The Alaska Citizen Review Panel evaluates the policies, procedures, and practices of state and local child protection agencies for effectiveness in discharging their child protection responsibilities. The Panel is mandated through CAPTA 1997 (P.L. 104-235), and enacted through AS 47.14.205.

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ABOUT THE PANEL

CRP ANNUAL REPORT:
Alaska CRP’s annual report is released on June 30th each year, and covers the Panel’s activities through the period beginning July 1st of the previous year. The Office of Children’s Services is required to respond to this report and its recommendations within six months of its release.

This report is distributed to all state legislators, Alaska’s congressional delegation, the Children’s Bureau, and the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. It is also available for any interested party and the general public on the Panel’s website at www.crpalaska.org.

CRP Coordinator
880 H Street, Suite 106
Anchorage, AK 99501
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AUTHORITY: The CRP is a federally mandated body that operates independently of the Office of Children’s Services (OCS) with the primary purpose of reviewing the policies, procedures, and practices of OCS. (1996, 2003, and 2010 amendments to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA))

FUNCTIONS OF THE PANEL: The primary purpose of Citizen Review Panels is to assist state and local child protection systems to improve services through evaluation, public outreach, and advocacy. In Alaska, the designated child protection agency is the Office of Children’s Services (OCS). Therefore, the Alaska Panel:

- **Evaluates** the extent to which OCS is effectively discharging its child protection responsibilities under: CAPTA State Plan (42 U.S.C. 5106a(b)); and CFSP; Child Protection Standards under federal and state laws; and any other criteria that the CRP considers important to ensuring the protection of children.
- **Conducts public outreach** and gathers public comment on current OCS procedures and practices involving child protection services.
- **Advocates** for relevant actions that would help improve the child protection services system in Alaska.

STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP: Membership on the Panel is voluntary, and expected to represent the diversity of the state. The Panel selects its own members through a formal recruitment process. While members are expected to serve for at least two years, there are no stipulated term limits. The Panel membership during 2017 – 2018 included:

- **Diwakar Vadapalli (Chair 2017-2018)** Anchorage
- **JP Ouellette (Chair 2018-2019)** Anchorage
- **Bettyann Steciw** Anchor Point
- **Donna Daniels** Anchorage
- **Dylan Conduzzi** St. Paul Island
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Panel is grateful to the staff and leadership in the Office of Children’s Services for their hard work and dedication to keeping Alaska’s children safe. OCS staff and leadership were consistently available to the Panel throughout the year, and their cooperation is much appreciated. The Panel recognizes and appreciates their diligence as they continue to serve some of the most vulnerable children and families of Alaska.

The Panel also thanks all the partner agencies and their staff for being available for consultation, their thoughtful reflections, and helpful suggestions during the course of the Panel’s work.

The Panel thanks Rep. Ivy Spohnholz, Chairperson of the House Committee on Health and Social Services, Sen. David Wilson, Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services, and all the Committee members of both committees for encouraging the Panel and providing a forum for meaningful and constructive dialogue. The panel expresses its special appreciation to the efforts of Sen. Coghill and his legislative staff for their support and encouragement. Denali Daniels and Associates (DDA) provides staff support under a contract with the State of Alaska.

***The Citizen Review Panel is tasked with reviewing the policies, procedures, and practices of state and local child protective services in Alaska. In that capacity, this report notes the Panel’s observations on various components of the system in Alaska. The Panel’s review is intended to provide constructive feedback to inform OCS’ policies and practices. No observation should be construed as critical of any individual OCS employee.***
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Alaska Citizen Review Panel continued and advanced its efforts in advocacy, evaluation and public outreach in a variety of ways. The activities conducted by the Panel this year were related to the six goals that the panel established during the Annual Workplan Retreat in August 2017.

- This year the Panel made regional site visits, held community events, advocated for new legislation, presented to stakeholders, and met with partner agencies.

- While unable to accomplish all it set out to do for the year due to the changing composition of the Panel, scheduling issues, and a leadership transition, the Panel made significant progress on several of the annual goals.

- The Panel recruited 6 new panel members, with another two applicants waiting to be approved. These activities allowed the CRP to significantly expand its outreach during 2017-2018.

- Panelists also participated in the implementation of the “Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children: Strategic Plan 2016-2020” and several of the OCS workgroups dedicated to facets of this plan.

- The Panel was able to visit 4 regional offices this year and each site visit generated a separate site visit report with unique observations and specific recommendations.

- A major effort was made, in cooperation with supportive legislative offices, to pass SB122. The bill, while unsuccessful, would have effectively allowed the CRP to operate under the Alaska State Office of the Ombudsman rather than the Office of Children’s Services.

- During the Annual Meeting, Panelists voted to elect JP Ouellette the new Chair of the CRP, taking over for Diwakar Vadapalli. The Panel thanks Mr. Vadapalli for his tremendous work in advancing the causes of the CRP.
Citizen’s Review Panel
2017 - 2018 Workplan Goals

Goal 1: Examine the effectiveness of the current administrative review process and whether the changes made in 2015 have improved the system.

Goal 2: Examine if ‘family reunification’ is prioritized as a goal for children in out-of-home care placement, and OCS’ efforts in pursuit of ‘family reunification’.

Goal 3: Examine OCS’ efforts in finding relatives for placement of children in foster care.

Goal 4: Expand public outreach in collaboration with efforts under the Tribal-State strategic plan.

Goal 5: Strengthen the panel through aggressive recruitment of new members, enhanced website, and tools to reach diverse groups of stakeholders.
ANNUAL ACTIVITIES

The Panel’s 2017-2018 annual calendar included the following activities:

▪ **QUARTERLY PANEL MEETINGS:** The Panel met in August of 2017 to develop their workplan. The Panel met quarterly in December of 2017, March of 2018, and their annual meeting was held in June 2018 in Anchorage. Owing to the geographic dispersion of the Panel members, all quarterly meetings are held over the telephone. All quarterly Panel meetings are open to public and include a public comment period. The meeting agenda, date, time, location, and call-in number are announced a week prior to the meeting, and are posted on the Panel’s website. Summary minutes are also posted on the Panel’s website. Agency representatives or others with experience and expertise on a specific practice or policy are often invited to present to the Panel at quarterly meetings.

▪ **NEW PANEL MEMBER ORIENTATION:** In December 2017, the CRP coordinator, in cooperation with the Panel Chair, developed a set of new orientation materials for the incoming Panel members. A day-long orientation was held in December, with several of the new Panel members attending. These materials have been streamlined and packaged as an orientation kit that will be provided to new panel members. Future orientations will be held in the coming years depending on needs.

▪ **MONTHLY MEETINGS WITH OCS:** In order to maintain a healthy working relationship, and stay informed of the latest developments in practice and policy, the Director and the Division Operations Manager of OCS meet by telephone with the Panel every month to share mutual progress, discuss latest developments, and respond to mutual queries.

▪ **SITE VISITS:** The Panel conducts visits to various OCS regional and field offices to gather information on practice and assess working relationships between OCS and its local partners. The Panel’s observations and recommendations are documented in a report and are subsequently discussed with the OCS’ state and the regional leadership. All site visit reports that have been reviewed with OCS are available on the CRP website. The Panel conducted 4 site visits during 2017-2018 – Anchorage, Southeast Region, Western Region, and Northern Region. Due to transition in staff the panel was unable to complete...
the Anchorage site visit report, and was unable to coordinate panel and partner schedules to visit the Southcentral Regional Office in Wasilla.

▪ **REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE:** Each year, the panel aims to present a summary of the previous year’s work and an update on the current year’s work to the Alaska House and Senate Committees on Health and Social Services (HSS). The Panel Chair successfully secured a hearing with the Senate HSS Committee but due to time constraints and availability, was unable to secure a hearing with the House Committee. In addition, the panel leadership met with several individual legislators and shared the work of the panel.

▪ **OUTREACH ACTIVITIES:** The Panel reaches out to the public and various stakeholder groups to collect public comments. The Panel maintains an active website [www.crpalaska.org](http://www.crpalaska.org) that hosts all Panel documents and serves as a means for the public to reach the Panel. The Panel also meets with, or participates in meetings of, various other groups, Panels, and commissions to inform them of the Panel’s activities. Such activities in 2017-2018 included presentations at various forums like the Family Resource Advisory Board; the BIA Provider’s Conference; the Tribal State Collaboration Group, the Children’s Justice Act Task Force, and the Field Center for Children’s Policy, Practice and Research

▪ **CRP NATIONAL CONFERENCE:** 3 Alaska Panel members and the coordinator attended the National Conference on Mackinac Island, Michigan in early June. Among the topics discussed were Adverse Childhood Experiences, Child Abuse in England and Strategies from the United Kingdom, Head Trauma and CTE in Children, and Recruitment of CRP Panel Members.

▪ **CHANGES TO PANEL OPERATIONS:** The Alaska CRP led an effort to pass a legislative proposal (SB122) to move the Alaska CRP from within the budgetary control of OCS and under the Ombudsman’s Office. Sen. Coghill’s office was supportive of this work and assisted the CRP with this proposal in Juneau. Ultimately, the bill did not pass, but the CRP left the door open for further discussion and the potential for renewed efforts in this area. Discussions related to the furtherance of this effort will be held at the August Workplan Retreat.
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GOAL 1: Examine the effectiveness of the current administrative review process

The panel continued to hear two major concerns about the new administrative review process adopted by OCS in 2015:

1. The new process is too short and does not allow the opportunity for all parties of the case to know each other, nor discuss many aspects of the case.
2. The process serves mostly to check for minimal compliance and identify the next impending deadlines, with minimal attention to substantive progress on the case.

The new review process was a substantial change, and examining its efficacy and efficiency in comparison to the old process has been a goal for the CRP since the change. Our past work revealed that OCS senior management made the change to primarily improve efficiency, and ensure the reviews were completed on time.

This has traditionally been an area of strength for OCS. According to the CFSR in 2017, periodic case reviews were found to be a strength (Item 21). There were only three reviews overdue as of January 2017. Though data were unavailable on this item in 2009, stakeholder interviews established that case reviews were conducted regularly and on time. While it is clear that reviews are being completed in a timely fashion (efficiency), the CFSR does not assess the effectiveness of these reviews. CRP continues to receive complaints about their effectiveness since moving the reviews to the QA section. In discussions with OCS, the agency leadership expressed a desire to better understand these concerns.

The question remains as to the intended purpose of the review. Case workers former experience of the review was that parties had a chance to build rapport and collaborate on issues. As mentioned in point one above, they no longer experience this due to scheduling and time constraints and lack of participation by stakeholders. However, if the purpose of the review is to satisfy a federal mandate to ensure minimal compliance, then most parties interviewed on site visits agreed the current process is effectively achieving that outcome.

If the reviews are intended to provide constructive feedback for case workers on how to better achieve case plan objectives, case workers interviewed stated this was not the case rendering the review process somewhat demoralizing when compliance was not being met.
GOAL 2: Examine if ‘family reunification’ is prioritized as a goal for children in out-of-home placement, and OCS’ efforts is pursuit of ‘family reunification’.

The panel outlined five allegations stemming from the packet of information forwarded to the panel by Alaska Department of Law (DOL), Office of Special Prosecutions on January 18, 2016 (see the panel’s 2017 Annual Report). Among those, it was alleged that OCS does not prioritize family reunification, and spends very little resources on this effort.

Reunification is a widely preferred outcome when children are removed from their home. Federal law requires ‘reasonable efforts’ in all cases, and ‘active efforts’ in cases where the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) is applicable, to return the child home. Both federal and state laws provide exceptions in cases where reunification is not possible. Considerable debate over several decades pitching family reunification against the safety of the child caused major shifts in federal policy. Irrespective of the debates, OCS’ policies and practices must adhere to the current set of federal and state statutes and regulations. However, since circumstances of each case are unique, and the courts have some discretion in determining if reunification is preferred in a particular case, OCS’ practices may vary over a spectrum of possible paths in pursuit of permanency.

Statewide, family reunification was a stated priority for all stakeholders. Factors that contributed to the success of achieving this priority are:

- Personal investment of OCS personnel in the community they serve (i.e.: workers from the region, or neighboring regions)
- Workplace culture that promoted positive regard and empathy families
- Collaboration among families, and between case workers and families prior to removal of children
- Collaboration and respect between OCS case workers and ICWA workers.

Factors that contribute to poor results in the area of family reunification are

- Caseworkers with little to no personal investment in the community they serve (i.e.: new or experienced workers with no experience in the region or in other rural areas of Alaska)
- Workplace culture that projects poor expectations of families in the region
- Lack of support for preventative work in the community to build stronger safety nets for families in crisis
• Viewing ICWA workers as an obligatory stakeholder rather than an optional asset in case-planning resulting in poor or absent communication and little to no interest in collaboration

GOAL 3: Examine OCS’ efforts in finding relatives for placement of children in foster care.

In its 2017 Annual Report, the panel outlined five allegations stemming from the packet of information forwarded to the panel by Alaska Department of Law (DOL), Office of Special Prosecutions on January 18, 2016. Among those, it was alleged that the efforts of OCS’ workers in searching for relatives of children in foster care for their placement were inadequate.

Upon interviewing stakeholders in various regions, the panel learned that this is an area that appears to have been improved upon for the following reasons:

o In the **Southeast region**, OCS and partner agencies are made up of individuals who know and love the region they serve. The tribe has a very extensive database and collaborates well with OCS in finding relatives. Case workers are familiar with families in the region which allows them to take preventative measures as well as “score” well in the area of relative placement.

o The **Western region** is made up widely connected families which is a real asset for the region. Case workers in the region don’t appear to have the same level of investment as most of them are “transplants”, some even from out of state. The priority to place kids with families, from our observation is less when workers aren’t personally invested in the community they serve.

o McGrath was our **Northern region** site visit, which may or may not be a significant representation of the Region, but does cover many areas. The OCS worker in McGrath was stellar example of regional investment and collaboration. The connection maintained with community partners and families, despite the similar challenges faced by families in other regions, lead to relatively few children being placed in state custody. (Workers who have developed this level of efficacy should be considered for mentorship positions as described below in another section).

o Though a formal site visit report was never finalized for the **Anchorage region**, we do have significant findings in this area. Relative placement was not perceived as a priority for workers in Anchorage by community partners. Allowing deadlines to be the guide for completing relative searches, lack of collaboration with tribal entities and family advocates (GAL’s, attorneys, etc), and little effort to reach known family members (with letters, phone calls,
etc.) had been made. High caseloads, lack of mentorship, and low personal community investment among workers contribute to this. Policies are already in place, and the recent passing of SB 151, are intended to address these specific challenges.

As such, it’s very likely recommendations made for other areas will contribute to improvement in family reunification, and the CRP will avoid redundancy by not including additional recommendations for this goal.

**GOAL 4: Expand Public Outreach in collaboration with efforts under the Tribal-State strategic plan.**

“Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children: Strategic Plan 2016-2020” was released in August 2016, and is a product of innovative and collaborative work by OCS, several other state agencies, and many leaders from various Alaska Native tribes and tribal organizations. In response to the panel’s insistence, OCS invited the CRP to participate in any of the six Priority Area Working Groups to implement the plan. The panel consistently participated in two priority area group deliberations during this year.

The panel’s participation in the priority area groups opened some potential opportunities, and OCS and the CRP committed to leverage current efforts in furthering this work.

Members of this priority area group have been discussing various ways to maximize the CRP’s work and to avoid duplicate efforts. The CRP identified the following as possible cooperative efforts that should continue into the future work of the Panel:

1. Town hall meetings:
2. Survey of ICWA workers and Tribal Service Providers:

**GOAL 5: Strengthen the panel through aggressive recruitment of new members, enhanced website, and tools to reach diverse groups of stakeholders.**

**Recruitment** – The CRP was focused heavily on recruitment during the Fall/Summer of 2017 and winter of 2018. Due to low attendance and participation problems, the CRP needed to add new members to engage meaningfully. In November and December, 5 new panel members applied, were reviewed by the current panel, and were invited to join the CRP. This brought the numbers up significantly.

Continuing these recruitment efforts remained a focus throughout the year. During the Western Site Visit a town hall meeting was arranged by the Coordinator and held
by the local tribal organization. This allowed an expanded forum for engagement, and the Panel recruited 3 new members and added to the regional representation. All sites visited were given contact information for the CRP.

It is highlighted that the CRP continues to be a resource which isn’t well understood, needs promotion, and is limited in what information it receives (outside of direct site visits) as a result. Currently, the CRP has two pending applications and will likely add panel members representing the Northern Region as well as members with experience in the foster care system.

**Website** – Work and maintenance continues on the website. This year the site was reorganized by year rather than by type of document to make it more user friendly. It was also migrated to a more effective interface and upgraded network. Updates were made on a regular and continuous basis, and public meetings were posted on the home page for announcement.

**Mailing Lists** – The CRP Coordinator forwarded relevant emails to panelists, as well as updated the list of Annual Report recipients as required.
OTHER IMPORTANT FINDINGS FOR 2017-2018

Every year, during the course of its work, the Panel comes across various issues of importance to the delivery of child protection services in Alaska. Many of these issues are interconnected, and overlap with the goals for that year. While its mandate is broad and covers everything that the state and local child protection system does in Alaska, the Panel is limited by the available resources. Thus, this list does not include several other issues that could have been considered during this year.

CENTRALIZED INTAKE

The move to a centralized intake presented challenges for all regions including delays in dispatch, inconsistency in triaging and assigning a priority level, inaccurate and delayed reporting. Regions that already employed strong collaboration were able to utilize the new system while using local resources to handle the situation and care for children in need. Over time, it seems most regions have adapted and learned to make the intake system work for them. The CRP understands there is pressure from the federal government to standardize and centralize processes like intake, whether we like it or not.

WORKER SAFETY

In every region, worker safety was a concern. Dangerous animals as well as dangerous people were a concern. The lack of resources workers had to defend themselves such as bear spray or self-defense training and the lack of safety officers in some areas posed significant risk for workers. In the Southeast region, the CRP brokered information between OCS and JPD which resulted in safety training for the workers.

COLLABORATION WITH TRIBE IN WESTERN REGION / CULTURAL COMPETENCY:

The CRP observed a clear lack of collaboration with tribal/ICWA workers in case planning. In Yupik culture, lack of disagreement from a tribal member can be mistaken as agreement. ICWA workers may not question the OCS worker or advocate for a more culturally sensitive case plan and parents may not question the case plan, and that is viewed as agreement. However, avoiding confrontation is a cultural norm and self-advocacy is not promoted. In Yupik culture and, possibly, upon investigation for other tribes and regions, is that the presence of an elder gives the tribal member permission to advocate for other ideas. The elder does not need to intervene, as it was explained to us, but only to be present to empower the tribal member.
Recommendation 1:

- **IMPROVE ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW PROCESS:** The Panel recommends that OCS not transition to a judicial review process but fine-tune the current administrative process to make it more comprehensive.

  ✓ **ACTION:** OCS should take steps to: ensure that case workers are present during review; and maintain flexibility in scheduling so that there is maximum participation from interested parties.

  ✓ **ACTION:** OCS should evaluate the case-continuum for opportunities to build rapport and collaboration among all stakeholders if this (unintended, but crucial) objective is no longer being met during the Administrative Review (AR)

  ✓ **ACTION:** OCS should ensure case workers are provided with ample constructive and supportive feedback in how to better achieve compliance.

  ✓ **ACTION:** OCS should implement a training or orientation on the AR process be developed and delivered for case workers and families to better understand the scope and goals for AR and what should be the anticipated outcomes that follow from an AR.

Recommendation 2:

- **IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR FAMILY REUNIFICATION:** The Panel recommends that OCS take the following measures:

  ✓ **ACTION:** OCS should target recruiting efforts to workers with life experience in or near the regions they will be serving.

  ✓ **ACTION:** OCS should provide orientation and training that explains the often overlooked cycle of trauma children endure when separated from their families, and the reason family reunification is a priority. OCS supervisors and trainers should
encourage a strengths-based approach to working with parents.

✓ **ACTION:** OCS should support and train workers to practice early intervention / in-home efforts to prevent removal. We suggest drawing from the experience of more seasoned workers who do this very well in their regions to provide mentorship opportunities.

**Recommendation 3:**

- **STRENGTHENED CULTURAL COMPETENCY:** The Panel recommends that OCS leadership look into identifying the cultural differences that can contribute to bias among OCS workers and minorities, then find ways to improve their cultural competency.

✓ **ACTION:** This can be done through more observation, listening, and engagement, as well as targeted and evidence-based trainings like “Healthy Families” and “Knowing Who You Are.”

✓ **ACTION:** OCS should return to previous practices which included cultural competency training from local village councils or other tribal training partners. This not only builds from a collaborative foundation between OCS and the tribes, but also gives caseworkers an opportunity to engage with tribal representatives and establish better lines of communication for achieving ICWA objectives.

✓ **ACTION:** OCS should collaborate with tribes in the Western region to ascertain if and where the presence of an elder would empower ICWA workers and parents to take a more assertive role in case-planning leading to better results. The ICWA specialist could use the relationships with local elders and community leaders to help case workers develop effective strategy for community engagement and interaction with Tribal resources and perspective.

**Recommendation 4:**

- **INCREASED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** The Panel recommends that more community engagement be done during CRP site visits, and that the CRP work with regional OCS authorities to collaborate with other partners and stakeholders. This is not only to
broaden the scope of feedback the CRP receives, but also allows the CRP to facilitate the constructive exchange of vital information between stakeholders increasing collaboration.

✓ **ACTION:** Encourage local/regional OCS leadership to help arrange and facilitate townhall or “talking circle” type meetings during each site visit that the CRP conducts in 2018-2019.

**Recommendation 5:**

- **WORKER BURNOUT AND VACANCIES:** Recruiting, supporting, and retaining workers that have the skills, character, and resilience to serve the needs of Alaskan families is key. Of the regions the CRP has visited, the ones that produce the best results have some things in common. Staff at varying levels include people who have time invested in the region as well as in their field of work. Workers producing the best results are invested in the communities they serve either because they grew up in the area, or they have lived there long enough to consider it home. In a field where the average worker lasts about 2.5 years, those that have 5 and 10+ years in the field are invaluable assets, especially if they’re invested in their region.

The panel presumes there is a significant screening process for new applicants, but across the regions, the shared perspective is that the current crisis has led to a significant decrease in the qualifications to becoming a case worker including job-specific education and experience. While this may serve to fill empty positions, it doesn’t send the best Alaska has to offer into our areas of greatest need. In fact, sending unqualified workers into the field has created more problems, per our observation and the feedback we’ve received, than it has resolved including distrust and animosity between families and OCS. This and a lack of focus on self-care perpetuate burn-out at a high cost to families, workers, and the state budget.

✓ **ACTION:** OCS should tighten its hiring policies in the following ways:
Acquire or develop a tool that screens job applicants for resiliency.

Require applicants have field-related experience and/or education.

✓ **ACTION:** OCS should provide wellness support for staff including on-site counseling, education and training in secondary traumatic stress at least annually, and mandatory self-care including supportive check-ins with supervisors, breaks, and walks/exercise.

**Recommendation 6:**

**o IMPROVE CENTRALIZED INTAKE:** While regions are adapting to what may be an irreversible change, there are still significant concerns about the efficacy of the current intake process. Stakeholders across the regions shared frustration over the inconsistency of the process and the intake worker’s inability to facilitate necessary actions in a region they are unfamiliar with in a timely manner.

✓ **ACTION:** Equip centralized intake workers with region-specific resources and a concise standardized assessment tool for prioritizing calls based on already existing OCS policies and procedures.
PROGRESS ON 2017 RECOMMENDATIONS

The CRP had 6 recommendations in the June 2017 Annual Report. Continuity in the panel and the panel goals has been lacking, and there was limited capacity to pursue updates on the recommendations from last year. Therefore, the observations of the current panel members will be limited.

1. **Recommendation 1: Consider assigning the CRP a significant role in implementing various priority areas of “Transforming Child Welfare Outcomes for Alaska Native Children: Strategic Plan 2016-2020”**.
   - ✓ The CRP has been given the opportunity to participate in all work groups, but panel capacity and inconsistency in calendaring of meetings did not allow for regular, meaningful, or consistent participation. The former chair regularly attended work group meetings and did often participate. However, his institutional knowledge is now gone and the current panel members have not had a chance to participate in work groups on a regular basis.

2. **Recommendation 2: Speed up the process and implement the new tracking system of grievances by December 2017**
   - ✓ This recommendation was not reviewed by the current panel members.

3. **Recommendation 3: Establish adequate connection between a case file and any related grievances, with necessary protection for worker identity**.
   - ✓ This recommendation was not reviewed by the current panel members.

4. **Recommendation 4: Publish monthly aggregate data on number of grievances received, nature of those grievances, and time to resolution of those grievances online**.
   - ✓ Current Panel members attempted to find the data mentioned, but were unable to locate any of the materials. This is of interest to the Panel and any information related to this data or progress on the recommendation should be provided to the CRP.

5. **Recommendation 5: OCS should work with CRP to strengthen CRP’s ability as a robust mechanism for public participation, and rely on it to improve public awareness of the nature and content of OCS work**.
   - ✓ The current Panel continues to be motivated to improve the collaborative relationship between OCS and the CRP.
Recommendation 6: OCS should continue to work with CRP to identify a clear working relationship under the participatory evaluation framework.

✓ Monthly OCS/CRP calls have been held on a consistent basis, and OCS regional leadership is invited to participate in the site visit reports, to provide comments, and to offer feedback on recommendations.
APPENDIX

Appendices are not included with this report. They are available by request. Please email admin@crpalaska.org

1. CRP 2017-2018 Annual Workplan
2. 2018 CRP Southeast Region Site Visit Report
3. 2018 CRP Western Region Site Visit Report
4. 2018 CRP Northern Region Site Visit Report

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES IN ALASKA are administered through a complex network of various government, non-government, tribal, for-profit, non-profit, and private agencies and organizations. A majority of these entities are located in Anchorage, or other major urban centers or hub communities across the state. The Office of Children’s Services (OCS) is a state-designated agency, primarily responsible for responding to and addressing reports of child maltreatment and providing child protective services in Alaska. It is situated within the Department of Health and Social Services. OCS operates through 5 regional offices and 25 field offices. In addition, OCS provides a number of its services through contracts and grants to numerous organizations located across the state.