lead Community House as their Executive Director, and Mrs. Lisa Gharthey Ogundimu will oversee the CRP elements. He shared there has been a change in laws regarding the determination of a child's abuse and maltreatment. Previously it required some credible evidence, now updated to a fair preponderance of the evidence. Their goal with this update is to receive fewer unfounded reports coming through the SCR. He also noted that OCFS has now implemented a FAR indicator on county reports, in hopes this will entice counties to implement the FAR program if they are not already doing so. Mr. Lansner excused the guests and thanked them for their participation.

### **Associate Panel Member Discussion:**

Mr. Lansner opened with a mention of a previous discussion on Associate Panel Members for the NYC panel, stating they would be involved in the Panel discussions with no voting rights. He introduced Joyce McMillan, who is currently going through the panel nominee process. Mrs. Marion White and Mrs. Mathea Rubin welcomed her and noted this is a prime time to get involved as there is a transformation in the recommendation process. Mr. Lansner put it to a vote and Ms. McMillan was appointed as the first Associate Panel Member for NYC.

### **Subcommittee Work:**

Mr. Lansner updated the panel on the current Recommendation Drafting subcommittee work, announcing their intent to speak with other like-minded advocacy groups. The goal behind this is to find organizations with similar goals that can help curate joint recommendations and assist with the rollout of media coverage and legislative lobbying. He presented a request for monthly meetings to accomplish more than what the quarterly meetings can provide.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 11:30 AM

### **Next CRP Meetings:**

- Recommendation Drafting Subgroup Meeting: 9/28 | 9:00 AM
- Joint Panel Meeting: 10/13 | 5:00 PM