

7-26-13

Overview of Region 4 Regional Advisory Council (RAC)

We would like to personally reach out and invite you to learn more about and participate in the work of the DCF Hartford-Manchester Regional Advisory Council. As you may already know, the RAC is a group of community representatives, parents and foster parents, service providers and DCF staff that meets monthly to discuss the needs of the community and how DCF can have an impact in fostering positive outcomes for families and children. Over the past few years, the RAC has embraced challenging discussions and recommendations regarding meeting children's educational, behavioral and mental health needs and building strong support systems for their caregivers. As part of DCF's ongoing effort to partner with families and community providers, we want the RAC to be a robust and diverse group that will advise the Department and positively influence the direction of Agency practices and reforms. Our goal is for the RAC to be an open table and an effective forum for people who are seeking to share their experience and expertise with DCF.

The RAC is not meant to replace other working groups that you may be interested or are participating in, but the RAC will become the central forum for discussing the role of DCF in the community and the impact of its policies and practices for families. The RAC will also be helping to ensure that practice reform efforts currently underway continue to move forward successfully, and that other necessary reforms are identified and pursued. To that end, in May 2013 the Region 4 Strengthening Families Practice Model Implementation Team merged with the RAC in order to move the oversight of implementing the Practice Model to the RAC. The RAC's agenda incorporates all aspects of DCF's work, from early childhood interventions to juvenile justice, from prevention to permanency. But we can not have this central table without you. Therefore, we want anyone who is interested to come to the RAC meetings, and learn about its work, and opportunities for committee participation and membership. Meetings are the third Tuesday of the month from 12-2pm.

Co-Chairs
Sarah Eagan, JD
Director, Child Abuse Project
Center for Children's Advocacy

Ivy Farinella
Foster Parent

Statutory language governing the RAC, amended as of 2012 from Conn. Gen. Statute 17a-30

Sec. 17a-30. (Formerly Sec. 17-434). Regional advisory councils. Appointments and terms. (a) The commissioner shall create distinct service regions and shall create in each such region, a regional advisory council to advise the commissioner and the regional director on the development and delivery of services of the department in that region and to facilitate the coordination of services for children, youths and their families in the region.

(b) Each regional advisory council shall consist of no more than twenty-one persons, a majority of whom shall be persons who earn less than fifty per cent of their salaries from the provision of services to children, youths and their families, and the balance representative of private providers of human services throughout the region. The commissioner, or the commissioner's designee, shall appoint one-third of the representatives of each group for a term of three years, one-third for a term of two years, and one-third for a term of one year. No person may serve more than two consecutive three-year terms. All subsequent appointments to replace those whose terms have expired shall be for a term of three years. No person may serve on more than one regional advisory council at a time. The regional director shall make a good faith effort to ensure that, to the extent possible, the membership is qualified and closely reflects the gender and racial diversity of the region. All members shall serve without compensation. Each regional advisory council shall elect two co chairpersons. Each regional advisory council shall meet at least quarterly, or more often at the call of the co chairpersons or a majority of the council members. The regional director, or a designee of the regional director, shall be an ex-officio member of the council without the right to vote. Any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings or fifty per cent of all meetings during any calendar year shall be deemed to have resigned. A majority of the members in office, but not less than six members, shall constitute a quorum.