

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee (FCRRC)**

September 17, 2025
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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

I. Call to Order and Welcome

Co-Chair, Felicia Nelsen, called the meeting of the Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee (FCRRC) to order at 1:10 p.m., and asked Adam Anderson to call roll and attendees to introduce themselves.

II. Roll Call and Introductions

Committee Members present (5):

Theresa Goley

Liz Lovejoy-Brown (1:36 p.m.)

Jackie Meyer

Brian Rader

Felicia Nelsen

Committee Members absent (2):

Sue Hamilton

Bobby Loud

Ex-Officio Members present (3):

Proxy for Nichole Hersh, Angela Miles

Kari Rumbaugh

Lana Verbrigghe (1:46 p.m.)

Ex-Officio Members absent (3):

Cydney Volker

Brenda Brooks

Kathleen Stolz

A quorum was present.

Guests In Attendance (4):

Amy Ambrose

Adam Anderson

Chloe Fowler

Julie Smith

Kinsey Baker

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

It was moved by Felicia Nelsen and seconded by Brian Rader to approve the agenda as presented.

There was no further discussion. Roll Call vote as follows:

FOR (4):

Theresa Goley
Jackie Meyer

Brian Rader
Felicia Nelsen

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAINED (0):

ABSENT (3):

Sue Hamilton
Bobby Loud
Liz Lovejoy-Brown

MOTION CARRIED

IV. Co-Chair Report

Co-Chairs Theresa Goley and Felicia Nelsen noted that the report outlining the committee's work and proposed changes is targeted for final submission to DHHS in early 2026 to properly align with state budget cycles.

V. Membership Update

Adam Anderson updated the Committee regarding membership of the Committee and Workgroups. He noted that Alisa Ryan has moved to a new position, and her seat representing her agency sector will be filled by incoming member Rachel Oakley, whose formal application will be submitted for official appointment at the November Children's Commission meeting. Additionally, he noted that regional merges within DHHS have consolidated service areas (Lana Verbrigghe overseeing Eastern/Southeast and Brenda Brooks overseeing Western/Northern/Central); however, because statutory language still mandates separate regional service area representations, recruitment for these specific slots will pause until a broader structural modernization is mapped out ahead of the committee's formal transition. Anderson also shared that automated onboarding interest forms are being updated with explicit text outlining active workgroup time commitments, and noted that proactive transition planning sessions will be scheduled to ensure continuous communication and direct DHHS collaboration.

VI. Legislative Updates

Chloe Fowler shared an update regarding child welfare legislation. She reported that LB346 has officially been signed into law. Under the statutory language of LB346, the independent Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee is scheduled to terminate on July 1, 2026; however, to ensure long-term continuity, the Nebraska Children's Commission has already passed a motion to formally absorb the body as an official subcommittee. Fowler noted that while workgroups under the Children's Commission are technically exempt from certain statutory meeting requirements, all policy updates and rate determinations will remain fully publicized and transparent.

VII. Nebraska Caregivers Responsibility (NCR) Tool Discussion

Co-Chair Theresa Goley led an extensive update regarding the ongoing redrafting and clinical testing of the new NCR framework, noting that while work slowed over the summer, significant progress has been made

due to format modeling by Julie Smith. The workgroup is running mathematical comparisons against existing NCR case profiles, with staff at KVC Nebraska pulling sample files for 8 to 10 state wards to cross-test with Kinsey Baker's staff. The workgroup's goal is to safely collect a sample size of 40 to 50 completed case profiles to map a balanced scoring index.

Goley highlighted that the new form utilizes a scored checkbox design, with clear definitions appended to the end of the tool, heavily emphasizing behavioral impacts that historically went unmeasured. For example, under "Emotional Regulation," the tool scores children who display disruptive but not dangerous, redirectable behaviors; while clinically low-risk, these behaviors consume extraordinary caregiving energy and frequently drive foster home disruptions. Behaviors will be evaluated based on an active lookback window of the preceding 60 days, though high-severity safety criteria (e.g., historical instances of self-harm, psychiatric hospitalizations, or sexual/physical assault) will remain permanently visible on the form for safety mapping without adding active points if they fall outside the 60 days.

Lana Verbrigghe indicated she would feel comfortable presenting youth cases once the testing phase is complete. Regarding Therapeutic Family Care (TFC) alignment, members clarified that TFC eligibility relies upon an independent CAFAS assessment; youth scoring in TFC-eligible brackets (typically Tier 4 and higher) will bypass certain standard processing paths. For general placements scoring higher than Tier 4 where Letters of Agreement (LOA) remain individualized per child, the committee is evaluating whether to route rate exceptions directly through the DHHS Clinical Care Team to prevent system bottlenecks and keep standard processing swift.

Brian Rader asked whether adding additional tiers would slow down the placement and approval process.

Goley pointed out that if only a small handful of providers focus on high-level placements while others stick to standard levels, an inequity will occur for those high-placement providers. Goley noted national benchmarking reviews of Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, and Illinois, pointing out that while some states like South Dakota rely on basic two-tier systems ("Basic" and "Professional"), Nebraska's multi-tiered system is highly tailored and requires diligent testing to avoid front-loading the system. Goley also noted that because many agencies are bound to existing one or two-year contracts, rate changes can be introduced mid-cycle via formal state amendments if necessary. Statutorily, the committee's ultimate deadline for the next full four-year Foster Care Rate Report to the Legislature remains July 1, 2028.

VIII. New Business

There was no new business.

IX. Public Comment

Co-Chair Nelsen opened the floor to public comment, noting that comment is limited to three minutes per person and fifteen minutes total.

The following individuals offered public comment or were recognized on the record: Rachel Oakley, Miranda Buckley, Amy Ambrose

X. Upcoming Meetings

- a. Late Winter / Early Spring 2026 (Targeted to review the aggregated data from the 40–50 case test sample)

XI. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Adam Anderson