

# Nebraska Children's Commission Structure Task Force Proposal for Discussion

The Nebraska Children's Commission Structure Task Force was convened to assess the Commission's current role and structure in order to make recommendations to the Commission on potential structures for the continuation of the Commission following its sunset date in June 2019.

The Structure Task Force proposes three options for the Commission's consideration moving forward after SFY19. They are as follows:

1. Maintain the current structure, clean up the statutes to modernize to present day activities, extend sunset date;
2. Change structure, Re-Conceptualized operations, introduce sunset dates statutory committees; extend Commission sunset date; or
3. Carry out the sunset of the Nebraska Children's Commission

An additional proposal discussed was the creation of a Nebraska Research and Technical Assistance Center for Child Welfare. This structure would be supported through an entity such as the University of Nebraska. It would provide expertise on Nebraska's programs, practices, and performance. Being a resource to the legislature and DCFS, it could provide policy briefs, presentations and research evaluation of programs. Though this resource is needed and would be of tremendous value to Nebraska, it would ultimately happen because of Option 3 above. In this option, the Children's Commission would sunset and make room for the rise of the Research and Technical Assistance Center.

Research was conducted, in consultation with the National Conference of State Legislatures Three Branch Institute, and the Children's Cabinet Network, in order to assess alternative models of Children's councils, commissions and intra-agency cabinets. The State of Indiana's Commission on Improving the Status of Children was further assessed and components of its model were applied to a proposed alternative structure (Option 2). A review of existing research entities, commissions and similar resources in Nebraska were reviewed to understand the landscape of services and resources available to policy making bodies.

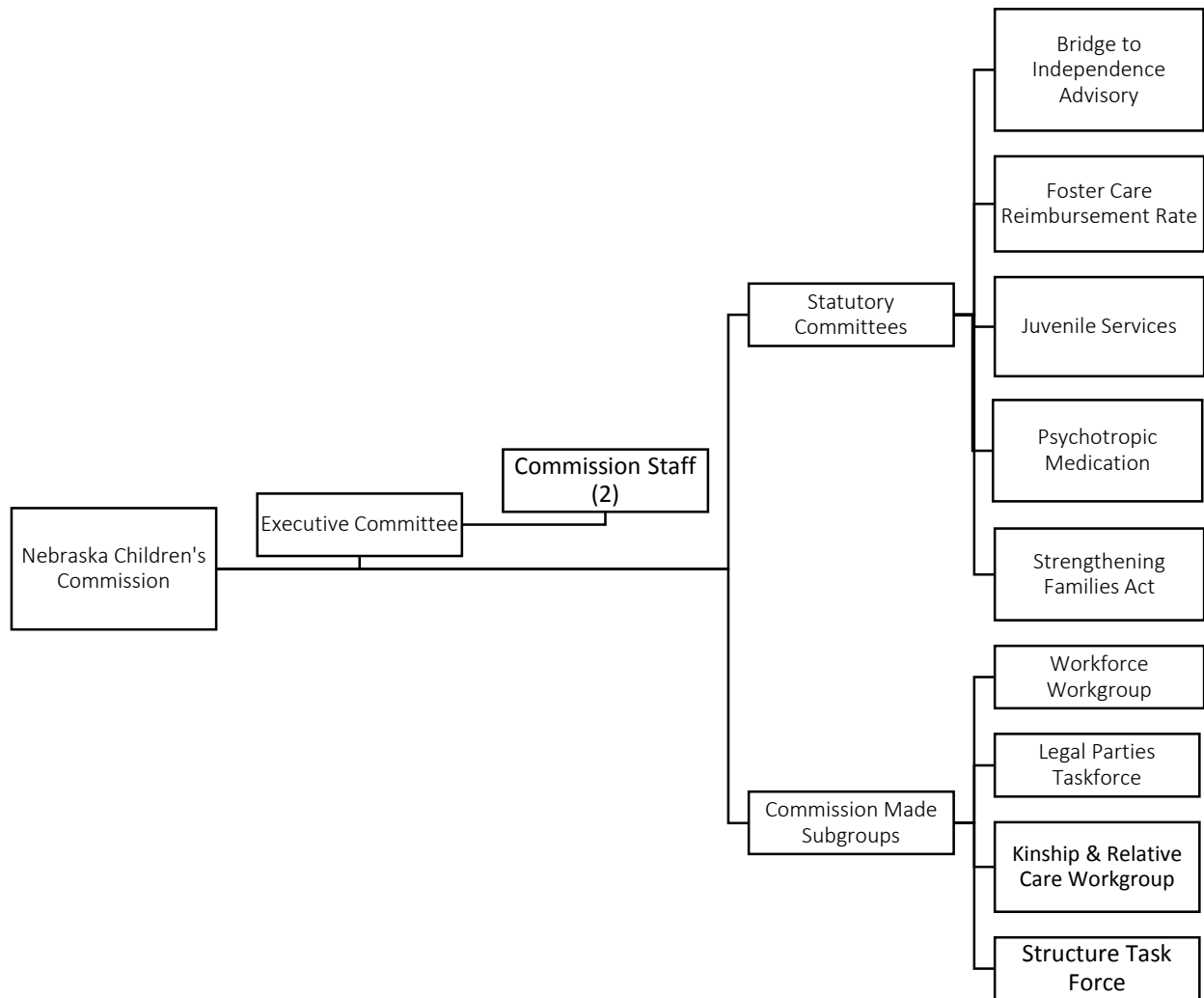
Further details regarding the options are found on the following pages in no particular order.



Option 1: Maintain current structure, clean up the statutes to modernize to present day activities.

Key Changes:

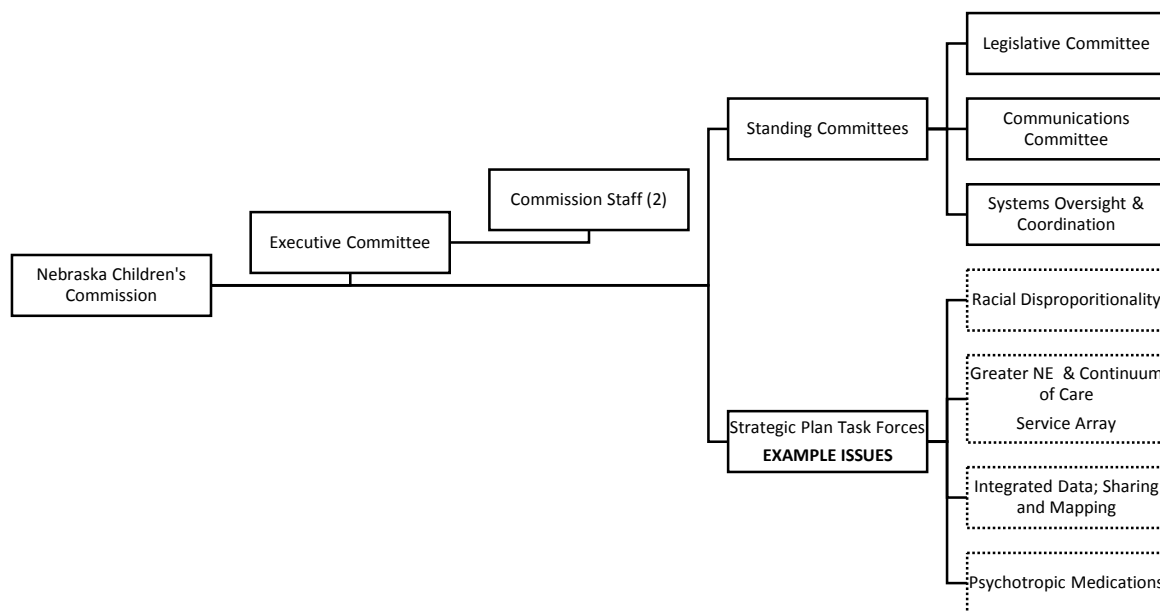
- Add representatives from Medicaid, Developmental Disabilities
- Eliminate ability to send designees



## Option 2: Change structure, edit statutes to reflect re-conceptualized structure and operations

### Key Changes:

- Work focuses on cross cutting, multidisciplinary topics which cannot be achieved within any one agency.
- More procedural and operational changes than statutory
- Add representatives from Medicaid, Developmental Disabilities
- Eliminate ability to send designees to meetings for the Children’s Commission.
- Merge the statutory groups: Healthcare Oversight Committee & Psychotropic Meds Committee (Administering Agency: DHHS, remove from NCC)
- Sunset the SFA and B2i Committees either June 2019 or introduce a sunset date
- FCRRRC Committee to report to Service Array Task Force
- Eliminate the Juvenile Service Committee; have representative of Systems Oversight & Coordination become member of NCJJ



### Committees

Legislative- 1) Works with Senators to propose legislation of interest to NCC, 2) Monitors bills of interest, 3) presents key issues to NCC, 4) Prepares and Testifies on behalf of NCC at hearings.

Communications- 1) Preserves institutional knowledge; works with Senators, Agency heads, Administrations in transition, etc. 2) Develops Communication Plan for NCC activities, Annual Reports, Presentations to Stakeholders, Findings & Recommendations roll out.



Systems Oversight & Coordination- 1) Assesses plans for children and juveniles for gaps, reviews DCFS, DD, OIG, FCRO, NeSOC Strategic Plans, PIPs, Annual Reports, etc 2) Maps and coordinates with other entities.

**Strategic Plan Task Forces**- Assigned according to strategic plan, (in consultation with the Systems Oversight & Coordination Committee). The Task Forces are convened with the intent of creating findings and/or recommendations to the Commission, the Legislature and the Governor. The Task Forces are necessary because the work cannot be done by one agency alone, and the issue is of multidisciplinary interest and will improve services for children and families in Nebraska.

**Organizational Home:** Independent Agency

**Membership Appointments:** Certain positions may not send a designee, Same voting/non voting membership.

**Scope/Population:** Nebraska's vulnerable children & youth (including child welfare, developmental disabilities, juvenile justice, those served by early childhood programming, education and behavioral health)

**Reporting:** Annual Report

### Option 3- Carry out the sunset of the Children's Commission

- This option would mean the Commission would sunset completely.
- The statutory committees would be responsible for fulfilling their statutory requirements without resources from the Commission. Resources have been staffing, administrative, reimbursement, meeting scheduling, annual report writing, etc.
- Statutes for the Strengthening Families Act, and Bridge to Independence Advisory Committees would need to be further outlined as to how membership appointments would occur.

