



December 28, 2019

Lincoln Arneal
Nebraska Project Everlast Citizen Review Panel
Nebraska Children and Families Foundation
215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 200
Lincoln, NE 68508

RE: Annual Report and Recommendations

Dear Project Everlast Citizen Review Panel Members,

The Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) would like to thank the Citizen Review Panel (CRP) for your work over the last year. We have reviewed the 2018-2019 Annual Report and appreciate the continued effort the CRP. DCFS has recognized the importance of the CRP Annual Report recommendations and the following is an outline of the steps taken towards those requests:

The development of a RedBook binder which contains the necessary information, resources, and contact information for system-involved youth.

DCFS is exploring options for implementation of the RedBook through coordination with CRP members. DCFS looks forward to receiving a mock RedBook for review. In addition, DCFS has explored similar formats utilized in CFS field work such as the MyRecords Transitioning into Adulthood Independent Living binder. Finally, DCFS will develop Standard Work instruction to ensure all youth receive and understand the RedBook binder.

Review and enhance the grievance process.

DCFS, in partnership with the CRP, is drafting 'quick tips' to be posted on the DHHS website. The 'quick tips' will outline examples as to why a grievance can be raised with DHHS, such as a statute violation. It will also include alternate steps when the identified issues aren't able to be held as a grievance. DCFS is developing an online grievance submission form to streamline accessibility and confidentiality.

The implementation of a peer advocate program.

DCFS is working to identify and learn about peer advocate programs in other states and in Nebraska community collaborations to inform a peer advocate model that is sustainable and meets the recommendations of the CRP. In collaboration with the CRP, DCFS has developed a feedback loop to help inform what approach would be best for the youth and families involved in a peer advocate program.

We look forward to the continued collaboration and recommendations this coming year. Thank you again on behalf of the children and families of Nebraska.

Sincerely,



Lori Harder, Deputy Director
Division of Children and Family Services
NE Department of Health and Human Services