

Child Fatality and Near Fatality External Review Panel

Virtual Meeting

Tuesday, August 18, 2026

MINUTES

Members Present: Judge, Lauren Adams Ogden, Chair; Dr. Christina Howard, Child Abuse Pediatrician, University of Kentucky; Dr. Elizabeth Salt, Citizen Foster Care Review Board; Hon. Olivia McCollum, Practicing Local Prosecutor; Victoria Benge, Executive Director, CASA; Nicole Smith Abbott, LCSW; Brittany Nichols, State Child Fatality Review Team; Dr. William Ralson, Chief Medical Examiner, OME; Lesa Dennis, Commissioner Department for Community Based Services; Senator Danny Carroll, State Senate, District 2; Mike Bowling, Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky; Heather McCarty, Regional Manager, FRYSC; Dr. Danielle Anderson, Practicing Medication-Assisted Treatment; Lt. Jonathan Murphy, Kentucky State Police, Post 2; Geoff Wilson, Association of Addiction Professionals; Dr Lyndsey Neese, Department for Public Health; and Olivia Spradlin, ZeroV.

Welcome

Judge Lauren Adams Ogden, Chair

Chair Ogden welcomed everyone to the August meeting of the Child Fatality and Near Fatality External Review Panel. First item of business on the agenda is the approval of the Minutes and Case Review Summaries of the July meeting. Dr. Salt made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Heather McCarty. With no objections, the July Minutes and Case Review Summaries stand as approved.

Next item of business is the recent legislative testimony; Steve Shannon yet again volunteered to testify before the Interim Joint Committee on Judiciary. We are grateful Steve gave his time to testify on behalf of the panel.

Elisha shared with the panel, unfortunately Steve could not join us today but wanted to share a few things about the testimony. Rep. Nemes suggested that if the panel had any recommendations for amendments on the medical marijuana bill to please share with him. Since a few members are unable to join today, I will send an email after this meeting requesting any recommendations. Once those have been compiled, I'll share that information with the committee. Sen. Carroll may have a few additional thoughts to share but overall, it was an excellent meeting.

Sen. Carroll agreed, the main thing discussed during that meeting were the gummies concerning the appearance and flavor. That will probably be one of the primary things we can address as move forward.

Judge Ogden reminded members to be on the lookout for that email. Reminder next month's September meeting will be held in conjunction with the Kids Are Worth Conference. This will be an all-day in-person meeting. The conference will be held on September 14th and 15th at the Central Bank Center, 430 West Vine Street in Lexington. Please let Elisha know if you plan on attending in person and she will take care of accommodation. If you are interested in attending the conference, please know registration closes on August 31st. There are discount room rates available at the downtown Hyatt. If you need any

assistance with registration or overnight accommodations, please contact Elisha. The panel meeting will be held in Meeting Room 11, on the second floor of the Central Bank Center.

Lastly, we have attempted to set a date for a subcommittee meeting in order to help our organization become in compliance with the changes as result of HB 778. We have scheduled a default date of Friday, September 18th at 3:00 p.m. via zoom. Elisha will send an invite to the entire panel. If you can join, please do. With no other business to address, we will proceed with the updates on the pending cases.

Pending Cases:

NF-182-25-C – Jennifer Burke provided an update regarding out of state criminal charges. No changes to findings.

NF-101-25-C – Jennifer Burke provided an update on law enforcement and custody. No changes to original findings. Invite law enforcement on this case to discuss barriers.

F-058-25-NC – Cynthia Hildebrandt provided an update on birth records and law enforcement records. Missed opportunities for delay in drug screening and failure to pursue criminal charges. Invite law enforcement to discuss events.

F-063-25-PH – Cynthia Hildebrandt provided an update on the child's mental health records. Medical issues and medical neglect were added to the original findings.

NF-142-25-C – Cynthia Hildebrandt provided an update from law enforcement. Additional findings were included for DCBS issues.

Case Reviews:

The following cases were reviewed by the Panel. A case summary of findings and recommendations are attached and made a part of these minutes.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Case #</u>	<u>Analyst</u>
1	NF-015-25-C	Jennifer Burke
2	F-042-25-C	Jennifer Burke
3	F-056/057-25-C	Jennifer Burke
4	F-008-26-C	Cynthia Hildebrandt
4	F-016-25-NC	Cynthia Hildebrandt
3	NF-018-25-C	Cynthia Hildebrandt
1	NF-048-25-C	Cynthia Hildebrandt
2	NF-061-25-C	Emily Neal
1	NF-184-25-NC	Jennifer Burke
2	NF-089-25-C	Jennifer Burke
3	NF-168-25-C	Jennifer Burke
4	F-026-25-C	Cynthia Hildebrandt
3	F-021-25-C	Cynthia Hildebrandt

Additional Discussion:

Discussion surrounding how the panel can capture the severity of some of the cases that do not meet the definition of torture.

Kentucky needs a set standard THC amount to determine when it's illegal to operate a vehicle, especially if there are children in the car. Dr. Anderson added there are some states that have rapid forms of testing but unclear if it's admissible for DUID purposes. It appears the availability is very low. Education is a major issue as well, even with medical marijuana. Patients need additional education surrounding operating a motor vehicle while using medical marijuana. Ohio has a legal marijuana limit.

Next meeting will be held in-person on September 15th at 9:00 a.m. Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Dennis and seconded by Dr. Howard. With no other business, the meeting is adjourned.