



**DCF 57 Advisory Council Meeting**  
**February 26, 2025**  
**1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

DCF Staff			
Name	Present	Name	Present
Jamie Gennrich		Elaine Pridgen	
Katie Davis	X	Shelby McCulley	
Dana Johnson	X	John Elliott	
Kristie Buwalda	X	Amy Bryant	
Mary Morse	X	Emily Erickson	X
Rob Collins	X	Jeanette Paules	
Rachel Nili		Frances Bass	
Dustin Hinze	X		

Member	Present	Nominating Organization
Kathy Markesan	X	WAFCA
Marye Beth Dugan		Nehemiah Group Home
Dave Fretz		Forward Home for Boys
India Hansen		Office of Lived Experience @ DCF
Brian Peil		DOC – Juvenile corrections
Dr. Maurice Johnson	X	Moe's Transitional Living Center (COA)
Lisa Nettekville		New Hope & Destiny Home II (COA)
Caylee Nichols	X	Positive Alternatives
Audra O'Connell		Walker's Point GH (homeless program)
Jennifer Pester		Office of Lived Experience
Jill Collins	X	DMCPS
Lisa Pendleton	X	WAFCA (Winnebago County)
Stephen Bedwell	X	WAFCA (Racine County)
Amy Rodriguez	X	DOC

**I. Call to Order, Welcome, and Introductions.**

- a. See attendance roster above.
- b. Agenda and minutes from last meeting were attached to the meeting invite.

**II. DCF 57 Rule Sections**

- a. All sections of the review have been reviewed with the Advisory Council.
- b. Progress update.
- c. Drafting instructions are in progress. DCF explained the process of how the drafting instructions are created, next steps in rule development and that there will be an approximate two-month break prior to the Advisory Council reconvening to review draft documents.

**III. Feedback requested on any areas of rule that members of the Advisory Council would like their opinion to be known or questions asked:**

- ***Will group homes be required to become certified QRTP providers?***

- It takes a lot to become QRTP certified. Including a significant expense to become accredited.
- Some group homes recoup the cost of accreditation in the daily rate charged for their overhead.
- Front end loaded cost will be recouped over time.
- ***Is there a way to offer some startup costs?***
  - Maintaining QRTP is costly over time to sustain certification due to training, etc.
- A new group home can't be QRTP within 1-2 years. They would need to be licensed and then become accredited to become QRTP certified.
- Need technical assistance to meet the requirements.
- This may impact more group homes opening.
- The financial impact is we can't claim Title IVE for group home placements if they are not QRTP.
- ***Will QRTP certification become a requirement of DCF 57?***
  - QRTP is within scope of the project - only for NEW group homes being considered at this time.
- ***Are we deleting or revising the needs determination process and admin rule section for new group homes?***
- Question why all of this/needs determination is required?
- Historically there were a lot of group homes especially in the Milwaukee area which led to restricting the creation of new group homes. DCF explained the determination of need thought process for the department.
- DMCPs has not been issuing support letters so persons wanting to open a new group home contact other counties for letters of support. Would prefer that the State manage the needs determination instead of the requirement to get support from a county. One county said the number of requests is burdensome.
- DMCPs has 45 group home contracts and only 93 youth in group home care which is why they are not supporting the creation of new homes.
- Corrections can also authorize support letters. Do they need to continue to provide support letters?
- The way the current rule reads, the department can still deny opening a new home even if there is a letter of support. The department does consider the support letter and also if they are proposing to open a home with more specialized services as well as location.
- One licensee shared that they shared the burden of working with another agency to complete the QRTP accreditation process. Staff has improved and more robust services now that they are QRTP certified. They also are getting more interest from counties that have not used them before because they are QRTP certified.
- Support for the state to make this determination instead of individual counties. (WAFCA).
  - *What is the mechanism that provides for additional oversight at the department level?*
  - Some states issue an RFP instead of a needs determination process.
  - *What should the department consider when determining if there is a need?*
  - YJ youth could benefit from more quality homes.
  - Need to own a building before the department makes a needs determination is in the current requirement. This is burdensome.
- Providing education in the group home. How many suspensions are occurring? This is increasing staff time. More kids are not enrolled or suspended. Most have IEP's. Staff

need to drive to school to get them during the day because they are being suspended.  
Give the group home more autonomy to teach the kids in the group home.

- This may require a larger discussion about DPI serving kids. **Flagged for DCF internal team for future work outside the scope of DCF 57.**
- If schools are not going to provide education then a DCF 57 issue would be if/can group homes offer education services in the group home?
- Medication administration is also a concern. Some schools ask the group home to come and administer noon meds.
- *Where does a group home fit in the continuum of out of home placements?*
- *What is the referring agency looking for the group home to provide?*
  - Sometimes they are only wanting “shelter” because a child needs to go somewhere.
  - Other kids do need a higher level of care and are capable of managing their higher level of needs.
- *Background checks. Do guest speakers, volunteers or others who would only be there for a limited amount of time need to have a background check?* In the draft rule it spells out what is currently in a FAQ memo.
- *Is food allowed in a resident’s bedroom? Could we add a requirement that this would not be allowed?*

#### IV. **Focus Groups & Next Steps**

- At the provider forum it was mentioned that we are looking for additional feedback. Focus groups may be used to solicit this information and/or a survey with providers and youth.
- Looking at pausing the advisory council until we have a draft to share.

#### V. **Adjournment**

- a. Next regularly scheduled meeting is May 21<sup>st</sup>, 1:00pm to 3:00pm
- b. Tentative Meetings on-hold scheduled for March 26<sup>th</sup>, April 23<sup>rd</sup>.