

# Eastern Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services

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## Meeting Summary September 15, 2022 • 10:30 AM

### Attendees:

#### Eastern Panel Members

Eunju Lee (Chair)  
Sharon Chesna (Co-Chair)  
Mary McCarthy  
Kathy Halas  
Carrie Jefferson Smith  
Kellyann Kostyal-Larrier  
JoAnn Merriman

#### Welfare Research, Inc.

Darlene Ward  
Liz Roberts  
Felicia LaClair  
Jeesoo Jung

### Guests

David Haase (OCFS)  
Mike McMann (DSS Commissioner | Rensselaer County)  
Jen Gerzon (DSS Deputy Commissioner | Rensselaer County)  
Kara Brown (DSS Director of Service | Rensselaer County)  
Frances Pierre (DSS Commissioner | Suffolk County)  
Sandra Davidson (DSS Chief Deputy Commissioner | Suffolk County)  
Marie Buday (DSS Assistant to Commissioner | Suffolk County)  
Ken Nat (DSS Director of Finance | Suffolk County)  
Dawn Lazuar (DSS Director of Management & Admin Services | Suffolk County)

### Handouts

**Welcome** – Liz Roberts

Meeting commenced at 10:35 AM

### OCFS Discussion

Mr. David Haase opened the OCFS discussion updating the panel on the following initiatives for Family First implementation: training of all child welfare staffs and motivational interviewing, establishment of Centers of Excellence to support districts with the implementation, continuous quality improvement, and evaluation requirements of evidence-based programs. He reported the launch of a UBI, Universal Basic Income pilot, and the implementation of the Oregon model treatment foster care program, which is a very intensive and therapeutic foster home model.

Mr. Haase provided additional updates on the changes in leadership of OCFS, as David Bach has moved to the leadership of Community House and Mrs. Lisa Ghartey Ogundimu will oversee the CRP elements. 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. 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.

### **County Presentations**

Two of the Eastern region county joined the Eastern meeting to discuss child welfare funds and reimbursements. The counties noted they make their best attempts to maximize state services and provided data on the matter. They requested further guidance on how to implement FAR and feel that the state could do a better job, particularly for counties upstate or smaller counties. The counties both stated learning about new policies or practices through ADMs is not enough and would like more of a partnership with the state for administering new policies and practices, as well as request more flexibilities.

The panel was appreciative meeting with the counties in their region and hope to continue to do so. The Panels are all eager to put what they learn from the counties into their practice and advocacy.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 1:00 PM

### **Next CRP Meetings:**

- Recommendations Drafting Subcommittee Meeting: 9/28 | 9:00 AM
- Joint Panel Meeting: 10/13/22 | 5:00 PM