

**MINUTES OF THE
CHILD WELFARE LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT PANEL**
Monday, September 12, 2005 – 10:00 a.m. – Room W020 House Building

Members Present:

Sen. Dan R. Eastman, Senate Chair
Rep. Steven R. Mascaro, House Chair
Sen. Gene Davis
Rep. David Litvak
Rep. Paul Ray

Staff Present:

Mr. Mark D. Andrews, Policy Analyst
Mr. Thomas R. Vaughn, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Wendy L. Bangerter, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, copies of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.leg.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Chair Mascaro called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

MOTION: Sen. Davis moved to approve the minutes of the August 22, 2005 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Annual Compliance and Outcomes Report by the Office of Services Review

Mr. Craig Monson, Director, Office of Services Review, Department of Human Services, presented the department's annual report as required by statute. Mr. Monson indicated that case process review questions were answered affirmatively 80 percent of the time and that the Southwest region passed the qualitative case review for the second consecutive year.

Mr. Richard Anderson, Director, Division of Child and Family Services, responded to the report. He indicated that:

- The division is now reviewing all of its cases.
- Noncompliance identified by the case process review is attributable to lack of documentation 50 percent of the time.
- Employee salaries are falling behind rapidly.
- Employees are now looking at child welfare as a career rather than a stopover to something else.
- DCFS employees lack a career track.
- Employee turnover is down from 30 to 13 percent.
- The division is offering incentive pay to those who speak a second language and are willing to work on-call.
- The division is considering hiring people as technicians and using Title IV-E monies to pay for their schooling to become child welfare workers.

3. Office of Child Welfare Parental Defense

Ms. D'Arcy Dixon Pignanelli, Director, Department of Administrative Services, reported on the department's operations, activities, and goals. She explained that the department will be contracting with a private entity to provide certain parental defense services.

Mr. Tom Vaughn, Associate General Counsel, reviewed draft legislation, "Office of Child Welfare Parental Defense Amendments."

Ms. Pignanelli and Rep. Harper responded to questions from the Panel.

MOTION: Rep. Ray moved to recommend draft Legislation, "Office of Child Welfare Parental Defense Amendments." The motion passed unanimously with Sen. Eastman absent for the vote.

4. Utah Child Abuse Prevention Board

Representative Paul Ray explained legislation being developed that would transfer oversight of the Children's Trust Account from the Child Abuse Advisory Council and the Board of Child and Family Services to a new Utah Child Abuse Prevention Board. He stated that the fiscal note will be about \$300,000. He requested time on the next agenda to present the legislation for the Panel's consideration.

Dr. David Corwin, Co-Chair, Child Abuse Prevention/Intervention Committee, explained the committee's goal to develop a board that can work with state agencies, educate more broadly, and make child abuse prevention more available.

Ms. Liz Kuhlman, DCFS, explained that the intent of the legislation is to bring the Children's Trust Account to a more visible level so that more funds may be raised from other entities.

5. Other Items

Chair Mascaro noted a letter mailed to the Executive Appropriations Committee from the chairs highlighting the need to adequately fund the Office of the Guardian ad Litem.

Sen. Davis requested that all sponsors of child welfare legislation for the general session be invited to present their proposals to the Panel.

The next meeting was scheduled for October 20, 2005 at 3:00 p.m.

6. Adjourn

MOTION: Sen. Davis moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Mascaro adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.