

CCFS Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Location:	VIA: Microsoft Teams - Clark County Family Services Join on your computer, mobile app, or room device. Click here to join the meeting Meeting ID: 287 986 802 178 5 Passcode: bD6Cv2Ha Download Teams Join on the web Or call in (audio only) +1 725-696-5982,,856400064# United States, Las Vegas Phone Conference ID: 856 400 064#
Date:	July 17, 2025 8:30 am – 10:00 am

Membership		Present	Absent
CAC Members:	Alison (Ali) Caliendo	X	
	Christopher Merritt	X	
	David (Dave) Johnson	X	
	Dashun Jackson	X	
	Donna Smith	X	
	Kimberly Abbott	X	
	Judge Margaret Pickard	X	
	Shelia Parks	X	
County/Department Management:	Frank Prado, CCFS Director	X	
	Wonswayla Mackey, CCFS Deputy Director	X	
	Lisa Martinez, CCFS Deputy Director	X	
	Stacie Dastrup, CCFS Deputy Director	X	
Public:	Nicole Malich, Deputy DA	X	
	Kendra Pfalzgraf, DA Intern	X	

Agenda Item I:	Call to order and roll call	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting was called to order at 8:33 am by Chair, Dave Johnson and roll call was performed. 	
Agenda Item II:	Comments by General Public	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	
Agenda Item III:	Approval of April 17, 205 and May 15, 2025, Minutes	(For Possible Action)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAC April 17 and May 15, 2025, Minutes: Approved 	
Agenda Item IV:	Receive a presentation from Foster Parent Champions and determine any necessary recommendations that should be made	(For Possible Action)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agenda Item IV moved to the next meeting. A representative of Foster Parent Champions was unavailable. 	

Agenda Item V:	Clark County Family Services Director's Report	(Information Only)
	<p>1. Notable department goals, changes, and programs</p> <p>Frank shared CCFS developing goals in alignment with County priorities. Focus areas include improving workplace environment, processes, and updating outdated protocols and procedures (last revised in 2015). A full review of support units is underway, including those managing Social Security cards and medical records. Collaboration with the DA's Office ensures compliance with new statutes and revisions to policy and procedure manuals</p> <p>2. CFS staffing vacancies impact, and acquisition and retention strategy</p> <p>Overall attrition rate: 13.1% (notably lower than national averages of 30–50%).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigations: 15% • Permanency: 5% • Child Haven: lower rates overall <p>Position turnover rate: 43.5% — due mainly to internal movement rather than separations.</p> <p>Separations Breakdown (104 total):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 34 voluntary (during probation) • 31 voluntary (post-probation) • 24 involuntary • 10 retirements <p>Many employees change positions but remain within the department or County, often due to promotions or preference for less demanding roles.</p> <p>Workforce Stabilization Efforts</p> <p>New three-year minimum position tenure policy before lateral moves. Aims to build stability and expertise. Employees may still promote or transfer to other County departments. Management retains the ability to reassign staff as needed.</p> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donna Smith expressed concern that the policy may discourage retention. • Frank Prado responded that while valid, the change supports field training and mentorship consistency. • Lisa Martinez clarified that the policy does not restrict promotions or county-wide transfers. <p>Staffing and Recruitment</p> <p>Increased hiring of MSW student interns (target: 11 next year, up from 6–9). Transitioning from general to position-specific hiring (e.g., investigations or permanency). Currently around 28 vacancies, nearly all expected to be filled in the next Academy cycle. Department spending nearly 100% of allocated salary budget, indicating full staffing.</p>	

3. Three years longitudinal trends visual presentation

System Updates

- State replacing Unity system; RFP recently posted, expected resolution within 60 days.
- Concerns raised that \$40M in allocated funding may be insufficient for a robust replacement.
- Current limitations include inaccurate user access logs and inconsistent data integration with Cognos.
- Unity updates often disrupt Cognos data pulls, affecting reporting accuracy.

Child Haven Status

- Current population: approximately 87 children on campus (peaked at 123 in May).
- Population fluctuates seasonally, aligning with school year changes.
- Plans underway to open two additional cottages to relieve crowding for children aged 0–6.
- Repurposing storage and office spaces to create additional living space.

Caseload Compliance

- Only 11 case managers currently exceed 30 cases: goal of full compliance by mid-2026.
- Approach through attrition and internal rebalancing rather than new hires.
- Legislative changes are viewed as budget-neutral with no adverse county financial impact.
- Highest individual caseload reported: low 40s.

In-Home Services

- SIPS Team established to review long-standing cases and expedite safe reunifications.
- Priority on children currently housed at Child Haven and those in long-term placements.

Sibling Placement Issues

- Judicial concerns over sibling separation prolonging stays at Child Haven.
- Approximately 36 sibling groups remain due to placement shortages.
- Plan to collect data on cases delayed specifically by court-ordered sibling placement.
- Discussion focused on balancing sibling unity with immediate placement for younger children.

Placement Challenges

- High-needs older siblings complicate group placements.
- Statewide shortage of specialized foster care and rising provider insurance costs noted.
- 46 licensed foster homes have not accepted placements—review and outreach underway.
- County evaluating foster home recruitment and utilization processes.

	<p>Foster Parent & Daycare Barriers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daycare access issues cited as a leading cause of foster placement disruption. • Proposal to reimagine Child Haven or create county-partnered daycares as last-resort childcare. • County exploring partnerships with local daycares, though funding challenges persist. • State Early Childhood Mental Health Program highlighted as a model resource requiring greater utilization. <p>Campus & Facility Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FirstMed replacing Positively Kids as onsite medical provider; move-in expected within 30 days. • Recreation areas being relocated to improve safety and program space. • New provider, Cleverised Therapeutic Daycare, opening August to support children with behavioral needs. <p>Future Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lisa Martinez to report sibling placement statistics to the committee. • Frank Prado, Lisa Martinez, and Kim Abbott to present at next judges' meeting regarding placement challenges. • Continued collaboration with County and providers on foster home utilization and childcare supports. 	
Agenda Item VI:	Clark County Family Services Report Out	(Information Only)
	<p>Wonswayla:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To date, we brought in about 6,200 investigations. Of those, about 500 or so have been court involved, which means that there have been some formal removals. We are working with investigators to ensure compliance with the safety model. Last year, we took about 52,000 calls, up from 48,000 the previous year. We bring in about 1,000 investigations a month, slightly fewer in summer months. • We are emphasizing the use of the safety model to determine when in-home safety plans can be implemented and when conditions for return are met. Caseworkers are being reminded that full case plan compliance isn't required before considering in-home plans—meeting the safety conditions is the focus. We are partnering with prevention and community programs such as truancy and family support services to stabilize families and avoid removals. • Our SIPs team is reviewing cases to ensure families are placed on in-home plans whenever safely possible. When removals are necessary, we are ensuring caseworkers articulate safety concerns clearly and base decisions on the model. We are also improving diligent search processes to find relatives faster, now including collaboration with the Health District for access to birth records to help identify family members. The goal is to safely reduce entries into care and speed family reunification. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelia: • Many volunteers are concerned about teenagers cycling in and out of Child Haven—sometimes living in abandoned homes between stays. Are we reviewing these cases to determine if they could safely return home, especially when parents are capable of caring for other children? We can't expect perfect conditions before reunification. • Wonswayla: • We do review those cases. However, when families are out of state, we must follow the Interstate Compact. Another challenge is that relatives sometimes decline placement for teens with behavioral issues. We are focusing on improving assessments and ensuring services are in place for diagnosed needs before placement. We're partnering with clinical services to better support both children and kin caregivers. • Kim: • Thank you for focusing on safety model fidelity and avoiding removals. Could we review data on how many children return home within the first 30 days after removal? That's a key measure of how well we're preventing unnecessary removals. Also, while expediting returns is good, we need clear plans for how and when safety services can be reduced—otherwise families can stall in long-term safety plans. • Wonswayla: • Absolutely. Caseworkers must assess and articulate the parent's stage of change—whether they are in pre-contemplation, action, or maintenance. This determines readiness for reunification and ensures consistency. • Kim: • Agreed. I also encourage expanding the concept of "diligent search." Family can be engaged beyond placement—they can help with therapy visits, outings, or respite. That keeps children connected and reduces pressure on foster families. • Wonswayla: • Yes, we're working on that. Sometimes background checks can delay or prevent informal support, but we're re-evaluating that process to allow safe, flexible involvement. Families can be an essential support even when they're not full-time placements. • Judge Pickard: • I agree. Families should be more involved in respite and support roles. It would ease pressure on workers and benefit children.
--	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David: • Good point. Communication with foster parents about these supports could also help coordination. • Kim: • Lastly, regarding transportation—if HopSkipDrive is ending, that’s a big concern. Relatives may decline placements if they can’t transport high-needs kids to services. • Lisa: • We’re still using HopSkipDrive, but it’s limited to school transport due to budget constraints. During COVID, we used federal funds to expand its use, but that funding has ended. We’re managing exceptions case-by-case and reviewing new vendor proposals. • Kim: • Understood, but if transportation barriers persist, some kids may lose services or placements. We need an interim plan. • Lisa: • Agreed. We’re approving exceptions where justified but must monitor costs. Please contact me or Jeremy directly for case-specific issues. • Alison: • On diligent search—research shows relatives often move from “no” to “yes” if given support and information. We should hold meetings to educate relatives early about what placement involves. • Wonswayla: • I agree completely. Family meetings to explain expectations can turn initial hesitations into placement opportunities. 	
Agenda Item VII:	Information Items/Announcements	(Information Only)
Agenda Item VIII:	Identify Emerging Issues to be addressed at future meetings and receive updates on activities of the CAC members related to their duties as committee members	(Information only)
Agenda Item IX:	Discussion on date for the next meeting	(Information only)
	<p>Discussion regarding ordinance requirements for quarterly meetings. Frank noted monthly meetings are unsustainable. Kim and Donna preferred bi-monthly schedules.</p> <p>Members requested earlier distribution of meeting materials.</p> <p>Decision: Next meeting scheduled for September 18, 2025.</p>	

Agenda Item X:	Discuss follow-up items from previous meetings and determine what recommendations should be made to PFAC	(For Possible Action)
Agenda Item XI:	Review and determine necessary next steps to address the committee's concerns and approach regarding previously approved priorities	(For Possible Action)
Agenda Item XII:	Comments by General Public	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	
Agenda Item XIII:	Adjournment	
	Meeting adjourned at 10:00 am. Next meeting is September 18, 2025	