

# **State Child Fatality Review Team Committee Proposed Changes**

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# Background

[Texas Family Code, Subchapter F](#), establishes the State Child Fatality Review Team Committee (SCFRT) and defines its purpose:

- Develop an understanding of child death causes and incidences;
- Identify procedures to reduce preventable child deaths;
- Promote public awareness and make recommendations to reduce preventable child deaths; and
- Publish a report with child fatality data and recommendations.

# Additional Requirements

- Publish a report...to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) on child protective services operations based on input from the child safety review subcommittee.
- Perform functions and duties required of a citizen review panel.
- Provide recommendations regarding child protective services system operations to DFPS.

# DFPS Child Safety Review Committee

- Currently, to fulfill statutory requirements, a subcommittee of SCFRT members sit on the DFPS Child Safety Review Committee and use their participation to inform SCFRT recommendations.
- DFPS Child Safety Review Committee considers issues recommended by Citizen Review Teams with statewide implications for policy, training, resource development, etc.
- Citizen Review Panels (Citizen Review Teams) review and evaluate casework and decision-making about services for children and families who experience child abuse or neglect.

# Needed Process Changes

- DFPS notified Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) of their decision to discontinue their Child Safety Review Committee.
- SCFRT needs to implement an alternative strategy to fulfill statute.

# SCFRT Subcommittee Proposal

- Form a subcommittee to review DFPS Citizen Review Team reports (published annually on the DFPS website).
- Have SCFRT subcommittee members report their findings to the SCFRT to inform SCFRT biennial report recommendations.
- Request DFPS present biannually at an open SCFRT meeting on their Citizen Review Team reports to inform the SCFRT biennial report recommendations.
- Coordinate with DFPS to give SCFRT members the opportunity to sit on DFPS Citizen Review Teams.

# Child Safety Review Subcommittee

- The SCFRT Child Safety Review Subcommittee (CSRS) can only consist of 12 members maximum.
- Meetings will occur after DFPS produces its Citizen Review Team reports, either virtually or in-person based on CSRS preference.
- DSHS will assist and support CSRS meetings and activities.
- The SCFRT Chair may appoint CSRS members or SCFRT members may volunteer to participate.
- The SCFRT Chair may preside over CSRS meetings or the CSRS may select a presiding officer.

# CSRS Member Expectations

- DSHS will ask subcommittee members to participate in two annual meetings maximum between legislatively mandated report submissions.
- Meetings will last 1-2 hours.
- DFPS may invite agency subject matter experts to attend the CSRS review to provide additional information on DFPS report(s).
- CSRS members will review all DFPS report findings and recommendations to determine appropriate suggestions to SCFRT.



# Thank you!

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