

## Alternative Response (AR) Advisory Committee

February 28, 2025  
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

Sarpy Conference Room, Nebraska State Office Building  
301 Centennial Mall South  
Lincoln, NE 68509

and Webex

### I. Call to Order and Welcome

Co-Chair, Monika Gross, called the meeting of the Alternative Response (AR) Advisory Committee to order at 10:04 AM, and asked Adam Anderson to call roll.

### II. Roll Call and Introductions

#### *Committee Members present (8):*

Jacie Boelts  
Jarren Breeling  
Pat Carraher

Jennifer Carter  
Monika Gross  
Bri McLarty

Heather Sikyta  
Susan Thomas

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

Michelle Paxton  
Ivy Svoboda

**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 Jennifer Paxton.** There was no discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

#### **FOR (8):**

Jacie Boelts  
Jarren Breeling  
Pat Carraher

Jennifer Carter  
Monika Gross  
Bri McLarty

Heather Sikyta  
Susan Thomas

#### **AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (0):**

**ABSENT (2):**

Michelle Paxton

Ivy Svoboda

**MOTION CARRIED**

**IV. Approval of July 12, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Jennifer Carter to approve the July 12, 2024 meeting minutes, with revisions in item VII (a.) to state, “the workgroup is considering additional recommendations.” The motion was seconded by Pat Carraher. There was no discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

**FOR (8):**

Jacie Boelts  
Jarren Breeling  
Pat Carraher

Jennifer Carter  
Monika Gross  
Bri McLarty

Heather Sikyta  
Susan Thomas

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (0):**

**ABSENT (2):**

Michelle Paxton

Ivy Svoboda

**MOTION CARRIED**

**V. Co-Chair Update**

Co-Chair Monika Gross noted that most of the updates to share will be part of the agenda items over the course of the meeting.

**VI. Legislative Update**

Sage Leis shared information about the stand with women bill which would create the policy of two biological genders for all state agencies. She expressed concern with the dangers that poses to kids in the child welfare and juvenile justice system who would be affected by this definition, as documented by higher risk of mental health issues and suicide.

Leis shared information regarding the B2i bill that would extend the program to lawfully-present immigrants. This law would include youth who are lawfully present in the U.S such as DACA youth and youth who have other special immigrant statuses.

Leis continued by sharing information regarding the bill that would move certain delayed appointments to the Legislature when the governor fails to appoint within certain timeframes. Leis noted there will be a hearing on March 13th.

Leis shared that LB 346 would have eliminated some committees under the Commission from statute and brought the duties of those committees under the Commission, but Sage has discussed with the bill introducer to remove the commission.

Jennifer Carter talked about the bill regarding the OIG. She shared that there are specific changes that clean up the act. She added that the bill also puts in statute the duties. She continued that the bill would consolidate some of the oversight agencies under a new division of the legislature. Carter said that the bill creates a foundation for additional areas of oversight as new items come up. She stated that it also changes the way the legislature can remove the Ombudsman. Members had a brief discussion of the proposed legislation.

Leis shared that LB 462 changes the definition of child abuse and neglect when kids are doing an age and developmentally appropriate activity. It also changes the definition of mandatory reporting of abuse and neglect. Members discussed the implication of reducing the number of mandatory reporting. Most noted that it probably won't affect those who would already report neglect. Training for reporting would still be available for everyone online.

Leis shared that LB 556 lowers the age of detainment to 11 and adds definitions for instances youth can be detained. Members discussed how that may come up in discussion with Senators. Members talked about the historical effects of public placement options that do not exist today.

Monika Gross talked about LB 668 which changes the way a central registry listing would be made and introduces a due process to the central registry process. Gross also noted that LB 668 would amend the definition to case manager to include private contractor in prevention cases. She noted that it could potentially create a community pathway. Jacie Boelts noted that it could be related to the prevention warmline which has been discussed for a few years.

Members discussed the bill that attempts to move probation to a new agency under the executive branch.

## **VII. DHHS Update**

Jacie Boelts asked the Committee about what types of data that the group would like to see. Boelts shared that in the past she provided comparisons between AR and TR intakes as well as RED team decisions for exclusionary criteria. She added that she had in the past provided information regarding cases that flipped. Monika Gross asked to have success rates and reentry rate.

Boelts shared that her team continues to review about 10 cases monthly. She added that AR recently was the focus of an internal audit. She noted that the audit found the purchase cards needed to be monitored and purchase card policy followed. The audit also found that AR caseloads need examination. Boelts shared that for the most part workers would like to go back to the way of specialized caseloads because in most service areas there are mixed caseloads.

Jacie Boelts noted that the SAFE model training is on pause. She shared that the training has been paused but didn't have additional information. Monika Gross noted that an email was received that stated DHHS would like to have Adam will share the email with the explanation.

## **VIII. Workgroup Updates**

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

### **a. Legal Resources Workgroup**

Pat Carraher noted that the group has not met after putting forward recommendations. He added that movement on pre-petition services has not gained traction despite being codified. He talked about potential next steps. Monika Gross shared information from the ABA webinar series that will talk about building a pre-petition legal team. Adam Anderson will share a link to the webinar series with the minutes.

**b. Oversight Workgroup**

Jennifer Carter shared that there were a few other recommendations that were to be discussed further. She noted that group chairs should meet to discuss next steps moving forward.

**IX. New Business**

There was no new business.

**X. Public Comment**

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

**XI. Upcoming Meetings:**

The group discussed potential upcoming meeting dates and decided on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

**XII. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 11:32 AM

Respectfully Submitted,  
Adam Anderson