

# Children's Justice Task Force Quarterly Meeting Minutes

**FY26 Q1 Meeting Minutes**

**August 18, 2025**

**Co-Chairs Virginia Zic-Schlomas & Matthew Klahn, Presiding**

**Location:** McHenry County Children's Advocacy Center  
1 South Virginia Street  
Crystal Lake, Illinois 60014

**Host Task Force Member: Misty Marinier**

<https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/j.php?MTID=m300a91e42335013fe2681f5ae519e149>

## I. Call to Order

Co-Chairs Ginny Zic-Schlomas & Matt Klahn called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

## II. Attendance

Name	Attendance			Motion #1 - Approval of Minutes	
	In Person	Virtual	Absent		
Bunn, Courtney	x			Yes	
Burns, Mike		X		Yes	
Christopherson, Mari	x			Yes	
Clayborne, Amber		X		Yes	
Cowart, Lark	X			Yes	
Fahrenkamp, David		X		Yes	
Glick, Jill	X			Yes	
Hofmann, Molly	X			Yes	
Karim, Elba	X			Yes	
Klahn, Matthew		x		Yes	
Mahoney, Christina	x				
Mangiaracino, Kim		x		Yes	
Marinier, Misty	X			Yes	
Matsen, Lisa	x			Yes	
McNamara, Kathy		X		Yes	
Petrak, Channing		x		Yes	
Singleton, Prestina			x	Yes	

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Name	Attendance			Motion #1 - Approval of Minutes	
Stein, Mary	x			Yes	
Theus, Frederika		X		Yes	
Trotter, Dion		x			
Zic-Schlomas, Virginia	x			Yes	
Andrea Hall	x				
<b>DCFS</b>					
Blancke, Heather		X			
Hamilton, Kara		X		-	
Stutz, Tierney			x		
Talbert, Charles		x		-	
<b>GUESTS</b>					
none					

During introductions, Dr. Jill Glick, shared a recent paper describing the collaborative MDT approach to child maltreatment used by MPEEC received a shoutout by the editor for the collaborative effort between medical teams and the MDT. The article can be found [here](#) for anyone interested in reading more about this work.

### III. Public Comment

- No public comments were presented.

### IV. Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve previous meeting minutes made by Elba Karim, seconded by Mary Joly-Stein.
- Motion carried unanimously.

### V. Task Force Membership Updates

- Andrea Hall and Christina Mahoney were new in attendance.
- All Task Force positions are now filled.

### VI. DCFS Update

- Charles Talbert provided a brief verbal budget summary to the group. It was requested that this information be followed up in a written format.
  - The CJTF application is due to the feds each June. There are components of this year's application that have not yet been approved, which he reported to be standard.
  - DCFS FY26 funding amount is anticipated to be \$573,146.00
  - Of these funds:

- \$490k has been approved for 3 university training programs
- \$56k has been approved for additional training
- \$10k for conference requests
- An additional \$50-60k of training funds are unallocated and open for additional proposals.
- Charles clarified that travel has its own line item in the budget and it includes travel for all meetings.
- Matt emphasized that if CJTF members are aware of training opportunities that the task force should consider supporting to please bring them forward. The group discussed the idea of issuing a notice of funding opportunity publicly. Misty Mariner was going to draft a proposed template to be used by interested applicants that helps to tie the funding requests to the recommendations and work of the CJTF.
- Charles clarified that funding provided in amounts less than \$20k can follow an informal process.
- The CJTF members discussed the need for more transparency in financial reporting related to budgeted funds for the task force to ensure that all funding is allocated and spent. Charles referred to the budget that is included in the federal application.

## **VII. Citizen Review Panel (CRP) Updates**

- CDRT symposium is in October in Springfield on 10/9 & 10/10 (half day each). All CJTF members are invited. There are several CJTF members who are on CDRT and who will already be there. It is all paid for by CDRT. Agenda is not published yet.
- Mary Joly-Stein provided an update on the ongoing concern with DCFS labeling cases 'Unfounded' when families are unreachable. Recommendation to classify as 'Undetermined' to prevent gaps. CDRT asked DCFS legal to provide them with a memo outlining the legal obstacles contributing to DCFS decision to not make a change. The CDRT is now determining next steps and whether legislative clarification may be needed.
- SCAN is the 3<sup>rd</sup> citizen review committee. Charles shared that Mandy Bernard is the new chair. They have a new slate of officers too. They meet later this week.

## **VIII. Task Force Mission & 3-year Assessment**

- Matt reviewed the CJTF purpose and commitment. It was discussed and decided to return to having 3 subcommittees for CJTF members to participate in. These committees would be 1) judicial 2) medical and 3) investigative.
- Misty will be sending out a form describing the subcommittees and asking members to respond with their preferred subcommittee to be a part of. Ginny will identify a lead for each of the subcommittees. The lead can be changed once the committee meets and discusses - if they want to.
- Subcommittee leads are asked to please organize a meeting within the next 6 weeks, ahead of the fall CJTF retreat. In the subcommittee discussion, members are asked to apply their expertise to discussion of what is working well and what are the gaps that need to be considered in the future task force work and recommendations.

### **IX. Updates from DCFS / Training**

- Kara Hamilton, DCFS, provided a presentation about advisory groups. See attached.ked here
- Kara encouraged all to check out the updated DCFS website: <https://dcfs.illinois.gov/>
- Reminder CJTF members must complete annual trainings ahead of 10/31/25. It was advised to keep a copy of your certificate in case there is a system issue with tracking your training. You do not otherwise need to submit a copy of completion to DCFS, the system will track it.
- Lark Cowart would be interested in representing CJTF at the collective advisory committee meeting with DCFS. Ginny said this is open to others who might be interested too. Mtg is 2<sup>nd</sup> weds of month from 11-12:30 virtually.

### **X. Legislative Updates**

- A summary of the legislative updates provided by Matt is linked [here](#).
- Kim Mangiaracino: SB2323 pertaining to the statewide response for human trafficking. This work currently involves partnerships with DCFS, IL state police, and DHS. CACI is supporting the work with a human trafficking coordinator. There is a strategic plan in development that includes input from survivors.
  - Jill requested literature or other resources to provide to hospital ER staff. She said they recently wrote a protocol on how to handle patients who arrive post an at-home abortion and how to handle remains. She would like to share any new resources with her hospital and distribute within the AAP as well.
  - Kim said the task force is looking to include medical responders, there is no medical representation currently.
  - The CJTF expressed interest in the expanded work happening at the state level. Kim will help get an update for the next CJTF meeting.

### **XI. FY2025–2026 Action Plan**

- Matt has offered to again write up the needs assessment and recommendations of the task force.
- Related to the current recommendations:
  - Matt said he will be reaching out to another judge to help with the judicial training
  - CJTF should monitor:
    - DCFS work related to the 2022 Inspector General Report. DCFS should be encouraged to be transparent with this.
    - CDRT suggestion on changing DCFS current practice of closing cases as unfounded when the family has not been able to be found.
    - Impact of the KIND act on DCFS. It is still early to know the extent of impact.
    - CJTF is interested in an update on progress on recommendation related to strengthening MDT response.
- CJTF would like to include more on human trafficking in future recs.

### **XII. Old Business**

- The 3-year assessment retreat will be coming this fall. Ginny reminded the group that CJTF members are needed to assist with this. It was discussed that the write up is due in June (NOTE: Charles clarified after the meeting via email to the group that the write up is due in June 2027).
- Misty updated everyone that her funding request for CACI was approved.
- Kim updated that she is continuing to work with Charles and DCFS about her funding request for gap analysis research and if it is allowable within the requirements.

### **XIII. New Business**

- Mari Christopherson offered for CASA to host the fall retreat meeting in their new meeting space located inside the Prudential building in downtown Chicago. A motion to accept this was made by Jill Glick and a second was made by Lark Cowart. The slate all voted in favor.
- Mari also said a member of her team would be able to help facilitate the meeting.
- Meeting date options for October and November were discussed. Misty will set up a doodle poll that she will send out in the same message as the subcommittee interest form.
- Ginny suggested moving the task force meeting dates to the second Monday of the month due to other committee meeting that are in the same week as the current CJTF meetings. Fredrica said she would only be able to participate virtually if the meeting date moved. Misty will include this in the doodle poll in addition to availability for the retreat.

### **XIV. FY2025 Meeting Dates**

- November 17, 2025 – Peoria
- February 9, 2026- CACI, Springfield
- May 18, 2026- Dixon

### **XV. Adjournment**

- Mary Joly-Stein motioned to adjourn; a second motion was made by Lark Cowart. Meeting adjourned at approximately 12:30pm.