



DCF 56 Advisory Council Meeting

**January 15, 2025**

**1:00 – 3:00 pm**

*Please note: DCF does not allow AI software (e.g., read.ai) or other AI transcription features to be used in DCF-originated meetings.*

DCF Staff			
Name	Present	Name	Present
Shannon Braden	X	Elaine Pridgen	
Emily Erickson	X	Jennifer Sailer	X
Dana Johnson	X	Britny Isaacs	X
Shelby McCulley		Kristie Buwalda	X
Allison Fern		Dustin Hinze	X
Rachel Nili	X	Lauren Washington	
Jessica George-Reyes	X	Taylor Gilbertson	X

Steering Committee Members (not required to be in attendance for this meeting)				
Member	Present	Nominating Organization	Agency Employed	Area of Expertise
Lisa Broll		Wisconsin County Human Services Association (WCHSA)	Walworth County Department of Human Services	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
Kathy Markeland	X	Wisconsin Association of Family and Child Agencies (WAFCA)	Wisconsin Association of Family and Child Agencies (WAFCA)	Child Welfare
Jill Collins		Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS)	Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS)	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
Deanna Collins		Forest County Potawatomi Tribe	Forest County Potawatomi Tribe	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
Brent Ruehlow	X	WCHSA	Jefferson County Department of Health and Human Services	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
Machelle Shipman		WAFCA	ANU Family Services	Private Child Placing Agency

Advisory Council Members				
Member	Present	Nominating Organization	Agency Employed	Area of Expertise

<b>Kristen Agenten</b>		Public Adoptions	Children's Wisconsin	Foster Care and Adoptions
<b>Patty Baker</b>	X	Wisconsin Child Welfare Professional Development System (WCWPDS)	Wisconsin Child Welfare Professional Development System (WCWPDS)	Child Welfare Training
<b>Cassandra Eggert</b>	X	WCHSA	Outagamie County Human Services Department	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Laura Goba</b>		WAFCA	Children's Wisconsin	Private Child Placing Agency
<b>Katlyn Graebner</b>	X	WCHSA	Green County Health and Human Services	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Kate Gravel</b>		WCHSA	Dane County Health and Human Services	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Laura Halonen-Schultz</b>	X	DMCPS	Wellpoint	Congregate Care Facilities and Services
<b>Allison Higgins</b>		WAFCA	Foundations for Healthy Transitional Living	Private Child Placing Agency
<b>Julie Kaye</b>	X	Forest County Potawatomi Tribe	Forest County Potawatomi Tribe	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Andrea Leaman</b>	X	DMCPS	Children's Wisconsin	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Michelle Jones Lim</b>	X	WCHSA	Waukesha County Health and Human Services	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Tracy Schumacher</b>		WCHSA	Forest County Human Services	Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care
<b>Brittany Shellenberger</b>	X	WCHSA - now at DCF BPOHC	<del>Winnebago County Health and Human Services</del>	<del>Ongoing Child Welfare and Foster Care</del>
<b>Julie Zidek</b>	X	Public Adoptions	Lutheran Social Services	Foster Care and Adoptions
<b>Jamie Socolick</b>		Private Adoptions		
<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS</b>				
<b>Karla Meyer</b>	X		Eau Claire	

## AGENDA

**I. Call to Order, Welcome, and Introductions** – attendance is listed above. 21 participants logged into the virtual meeting.

**II. DCF 56 Revised Rule Drafts Overview.**

- DCF shared a PowerPoint presentation which recapped intentions, goals, and future steps in the DCF 56 rule revision project.

**III. DCF 56 Revised Rule Drafts Review.**

- DCF shared and discussed the **Summary of Notable Rule Changes** document which was attached to the invite which has excerpts from the proposed draft. Discussion occurred through the raising of questions and comments indicated below:
- **Sleeping arrangements**
  - **Discussion:**
    - Q: Sharing a bedroom with another foster child based on consent. Will this cause challenges for foster parents, youth, and agencies? Also, does this apply for children of varying gender - - meaning can children with varied ages and gender share bedrooms and how will consent work if there are challenges with placements?  
A: Gender identity is excluded from determination of where children can sleep.
    - Q: What does consent include or is documentation required?  
A: Agency discretion is allowed for making determinations that are unique to children and home settings.
    - R: There may be consent barriers with teenagers. Hard to find homes for and if they now have to give consent to share, they will likely say “no” which could add to a decrease in the availability of placements.  
A: This was discussed in making determination of how to add in “consent”. Adds requirement for workforce to talk with the child about sharing a room, including comfortability, trauma history, and what makes sense at a unique placement.
    - Q: Foster children and foster parent biological children room sharing, ok?  
A: Yes – just says “child” does not qualify child as being adoptive, foster, bio child.
    - Q: Sharing with an adult not allowed over age 1.  
A: Exception may be granted if 56.074(2)(b) is not met. Proposed to exception be moved to agency instead of DCF exception process.
- **Physical environment**
  - **Discussion:**
    - Q: Is a rabies vaccination not required for pets under the new rule?
    - A: Licensing agency will have discretion based on local jurisdiction requirements for pet vaccinations, care, and types/numbers, etc.
- **Firearms**
  - **Discussion:**

- Q: Should rule say “permit” to carry a weapon and not a “license” in the concealed carry section?  
A: Concealed carry statute refers to it as a conceal carry “license”.
- Q: Would sub (4) re: safe storage of firearms and dangerous weapons not allow a foster parent to carry something like pepper spray on a key chain?  
A: Flagged for internal discussion, sub (8). DCF asked how agencies currently handle this situation. A: person said it had not come up before, the language in what a dangerous weapon definition made her question it. There is an existing definition of a dangerous weapon in current rule.
  
- **Capacity**
  - **Discussion:** No comment
  
- **RPPS**
  - **Discussion:** No comment
  
- **Regular Care outside the home**
  - **Discussion:**
    - Q: Is sub (11) referring to unpaid providers as child care or substitute caregivers? Is the county going to be required to compensate the unregulated providers?  
A: WI Shares application and what is not covered by WI Shares could be paid by the county in the foster care rate. Counties are not required to cover the cost of daycare but many do. Discussion regarding the use of the term ‘respite’ was had, in that many interchangeably use respite when they are discussing babysitting or short-term supervision.
    - Q: Should unlicensed providers apply for WI Shares, even if they know they will be denied?  
A: In order to get paid by the county it says you must be denied. Flagged for internal DCF policy time: Whose policy says you need to be denied? This is not in our current rule.
  
- **Level 5**
  - **Discussion:** No comment
  
- **Respite**
  - **Discussion:**
    - Q: Would this supersede/allow for information exchange to a respite provider without an ROI signed by a parent/guardian?  
A: An ROI is not needed as covered under agency confidentiality policies.
    - Q: Are all requirements under 56.055 required for respite providers? In an emergency it may be difficult to complete all of the background checks. If a respite stay is under 48 hours, could you apply use of RPPS?  
A: 56.055 is needed if they are not already a licensed foster parent. Respite applies only to advance respite arrangements in current rule.

- Q: What is current practice in countries? Do agencies run background checks now, when seeking substitute care in an emergency?
- Current process varies and uses the following:
  - Confirming safe environments
  - Fingerprints only required for licensed foster parents; not needed for respite providers.
  - Use “ongoing standards” as guidance
  - If the respite is not regular and ongoing, doesn’t it fall under RPPS? If yes, background checks or home checks would not be required.
  - Background checks were required if “paying” for the respite. If the foster parent arranged something that they were paying or unpaid and it was less than 48 hours, we did not do it and allowed the foster parent to make the decision under RPPS. Not being restrictive when asking someone the caregiver knows to help them out.
  - Respite: BID (DOJ & Caregiver Background checks) CCAP, SOR and SACWIS. If respite is in the respite provider’s home a walkthrough of the home is also done. They had a checklist which aligned with 56.
- Q: If there was an independent investigation would you keep the home open and would just use respite while giving time to gather additional information?
  - A: One county won’t pay a provider directly unless they go through the full respite certification process; the provider has to use their daily rate to pay for respite if they want to use someone that is not certified.
  - If someone only wants to be a respite provider the county required the full process. If it was a child’s family or like kin or someone the foster care provider knows. It was just a background check and home walkthrough?
  - Rely on the foster parent to assess the appropriateness of the respite
  - CCAP, eWiSACWIS and sex offender search if needed it done immediately. If emergency often go to a current foster parent or someone you already had approved for respite. One agency required a home inspection as well.  
Flagged for internal DCF team: Over 72 hours – is it a paid service or RPPS?

**IV.** DCF shared when the next meetings will be held in the next few months as well as the project timeline. DCF would like the advisory council to review the drafts so they can provide feedback prior to official public comment.

DCF mentioned that those who have a current license would continue to be licensed under that license until the time they renew their license. This means foster homes could be operating

Recipient Name

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under different rule licensing requirements and exceptions. Counties could decide to issue new licenses under the rule, but this is determined by the licensing agency.

**V. Thoughts & Questions?**

- Can we share the document which was shared today with stakeholders? Yes.

**ADJOURNED 2:52 pm**

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