



What Are Citizen Review Panels?

Federal Law

The Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Amendments of 1996 (CAPTA) and amendments in 2003 require each state to establish Citizen Review Panels ***"to evaluate the extent to which agencies are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities in accordance with [the State's CAPTA Plan], child protection standards set forth [in law], and any other criteria that the panel considers important to ensure the protection of children"*** including:

- A review of the extent to which the State child protective services system is coordinated with the foster care and adoption programs established under part E of Title IV of the Social Security Act
- A review of child fatalities and near fatalities.

The federal statute states that the panels:

- Make this evaluation by examining the policies, procedures and practices of State and local agencies
- Must prepare and make available to the public an annual report containing a summary of their activities.
- Provide for public outreach and comment in order to assess the impact of current procedures and practices upon children and families in the community (Section 106 (c)(4)(C)); and
- Make recommendations to the State and public on improving the child protection services system at the State and local levels in an annual report.
- Must meet not less than once every three months
- Be composed of volunteers who broadly represent the community including those who have expertise in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect.
- Not disclose to any person or government official any identifying information about any specific child protection case.

The federal statute instructs the state to:

- Provide access to information on cases and staff assistance
- Respond to the panels' annual report in writing within six months to the recommendations of the Panels include a summary of the activities of the Citizen Review Panels in their annual report to the federal government.
- Establish civil sanctions for a violation of confidentiality by a panel member.

History of CRPs

For the past several years, the federal government has been holding states more accountable with regard to the services they provide to abused and neglected children. With the passage of federal laws such as the Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) and the Adoption and Safe Families Act, states are being encouraged (some would say forced) to prove that they are doing a good job at protecting children.

The child protective services systems throughout the nation have also realized that they cannot protect children alone; citizens in the community must take an active interest in and responsibility for abused and neglected children.

Citizen Review Panels in Kentucky

PRESENCE

Citizen Review Panels (CRP) are groups of volunteer citizens throughout the nation who are federally mandated to provide an evaluation of their State's child protective services system. **In Kentucky, there are active CRPs in the Southern Bluegrass and Jefferson regions of the Department for Community Based Services, as well as a Statewide CRP composed of members from all nine regions.**

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Citizen Review Panels is to provide an evaluation of Kentucky's Cabinet for Health and Family Services. This is done by looking at how well the Cabinet adheres to its policies and procedures, whether or not the adoption and foster care systems are working well together, and whether or not the Cabinet is coordinating with others in the community to serve children and families. Panels may also look at any other part of the system, including staff training and turnover, child fatalities, etc.

MISSION

The mission of Kentucky's Citizen Review Panels is to involve the larger community in evaluating the practices and policy of the Department for Community Based Services. Ultimately, our goal is to improve the lives of every child and family in the Commonwealth.

Do you want to improve child protective services in Kentucky?



The Citizen Review Panels

are recruiting new members!

For more information, contact LaToya Vaughn at (859) 257-7210

Email: latoya.vaughn@uky.edu or visit <http://www.uky.edu/TRC/CitizenReviewPanel>

Questions? Please contact:

LaToya Vaughn, M.S.

Program Coordinator

Citizen Review Panels of Kentucky

1 Quality St., Suite 700

Lexington, Kentucky 40507

(859) 257-7210