

## Alternative Response (AR) Advisory Committee

July 12, 2024  
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

Virtual and  
Foster Care Review Office Conference Room  
1225 L Street, Suite 401  
Lincoln, NE 68508

### I. Call to Order and Welcome

Co-Chair, Monika Gross, called the meeting of the Alternative Response (AR) Advisory Committee to order at 10:06 AM, and asked Adam Anderson to call roll.

### II. Roll Call and Introductions

#### *Committee Members present (10):*

Proxy for Jacie Boelts, Jamie Kramer	Jennifer Carter (10:21 am) Monika Gross	Bri McLarty Michell Paxton
Jarren Breeling Patrick Carraher	Proxy for Sarah Helvey, Allison Derr	Ivy Svoboda Susan Thomas

#### *Committee Members absent (2):*

Alise Baker  
Heather Sikyta

**A quorum was established.**

#### *Guests In Attendance (2):*

Adam Anderson                      Sage Leis

#### *a. Notice of Publication*

Recorder for the meeting, Adam Anderson, indicated that the notice of publication for this meeting was posted on the Nebraska Public Meeting and Nebraska Children's Commission website in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act. The publication would be kept as a permanent attachment with the meeting minutes.

#### *b. Announcement of the placement of Open Meetings Act information*

A copy of the Open Meetings Act was available for public inspection and was located at the sign in table and on the Nebraska Children's Commission website.

### III. Approval of Agenda

**A motion was made by Pat Carraher to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Michelle Paxton.** There was no discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

#### **FOR (9):**

Proxy for Jacie Boelts, Jamie Kramer	Monika Gross Proxy for Sarah Helvey, Allison Derr	Michelle Paxton Ivy Svoboda Susan Thomas
Jarren Breeling Patrick Carraher	Bri McLarty	

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (0):**

**ABSENT (3):**

Alisa Baker

Jennifer Carter

Heather Sikyta

**MOTION CARRIED**

**IV. Approval of March 15, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Bri McLarty to approve the March 15, 2024 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Susan Thomas. There was no discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

**FOR (9):**

Proxy for Jacie Boelts, Jamie  
Kramer  
Jarren Breeling  
Patrick Carraher

Monika Gross  
Proxy for Sarah Helvey,  
Allison Derr  
Bri McLarty

Michelle Paxton  
Ivy Svoboda  
Susan Thomas

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (0):**

**ABSENT (3):**

Alisa Baker

Jennifer Carter

Heather Sikyta

**MOTION CARRIED**

**V. Co-Chair Update**

Co-Chair Monika Gross discussed LB 1417 and noted that an amendment was filed but the bill did not pass.

**VI. Strategic Planning**

Policy Analyst Sage Leis noted that increased involvement and participation by the families is important for the AR Committee to focus on. She noted that the addiction barrier to entry in AR is one main point to focus on. She added that DHHS anticipated 38% entry into AR, but the current rate hovers around 12%. Additionally, she would like to see an increased push for data access.

Co-Chair Gross discussed the current strategic priorities from the Children's Commission which were placement stability and solutions, service array, and prevention continuum. Gross discussed the statutory charge for the Committee. Pat Carraher inquired about regular data updates. Ivy Svoboda talked about how the Committee would be take on the statutory responsibilities. Jamie Kramer noted that she would take the recommendations to DHHS leadership for additional information. Jennifer Carter added that there is no

formal process for recommendations and that additional Legislative outreach may be needed. Discussion continued focusing on the committee asking for additional data from DHHS and implementing NFOCUS changes.

Co-Chair Gross proposed looking at some of the exclusionary criteria. Jennifer Carter noted that in previous changes in criteria, that at the time individuals had somewhat reached their “limit” as to what could be removed from exclusionary criteria. She noted an increase in serious incidents with families who had declined or were otherwise high-risk. Along those lines, Co-Chair Gross proposed that the Committee look at the proper screening of intakes as set forth in statute.

Co-Chair Gross reiterated that the statutory requirements should be the main focus moving forward. Pat Carraher agreed to moving forward with data. Gross suggested putting together a data group to determine what data is needed and what has been requested in the past. Sage Leis will look back at what has been requested. Jarren Breeling expressed an interest in joining the group.

## **VII. DHHS Update**

DHHS was not in attendance for this agenda item. Adam Anderson will follow-up with Jacie Boelts about data that was planned to be shared at this meeting.

## **VIII. Workgroup Updates**

Co-Chair Monika Gross welcomed the workgroup chairs to report out on the work of their workgroups.

### **a. Oversight Workgroup**

Oversight Workgroup Co-Chair Carter noted that the group has not met since March. She stated that DHHS is looking at reasons why AR families decline, conducting monthly AR case reviews. She discussed past data findings from CCFL regarding safety assessment bias towards safety. Carter continued by proposing additional recommendations such as funding for AR education, survey of workers regarding AR/TR split caseloads.

AR Co-Chair Monika Gross noted a change in the data collection form at the FCRO that will track AR involvement separately from non-court cases.

### **b. Legal Resources Workgroup**

Chair Pat Carraher reviewed the recommendations from the Special Report. He noted that workgroup prioritized two areas from the recommendations. He continued that the workgroup dug into those areas to explore the feasibility of those recommendations. He shared the current recommendations. He noted that pre-petition legal services federal funding is not able to be accessed due to infrastructure issues in the state. Carraher also discussed the pro se guardianship issue had been approached and the county courts opposed this recommendation.

## **IX. Workgroup Recommendations**

Members discussed recommendations provided by the workgroups in the previous agenda item and education and community outreach potential recommendation by the Oversight Workgroup.

Jennifer Carter noted that the Oversight Workgroup recommendations are recommendations that may need further development. Members discussed recommending educational outreach to communities regarding AR that comes from entities outside of DHHS.

A motion was made by Susan Thomas to approve the **Legal Resources Workgroup [recommendations](#)** and forward the recommendations to the **Children’s Commission**. The motion was seconded by Ivy Svoboda. There was no discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

**FOR (8):**

Patrick Carraher  
Jennifer Carter  
Monika Gross

Proxy for Sarah Helvey,  
Allison Derr  
Bri McLarty

Michelle Paxton  
Ivy Svoboda  
Susan Thomas

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (0):**

**ABSENT (4):**

Alisa Baker  
Jarren Breeling

Jacie Boelts  
Heather Sikyta

**MOTION CARRIED**

A motion was made by Ivy Svoboda to approve the **educational for communities recommendation** as well as synopsis of the discussion since **December 2023**, and forward the recommendations to the **Children’s Commission**. The motion was seconded by Susan Thomas. There was no discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

**FOR (8):**

Patrick Carraher  
Jennifer Carter  
Monika Gross

Proxy for Sarah Helvey,  
Allison Derr  
Bri McLarty

Michelle Paxton  
Ivy Svoboda  
Susan Thomas

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (0):**

**ABSENT (4):**

Alisa Baker  
Jarren Breeling

Jacie Boelts  
Heather Sikyta

**MOTION CARRIED**

**X. New Business**

There was no new business.

**XI. Public Comment**

Co-Chair Monika Gross opened the floor to public comment. There was no public comment.

**XII. Upcoming Meetings:**

TBD: Adam Anderson will send survey for meeting after November Children's Commission.

**XIII. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 11:43 AM

Respectfully Submitted,  
Adam Anderson

DRAFT