

## Washington County Citizen Review Panel

The Washington County Citizen Review Panel had a very active year. Panel members participated in four major projects and conducted 11 reconsiderations for the county.

Members also participated in a variety of training opportunities and webinars, which included workshops at William Mitchell Hamline School of Law, the county prosecutor's presentation on sex trafficking, new member orientation, the state meeting for all CRPs, county trainings, etc.

Presentations on topics were made at monthly meetings, including, addiction and how it affects families in child protection, Safe Harbor, permanency timelines, etc.

The four projects taken on by panel members were:

1. Foster care task force – several panel members served on the task force for foster care recruitment. A logo and branding statement were created.



Washington County logo and branding statement pictured above.

2. Permanency guidelines file review – Washington County staff will update the panel on the file review results they assisted with in early 2018.
3. Mentorship resource list/framework – a Big Brothers Big Sisters contact was developed and he will serve as a bridge to the county. There may be both individual and couple mentoring opportunities available, and panel members may assist with raising community awareness.
4. Safe Harbor work group regarding sex trafficked youth. The county [agency] doesn't have enough numbers to focus solely on sex-trafficked youth and will include them in a crossover youth model. Members took this off the project list, but Sarah Amundson will continue to look for ways for panel members to be involved.

**MN DHS staff extend sincere thanks to the Washington County Citizen Review Panel members** and staff for the many contributions to families and children this year. Panel members donated many hours of their time in thoughtful deliberation of the 11 reconsiderations they conducted this year. Through this work, they contributed the informed citizen perspective while learning about the child protection system. Members come away from

this experience with an in-depth understanding of the work involved in child protection, its complexity and difficulty.

Panel members also took a substantial amount of time to educate themselves on many topics involved in child protection and brought this information back to the panel meetings to present and discuss. As a follow-up they often arranged for speakers to present more in-depth information to the entire panel. This was done in addition to attending panel and subcommittee meetings and working on their projects. Through this work they developed as a group of informed citizens able to improve communication about child protection to the community at large.