



Kentucky Office of the Attorney General  
**Regular Meeting**  
**In-Person and Video Teleconference**  
April 9, 2024  
12:00 p.m. EST  
Minutes

**Primary Location:**

Kentucky State Police Records and Technology Center  
1266 Louisville Road  
Frankfort, KY 40601

**I. Roll Call and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair, Caroline Ruschell, at 12:03 p.m.

**Roll Call**

Commission Members Present:

Caroline Ruschell, Commission Chair, Children's Advocacy Centers of Kentucky  
Chelsea Harrod, Child Protection Branch, Department for Community Based Services  
(designee for the Commissioner)  
Lieutenant Kenneth Sandusky, Department of Kentucky State Police (proxy for Captain  
Jeremy W. Smith, designee for the Commissioner)  
Christina Weeter, Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Student Success (designee  
for the Commissioner)  
Ramsey Dallam, Office of the Attorney General, Special Prosecutions  
Dolores Smith, Administrative Office of the Courts, Family and Juvenile Services  
Susan Rhema, Social Worker in private practice  
Heather Wagers, Office of the Attorney General, Trafficking and Abuse Prevention and  
Prosecution

Commission Members Present Virtually:

Brittany Barber, Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual  
Disabilities (designee for the Commissioner)  
Shericka Smith, Fayette County Public Schools, Department of Student Support Services

Guests Present:

Commissioner Phillip Burnett, Jr., Department of Kentucky State Police

Laura Kretzer, Children’s Advocacy Centers of Kentucky

Jackie Kuryla, Children’s Advocacy Centers of Kentucky

Serah Wiedenhofer, Office of the Attorney General, Trafficking and Abuse Prevention and Prosecution

**II. Approval of the February 13, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Harrod made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Ms. Rhema seconded this motion. The motion to approve the February 13, 2024, minutes was unanimous.

**III. Review and Approval of Local MDT Protocols**

The Commission considered the local multidisciplinary team protocols for the following counties:

- Lee & Owsley
- Leslie
- Knott
- Breathitt & Wolfe
- Jessamine
- Clark
- Franklin
- Harrison
- Nicholas
- Boyle
- Scott
- Woodford

Each protocol contains the required language from the model protocol template without modifications or additions and provides the appropriate signatures, agency affiliations, and roles served for all team members on the multidisciplinary team. Ms. Ruschell made a motion to approve the protocols as presented. Ms. Harrod seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Commission also considered the multidisciplinary team protocol for Letcher County. The protocol contains the required language from the model protocol template without modifications or additions, but it is missing the signature of the commonwealth attorney. This is a required signature under the model protocol signature standards; however, the commonwealth attorney position is currently vacant and the signature cannot be obtained. The Letcher County protocol is instead signed by the assistant commonwealth attorney who is serving as the commonwealth attorney during the vacancy. Ms. Ruschell made a motion to approve the Letcher County protocol as presented. Ms. Dallam seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Ruschell provided an update on the status of the Hardin County multidisciplinary team protocol, which was submitted in the fall and requested many changes. She had an opportunity to work with some of the Hardin County team members regarding the requested changes and believes some good progress was made. Ms. Ruschell is hopeful that a revised protocol will be submitted in the upcoming months.

**IV. Information Obtained from the MDT Data Collection Tool**

Laura Kretzer, Chief Strategy Officer for CAC of Kentucky, provided the Commission with a review of data submitted by the local multidisciplinary teams for calendar year 2023. The Commission expressed its interest in both expanding the data currently collected through the MDT Data Collection Tool and improving the quality of the data provided. A working group was established to propose changes to the data collection tool. Ms. Rhema, Ms. Wagers, Ms. Dolores Smith, and Ms. Dallam volunteered to serve on the working group. The first meeting of the working group will be scheduled in the upcoming weeks.

#### **V. Discussion of Proposed Response to Recommendations Appearing in the 2023 Annual Report of the Child Fatality and Near Fatality External Review Panel**

The Commission reviewed the 2023 Annual Report recommendations and discussed the current capacity of the local multidisciplinary teams and those agencies serving core roles on the teams to include fatal and near fatal child physical abuse cases in local multidisciplinary team case reviews. The Commission felt additional information was necessary relative to the Panel's recommendations. Ms. Ruschell proposed the following steps in response to the Panel's recommendations:

- The KMCCSA will survey and analyze data to evaluate the extent to which fatal and near fatal child physical abuse cases are currently reviewed by local MDTs.
- The KMCCSA will survey and analyze feedback from local teams to determine the feasibility of adding additional case review to current caseloads.
- During the 2025 update to the model protocol, the KMCCSA will consider adding the fatal and near fatal child physical abuse cases to those required by local teams.
- The KMCCSA will discuss a proposal to amend KRS 431.600 to require MDTs to review all fatal and near fatal child physical abuse investigations.

Ms. Wagers made a motion to approve these steps as a response to the Panel's recommendation. Ms. Dallam seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

A written response incorporating the approved steps will be prepared. The response will be signed by Ms. Ruschell as chair of the Commission and sent to the Child Fatality and Near Fatality External Review Panel. A copy of the written response will be circulated to the Commission members.

#### **VI. Partner Updates**

CAC of Kentucky is working on a training for youth with problem sexual behavior. The speaker has been identified but the date has not been decided. The training will be open to all multidisciplinary team members.

Ms. Harrod told the Commission of recent legislation impacting the criteria for Cabinet investigations, the use of safety assessments, and the filing of petitions. The changes contained in House Bill 271 are effective in July and will result in a lot of changes throughout the state.

Ms. Barber told the Commission of a two-day, trauma-informed Train the Trainer program being offered by the Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. The training will be held on June 26 and 27, 2024.

## **VII. Adjournment**

Ms. Wagers made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Dolores Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 1:26 p.m.

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