



# Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

**Commissioner**  
*Jaime Masters, MS, MFT*

DFPS Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes:  
Committee on Advancing Residential Practices (CARP)  
Thursday, April 14, 2022, 11:00 am  
4900 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX 78751  
Brown-Heatly Building, Public Hearing Room

## Meeting Minutes

### CARP Committee Members Present:

Glenna Bilberry, State Director	The Bair Foundation
Sandra Daniels, Executive Director	Youth in View
Valerie Jackson, Program Administrator	Monarch Family Services
DeJuana Jernigan, Director of Child Welfare	Arms Wide Adoption Services
Karen Lund, Executive Director	CK Family Services
Scott Lundy, CEO	Arrow Child & Family Ministries of Texas
Candice Matthews, Executive Director	Children of Diversity
Katie Olse, Executive Director	Alliance of Child & Family Services
Melissa Opheim, COO	ACH Child & Family Services
Glenn Scruggs, CEO	The Giocosa Foundation
Jennifer Maddox, Director of Foster Care and Adoption	Jonathan's Place

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 am by the Committee Chair Scott Lundy, and the Committee members present introduced themselves.

Elizabeth Kromrei, CPS Director of Services, gave an update on the tracking of COVID testing for children in conservatorship, as well as COVID vaccinations in Texas. Superior Star Health is continuing to provide outreach information to medical consenters and caregivers, and assists with ensuring that youth medical needs are met. CPS is partnering with HHSC, DSHS and Superior to follow and relay CDC vaccine guidance. CPS is also in partnership with DSHS and Tarrytown Pharmacy in efforts to meet the population needs

of youth who need special care, including home-bound vaccination programs.

Jillian Bonacquisti, DFPS Director of Placement Services, gave an update on the currently posted Open Enrollment residential contracting pilot opportunity for Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP). All questions related to the open enrollment should be directed to the QRTP mailbox at [dfpsqrtp@dfps.state.gov](mailto:dfpsqrtp@dfps.state.gov). An external-facing public webpage specific to the [QRTP pilot and model](#) is being developed along with a formal presentation to assist providers. There was a question on the “no eject-no reject” clause in the procurement and if there is any additional information regarding it. Jillian responded that they are structuring around a provider’s initial criteria to ensure that placements are completed based on a provider’s specific program.

Rocky Hensarling, DFPS Director of Permanency, gave an update on Kinship placements, and stated that they are working with HHSC and other partners. The focus of the collaboration is to address the expert panel recommendations and streamline the current kinship process through policies to increase kinship placements, while also observing other state models to determine what can be adopted from their practices. The annual relative and designated caregiver program report revealed that Texas placements for youth were higher than the national average. The committee meets once a month and the work groups meet bi-weekly. Furthering permanency care assistance was the primary focus at the beginning of the committee’s work, before the expert panel report was released, but it is still part of the conversation.

Cristina Guerrero, DFPS Residential Contracts Heightened Monitoring Director, gave an update on numbers of operations that are on Heightened Monitoring (HM) in the active phase, operations that have an extension on their plans operations in the post-plan phase, and operations that have not

met their 12-month requirements. Laura Castillo, DFPS Residential Contracts HM Division Manager, reported that updates have been made in CLASS, which incorporated useful tools for HM. The next run of the data to determine the new year's additions to HM would likely be in May, and the results released in June. It is Cristina's understanding that the heightened monitoring algorithm is run with any deficiency that is not in an overturn status and does include deficiencies pending in admin review. All operations that are on HM are initially provided a 5-year history of their data, operations that are not yet on HM can request that information by emailing [dfpsheightenedmonitoring@dfps.texas.gov](mailto:dfpsheightenedmonitoring@dfps.texas.gov) or [heightened\\_monitoring@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:heightened_monitoring@hhs.texas.gov).

Bill Walsh, DFPS Director of Purchased Client Services, did an update on House Bill 5 (HB5) and stated that the residential daily rate increase was provided in November, 2021, which was amended on existing contracts. There is another \$20 million in capacity-building grant funding, for which contracts is in the middle of developing, and there are hopes to have the procurement posted by next month to get provider responses. Questions can be directed to HHSC PCS at [PCS CST HHSC@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:PCS_CST_HHSC@hhsc.state.tx.us). The committee expressed that it would be a worthwhile discussion to discuss the timeline of distributing the funds out and determining how the funds can be distributed faster.

Adam King, DFPS Director of Data and Systems Improvement, gave an update on current DFPS data, including an overall census decline for children in conservatorship and paid foster care, explained the potential causes for the decline, and addressed capacity needs. Adam projected that there will still be a sufficient need for treatment capacity. Of the children in conservatorship, for the Anglo and African American populations, 30% are in kinship settings and 70% are in non-kinship settings, and for the Hispanic population, 35% are in Kinship settings and 65% in non-kinship settings. In regards to questions about the forthcoming Residential Provider Report

Cards, Adam indicated that it will include positive outcomes if there are any to report, and that it only looks at data history, so in regards to the HM threshold for the data points, there is no way to project whether an operation will enter HM in the future as the threshold floats. The committee expressed the importance of understanding heightened monitoring methodologies and citations and suggested looking at the methodology to ensure that it is performing correctly.

The committee addressed the current state of regulation and discussed how regulations have morphed over time. The committee asked if there is there a way to streamline things to reach the appropriate conclusion to investigations in a less-invasive way so that youth are not interviewed multiple times. Bill Walsh stated that there is a provider workgroup that addresses investigation issues and that it could be an option to expand their purview to include this. In regards to a question about allegations that Region 6 is engaging in retaliatory placement practices, Commissioner Masters stated that she will meet with the specific committee member to discuss the matter. In regards to a question about how the "playing field" is being leveled correctly because there are allegations that some providers are not being regulated evenly across the state, Commissioner Masters stated that if she was aware of that happening, she would absolutely address it and stated that this specific committee member can provide examples during their follow-up meeting. Commissioner Masters stated that she has asked the team to investigate disparities other than race within the Department.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 pm.