

Children's Services Review Panel (CAC) Minutes

May 27, 2025; 4:30 – 6:30 PM

<https://zoom.us/j/98236935012?pwd=1aQdPvVwuw8V310V5V3vYcJs7BcCem.1>

Members Present: Molly Evans, Ankit Sood, Casey Acord & Tonya Long

Ramsey County Staff: Alex Cleveland, David Herrera

MN Dept. of Children, Youth, and Families: Laura Gapske (DCYF)

Guests: Jill Gunderson-Gernes, Kristine Frick, Abby Latham, Jill Esch, Beth Blick (on phone)

Reminder of Agreements:

If you would like a copy of agreements, please reach out to Laura Gapske.

New Actions:

- Approval of April Meeting Minutes

County Update; Alex Cleveland

Our division is still in the transition as our new director, Bobbi Jo, adapts to her new role.

We continue to look into hiring and onboard new staff. We will continuously be hiring staff, but we hope that by August, September we will have a solid foundation to continue the work we are doing and hoping to do.

Our systems (SSIS) are very outdated and there is no changes coming to it in the foreseeable future. However, Ramsey County is in the process of finalizing a contract to a company that will allow us to automate or facilitate time consuming tasks like note taking, which will free up time for staff to do more meaningful work with families and alleviate staff's life-work balance concerns.

MAAFPA is moving along well. We continue to up the percentage of cases we treat as MAAFPA. Reminder, it is not that these cases were not MAAFPA before and then they are. Rather, they fall under the MAAFPA law and consideration, but we are only taken a certain percentage of them and continue to uptick the percentage of eligible cases.

DCYF Update

Labor trafficking will be a required response when it involves a care giver. There are multiple trainings happening around the state to give multidisciplinary responding units the proper tools and skills to responding appropriately.

There is a great documentary that Gapske will share with us.

We are currently going through the process of moving Beth and Kat through the application approval process.

There is a current survey through DCYF that is focusing on wellness for foster youth across the state. This survey is not currently finalized. Gapske is still seeking approval to seeing what this survey process is looking like and what options we have on possible partnership, if this group would like to be a part of it.

This survey seems fairly similar to the initiative we have been discussing and planning on, with a few differences:

- Ages 12-21, due to the age of foster youth
- This will be across the state, through specific agencies piloting it: One rural, one urban, one tribal. Ramsey county would be the urban area.

Additional updates from Gapske, directly:

- Legislative session has concluded but we expect a special session to be called.*
- Labor Trafficking implementation roll out is [happening](#) to prepare for the start date of July 1.*
- There is a foster youth survey focused on well-being coming from the department. I am requesting approval to share their draft questions with the panel to see if they would like to collaborate on this already existing process and partnership with Wilder Foundation. They would provide all the technical support. Once the approval to share questions has been given, the panel can compare to see if they would be interested in partnership with Ramsey's County's input/thoughts on being involved.*

Foster Care Survey Update

If we move ahead with this survey, Ramsey County would like to:

- Be apart of the timeline creation
- Seek partnership with community organizations and partners
- Ensure the questions we are asking are grounded in trauma-informed practices to avoid creation and replication of harms and trauma

Ankit and Tonya met with SPPS and something they recommended to keep a Trauma-informed lens is to give the youth an opportunity to address any triggers they may have.

If you haven't, please access the Google Drive that includes the questions within the drive and leave comments and feedback.

Clarification on the survey from DCYF: Gapske will keep us update on the process of this survey and what a possible partnership could look like. Gapske will continue to keep us updated on what the conversations around the DCYF survey is looking like and the possibility for a partnership.

A partnership would also give us some more space to target other needs through partnership projects between this group and Ramsey County Social Services.

Future Projects

Ramsey County TST

How navigable are these systems for families? We could look at the support Ramsey County provides families and service users throughout the process of Child Welfare. This is a very complex system that often doesn't pause to explain what is happening to the family, creating confusion, taking away agency, and creating harms and traumas along the way.

Definition of abuse and education of what it looks like within the scope of the law.

June Meeting

Survey was sent out, if you haven't already, please fill out the survey for dietary needs and preferences.

As a reminder, the **meeting will be in person**. Gapske and David will send out the details with address and timeline soon.

Announcements/ Updates

- Reminder that June meeting is IN PERSON. We will send out an invite with the address.
- We will not have a July meeting. Cancellation to come.