

Minnesota Citizen Review Panel (CRP) Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of the panels?

Citizen Review Panels (panels) are established under the [Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act \(CAPTA\)](#). In Minnesota, panels are statutorily required under [Minnesota Statutes, section 142A.03, subd. 10](#). Minnesota has maintained panels since 1999. Panels provide a crucial community voice to county and statewide child welfare policies and procedures. Panel members play an integral role in ensuring that the child protection system protects children from abuse and neglect. They also help identify and eliminate racial disparities in the system.

What duties do panel members have?

Panel members may help improve child welfare practices and policies by:

- Examining specific child welfare cases, including active or closed cases, maltreatment reconsiderations, child fatality and near fatality cases
- Providing independent insight for improvement
- Providing feedback to key leaders on the internal workings of the child protection system
- Participating in educational events, including a national conference for Citizen Review Panel members
- Receiving ongoing support, training and organizational updates from county and state staff.

What counties have panels in Minnesota?

- Chisago County
- Hennepin County
- Ramsey County

Who are panel members?

Panel membership must include volunteers appointed by the commissioner of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families, in consultation with the county. They should broadly represent the community in which the panel is established, including members who have expertise in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect, child protection advocates, and representatives of the councils of color and ombudsperson for families.

Panels may include the following voting members:

- Community member, not otherwise specified below
- Adult survivor of child maltreatment
- Parent who has experienced involvement with the child protection system
- Child protection advocate (not employed by the county or by the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families)
- Child welfare professional (not employed by the county or by the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families).

What is the panel application and selection process?

The application is a **multiple step process**. All parts **MUST** be completed to be considered.

1. Interested applicants first complete an electronic application through the Minnesota Secretary of State's (MNSOS) [Boards and Commissions Open Positions](#) portal.
2. Upon receipt of the Secretary of State's application, the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families (department) will email a supplemental application form (Word file) provided by the County to the email address listed on the MNSOS application. *This supplemental application must also be completed to be considered.*
3. Once the application is received, a review panel comprised of current panel members and department staff will review the application.
4. County panel members will contact selected applicants to schedule an interview and use a rubric tool to score the applicant. Prospective applicants will also be invited to ask questions during this time.
5. The review panel will recommend candidates to the commissioner of the department. The commissioner will make final decisions and appointments to the panels.
6. All applicants will be contacted to inform them of the decision regarding their application.

How long are council members' terms of service?

Panel member seats carry a term of four years. The terms of half of these seats expire with the governor's term (the first Monday in January). The terms of the other half of these seats expires one year later (that is, the first Monday in January of the following year). Members may serve until their successors are appointed. Members whose terms are due to expire may reapply for another four-year term, but they may not serve more than two consecutive terms. There is no lifetime limit to the number of terms an individual may serve.

Additional questions about the panels?

Contact dhs.child.safety-permanency@state.mn.us or 651-431-4661.

Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families Child Safety and Preservation Unit, 444 Lafayette St. St. Paul, MN 55155.

To obtain this information in a different format, call (651) 431-2400. For questions about accessibility, contact Eric Falk, Minnesota Department of Human Services ADA coordinator, at eric.falk@state.mn.us or 651-431-3039.