Child Welfare Division
500 Summer Street NE, E67
Salem, OR 97301-1067

November 10, 2026

Desta Walsh
Citizen Review Board
Oregon Judicial Department
1163 State Street
Salem, OR 97301
Sent via email

Dear Ms. Walsh:

This letter responds to the recommendations made in the CAPTA Citizen Review Panel report for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

1. Convene a Family Decision Meeting prior to reunification.

"Family Decision-Making Meetings" are defined in ORS 417.365-375 and are specific to the period of 30-60 days after a child has entered substitute care. Oregon Administrative Rule 413-040-0000(24-25) reflects the change in terminology to "Family Engagement Meeting" (FEM)[1].

Although FEMs are required at the beginning of the case, they may be convened at any time to support family engagement in the case plan and ensure clear communication to all parties. These meetings can be convened prior to reunification to support both the in-home safety plan and transition planning with all relevant parties.

Complementary efforts to prevent re-entry into foster care are described in the Collaborative Agreement update on pages 46-47[2].

[1] See also OAR 413-040-0008 for the requirements of an FEM.
[2] https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/data/cwdata/cw-cse-report-05-01-2026.pdf

2. Develop ongoing safety plans in collaboration with parents and providers.

As described in the Child Welfare Procedure Manual[3] (Chapter 3, Section 7, beginning on page 296), safety plans must be developed including the parent(s) and relevant providers.

As part of the Collaborative Agreement, CW is implementing improvements to safety plan development, including fidelity and quality of safety plans. (See page 108 of the ODHS Progress Report dated 5/1/26[4]).

3. Ensure continuity of key services through transition home.

CW will review and consider this recommendation. Continuity of specific services is sometimes complicated or entirely prevented by limitations of funding source, scope of service, or availability of providers. Complementary efforts to prevent re-entry into foster care are described in the Collaborative Agreement update on pages 46-47[5].

4. Encourage development of sustainable community supports.

The Collaborative Agreement progress report (pages 61-79) describes in detail the agency's work with many partners to develop and sustain a wide continuum of sustainable community supports to meet children's needs, particularly in behavioral health.

CW supports community prevention activities like relief nurseries, early learning hubs, and youth mentoring through the administration of Social Services Block Grant funds.

CW administers the CAPTA grant and the related prevention activities are detailed in the Comprehensive Statewide Plan to Prevent Child Maltreatment Fatalities.

[3] https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/rules-policy/Documents/cw-procedure-manual.pdf
[4] https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/data/cwdata/cw-cse-report-05-01-2026.pdf
[5] https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/data/cwdata/cw-cse-report-05-01-2026.pdf

As noted in the 2027 Annual Progress and Services Review (APSR)[6], CW has revised its Family First Prevention Services Plan, including updates to community-based supports.

5. Develop communication plans to address concerns before they escalate.

CW is implementing a Safety Action Plan (detailed in the Child Welfare Progress Reports to the Governor[7]) which includes many strategies. This includes reviewing the Oregon Safety Model and related safety practices with the workforce to ensure staff have foundational knowledge to make accurate safety decisions and to improve safety outcomes for children and families.

As described in the Child Welfare Procedure Manual (Chapter 4, Section 14, beginning on p. 665), developing clear communication plans with the family, safety service providers, and any relevant providers is part of the reunification procedure.

6. Monitor child wellbeing after reunification and respond promptly.

CW's efforts to reduce re-entry into foster care, detailed in the Collaborative Agreement progress report (pages 44-46) include timely and high-quality contacts with children and parents to monitor safety and assess for additional services and supports.

7. Hold a placement prevention meeting prior to disrupting in-home plans.

CW will review and consider this recommendation. Complementary efforts to prevent re-entry into foster care are described in the Collaborative Agreement update on pages 46-47[8].

[6] https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/data/cwdata/cw-apsr-2027.pdf
[7] May 2026: https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/child-welfare-transformation/progressreports/cw-progress-report-2026-05.pdf. August 2026: https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/child-welfare-transformation/progressreports/cw-progress-report-2026-08.pdf.
[8] https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/data/cwdata/cw-cse-report-05-01-2026.pdf

8. Provide current ongoing safety plans to the court and CRB in specific cases.

Scheduled CRB Reviews

As described in the Child Welfare Procedure Manual (Chapter 9, section 4, beginning on page 1956), caseworkers are required to provide the CRB with the requested documents. They must also be prepared to discuss the ongoing safety plan.

The current Request for Case Information sheet[9], which comes from CRB to CW, specifically requests the safety plan when children are in-home, but does not request ongoing safety plans in general.

Full judicial reviews and/or placement changes when children are placed with a parent

Ongoing safety plans are part of the discovery required by ORS 419B.881, including for review hearings and shelter hearings.

Please address any questions or comments to Megan Brazo-Erickson: megan.j.brazo-erickson@odhs.oregon.gov.

[9] https://www.courts.oregon.gov/programs/crb/volunteer/Documents/2024.11.20_RCI%20Form.docx