

# **Children's Commission's Collaborative Council**

## **Purpose**

The Collaborative Council assists the Children's Commission by informing commission members and staff of local and statewide activities, events, and issues that affect attorney and judicial practices in CPS cases.

## **Composition**

The Collaborative Council is composed of child welfare stakeholders and advocates from across Texas, including child/youth and parent advocates. There are approximately 50 Collaborative Council members.

## **Membership**

Collaborative Council members serve at the discretion of the Children's Commission for no set term. Vacancies on the Collaborative Council may occur at any time during the year as a result of resignation, non-participation on assigned committees, or continued absence from the Children's Commission meetings.

## **Collaborative Council Input**

In general, Collaborative Council members participate and provide input into the activities, projects, and strategies undertaken by the Children's Commission. Collaborative Council members are invited to make short presentations at Commission meetings on a first come, first served basis. Additionally, members in attendance are provided the opportunity during each Commission meeting to provide brief comments, ask questions, or provide information of interest to commissioners and others. Collaborative Council members can also contact the Children's Commission directly to submit comments, information, and announcements.

## **Committees and Workgroups**

The Children's Commission also maintains an Executive Committee and four standing committees: Basic Projects, Training, Data/Technology, and Foster Care and Education. The Children's Commission may also form ad hoc committees and workgroups. Each committee, subcommittee, and workgroup is staffed by an employee of the Supreme Court of Texas assigned to the Children's Commission and is chaired by at least one member of the Texas Judiciary handling child abuse and neglect cases, a member of the Children's Commission or one of its committees, or another person with expertise in the subject matter area. Workgroups and subcommittees are formed based on the need, the outcome expected as a result of the work, whether there are measureable objectives or anticipated outputs from the effort, and whether there is any data

that can be collected to provide evidence of the project or workgroup's usefulness. The same process is used periodically to assess the impact and productivity of workgroups and subcommittees.

### **Committee Membership**

Committee Chairs may add or remove committee members at their discretion. Any Collaborative Council member may submit a request to the committee chair or to the Children's Commission Executive Director to be added to any Children's Commission committee, subcommittee, workgroup, or task force. The Children's Commission has discretion to invite the Collaborative Council member to a different or additional project depending on current membership and area of interest.

### **Travel Reimbursement**

The Court Improvement Program (CIP) is federally funded and travel reimbursement is thereby governed by the reimbursement policies of the CIP, the Children's Commission and the Supreme Court of Texas. Most Children's Commission workgroup, subcommittee, and task force meetings are held in Austin. Collaborative Council members who travel to Austin for Children's Commission or related workgroup meetings may submit certain travel expenses to the Children's Commission for reimbursement. Any person with work headquarters in Austin, Texas is not eligible to claim travel reimbursement under the State of Texas Travel Guidelines, which are outlined at the link below.

<http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/media/83435/travel-reimbursement-guidelines-and-reimbursement-form-for-website-07-17-17.pdf>