



NOVEMBER 2014 REVISION

California Child Welfare Council

Operations Manual

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Table of Contents

- I. Introduction
- II. Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles and Challenge Criteria
- III. Membership Selection, Appointment, Orientation and Participation
- IV. Organizational Structure
- V. Decision-Making Processes
- VI. Communications
- VII. Resources
- APPENDIX I By-Laws
- APPENDIX II Authorizing Statute

I. Introduction

The Child Welfare Leadership and Accountability Act of 2006 (AB 2216, Chapter 384) established the California Child Welfare Council (Council), to serve as an advisory body responsible for improving the collaboration and processes of the multiple agencies and the courts that serve the children and youth in the child welfare and foster care systems. Charged with monitoring and reporting the extent to which child welfare and foster care programs and the courts are responsive to the needs of children in their joint care, the Council may issue advisory reports whenever it deems appropriate, and is required to report at least annually to the Governor, the Legislature, the Judicial Council and the public.

Co-chaired by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the designee of the Chief Justice of California, the Council has met quarterly since November, 2007. This Operations Manual describes the Council's underlying principles for conducting business, process for selecting members and attendance requirements, organizational structure, decision-making processes, communication practices, and resources. The complete By-Laws and text of the authorizing statute may be found in Appendices I and II. This manual will be periodically revised and updated to reflect Council's commitment to continually improve practices to accomplish its goals.

II. Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles and Challenge Criteria

Vision

Every California child lives in a safe, stable, permanent home, nurtured by healthy families with the capacity to meet the child's needs and support the child's well-being, and is prepared for the transition into adulthood and becoming a contributing member of society.

Mission

We provide an effective, collaborative forum for the three branches of government, foster youth and their families, and key stakeholders to advocate for effective and promising strategies and adequate resources to improve outcomes for children, youth and families involved with or at risk of involvement with the child welfare system.

Guiding Principles

1. Collaboration is essential among the three branches of government, foster youth and their families and key stakeholders to achieving improved outcomes for children, youth and families.
2. Accountability for child, youth and family outcomes is shared between federal, state, and local governments and among multiple agencies, the courts, community partners, families, and youth.
3. Engaging families and youth in the development, implementation and evaluation of services, programs, and policies is essential to achieving improved system outcomes.
4. Sharing data and information across governmental jurisdictions, agencies and the courts promotes more informed program planning, development and evaluation. At the local level, it enables the linkage of children, youth and families to appropriate community services and supports.
5. Best and promising practices should be replicated statewide where appropriate and possible.
6. Maximizing and using multiple funding sources flexibly across systems provides resources needed to meet the comprehensive and complex needs of children, youth and their families.
7. Recommendations will be culturally appropriate, strength-based, evidence-informed, and outcomes-driven to ensure that all children, youth and their families are treated fairly and equally without regard to age, race, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity.

Challenge Criteria (when the Council is deciding whether or not to address an issue, the following questions are to be asked to determine if the issue is an appropriate one for Council consideration)

1. Does the challenge fall within one of the thirteen areas initially identified under the statute as requiring Council focus?
2. Does the challenge require an interagency response or is it a single agency/system challenge?
3. Does the challenge represent an urgent priority (short-term or long-term) upon which the Council could have a positive impact and which could be realistically initiated within the next 12 to 24 months?
4. Does the challenge support the State's work in meeting Federal and State child welfare/foster care system outcomes? Do some challenges support progress toward outcomes more than others?
5. Could the challenge be addressed outside the Council? Are there groups that already have addressed or are addressing a challenge where the Council could glean lessons learned, avoid duplication of effort, or build on existing work?

III. Membership Selection, Appointment, Orientation and Participation

Representation

The Council shall annually assess its membership to determine if all of the stakeholders and stakeholder groups listed in Welfare and Institutions Code §16541 (a) – (q) are represented by active members. If there is a position or group that is not represented or underrepresented, the Council shall follow the process outlined below to fill the identified gap in membership.

Appointments

The process for appointments to the Council includes:

- Staff consults with the identified individual or representatives of the group(s) needing representation to get recommendations and background information on potential new members.
- Staff presents recommended new members to the Co-Chairs.
- Co-Chairs' select new members and invite them to join the Council.
- New members accept the appointment.
- Appointment of new members is announced by posting on website and introduction of the new members at next Council meeting.

New Member Orientation

As needed, staff will schedule orientations for new Council members and any other Council members desiring a refresher. The orientation will include an overview of the history of the Council; recent activities and products; logistics; and a review of the Operations Manual.

Attendance

Under the Bylaws, Council members not specifically identified in statute may not have more than three absences from Council meetings within one year. If such a member is absent from more than three meetings, he or she shall be considered to have resigned from the Council and the Co-Chairs will appoint a new member, except in cases where the member's absence has been excused by one of the Co-Chairs.

Resignations

Council members not specifically identified in statute may resign for any reason by submitting a written request to the Co-Chairs asking to be removed from the Council.

IV. Organizational Structure

Council

The Council meets quarterly, as specified by its enabling statute, to keep informed about current child welfare priorities and to review work completed by committees and task groups and to establish new areas for study. Council staff¹ supports and tracks activities occurring between meetings and organizes a draft agenda and discussion items for upcoming Council meetings for review and approval by the Steering Committee and the Co-Chairs. Council staff keeps the Council website up-to-date, including posting all meeting materials and agendas within timeframes prescribed by law.

Steering Committee

In December 2011, the Co-Chairs appointed a Steering Committee comprised of seven Council members to (1) work with Council staff to advise the Co-Chairs and members regarding issues and processes that should be addressed; (2) be involved in the development of Council meeting agendas; and (3) give input to the Operations Manual. Effective July 2015, the Steering Committee members will serve for two years, and the Co-Chairs will appoint new members. The Steering Committee will include representation from the array of public, private and consumer agencies that comprise the membership of the Council.

Parent and Youth Discussion Group

To ensure that the consumer voice is fully present at Council meetings, Council staff will meet upon request by parent and youth representatives before Council meetings to discuss the agenda items for the upcoming meeting, answer any questions they may have, and assist in preparation for the Council meeting. After the meeting parents and youth may request a call to debrief the Council's discussion of agenda items and to provide clarification on any of the points made during the meeting.

Standing Committees

As provided for by statute, committees may be appointed by the co-chairs. Committees may include any combination of Council members, experts in specialized fields, foster youth, program stakeholders, state and county child welfare and foster care staff, child advocacy organizations, members of the judiciary, foster care public health nurses, or others as appropriate. Council members are expected to serve on a committee of their choice. Committees should be comprised of representatives from the multiple systems involved in their respective subject areas and should identify how effective collaboration can occur. Committees may advise the Council on any functions of the Council, assemble information, and make recommendations to the Council, but may not exercise any of the powers vested in the Council.

The Council has established four standing committees for the following purposes:

Prevention and Early Intervention

- Help establish a statewide prevention/early intervention platform through identification of research-informed practices that are a best fit for California.
- Bring Differential Response to scale statewide.

¹ See Section VII for a description of Council staff.

- Identify potential federal finance reforms that could promote prevention and early intervention.
- Serve as the statewide Citizens' Review Panel (CRP) as required by the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act and submit a report to the California Department of Social Services annually on its CRP activities.

Permanency

- Identify and remove barriers and recommend best practices to achieve speedy permanency for all children in foster care.

Child Development and Successful Youth Transitions

- Explore issues related to the health, mental health, educational and social development needs of all children and youth in the child welfare system, from the very young through transition to adulthood, and make recommendations on how to address them.
- Gather information on what works and recommend replication of proven policies and practices in one jurisdiction for expansion to other jurisdictions.

Data Linkages and Information Sharing

- Link data across major child-serving agencies (child welfare, education, vital statistics, health, mental health and substance use) to give caregivers, social workers, multidisciplinary teams and courts the ability to ensure continuity of care for children, youth and families.
- Develop essential tools to measure outcomes across systems at the state and local levels in order to improve access to and the quality of services for children, youth and families.

Overarching Issues and Ad Hoc Task Forces

Each committee is also charged with the overarching responsibility for monitoring and reporting, as appropriate, on strategies to reduce disproportionality of African American and Native American children and youth in the child welfare system; to increase families' access to services; to promote inter-agency and inter-branch collaboration; to overcome funding barriers and identify innovations; to identify ways to bring best practices to scale statewide; and to address other subjects identified by the Council that relate to the work of *all* of the committees.

In addition, the Co-Chairs may appoint ad hoc task forces to address issues that are germane to the work of the full Council. In its first years of operation, two overarching task forces were formed: one to address the issue of foster children's equal access to medically necessary mental health services when they are placed outside their county of court jurisdiction; the other to address the issue of securing child welfare families' priority access to services not within the direct purview of the Child Welfare System. In 2012 a third task force was formed to coordinate efforts of the California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care and the Child Welfare Council, with Council members serving on both groups as its members; this Task Force completed its work as of June 30, 2014, concurrent with the sun-setting of the Commission. In 2013 a fourth task force was formed to address how the child welfare system can effectively serve victims and those at risk of becoming victims of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), which operates as the CSEC Action Team.

V. Decision-Making Processes²

On items requiring a decision by the Council, the Co-Chairs will identify the means by which the decision will be made, using the following guidelines to make this determination. Generally, as the level of involvement in decision-making increases, so does the level of ownership or buy-in to the process and the outcome.

Decide and Announce

The Co-Chairs make the decision with little or no input and then announce the decision to the Council members or others who will be affected by, or must carry out, the decision.

Gather Input from Individuals and Decide

The Co-Chairs ask a committee, workgroup or selected individuals for input (ideas, suggestions, information). The Co-Chairs then make a decision.

Gather Input from Council Members and Decide

The Co-Chairs ask Council members to share their ideas in a meeting. The Co-Chairs decide after hearing from the Council.

Consensus

The Co-Chairs facilitate a discussion that leads to a decision that all members agree to uphold and support. All key stakeholders are given an opportunity to give their opinion and to understand the implications of various options. All members, including the Co-Chairs, have the same formal power to support or block proposals. If consensus cannot be reached, the Co-Chairs select a fallback decision-making option.

Majority Vote

The Co-Chairs ask members to vote on an item, and the decision will go to the position cast by the majority of Council members present.

Delegate Decision with Constraints

The Co-Chairs define the decision that needs to be made in the form of a question, clarify the constraints on the decision (e.g., budget, timeframe, quality requirements), and delegate the decision to others. The Co-Chairs do not alter the decision as long as it complies with the constraints.

Decisions Relating to Implementation Activities after Approval

Once the Council has approved a particular project, the ongoing work of the responsible Committee or Task Force does not have to return to the Council for approval of actions taken to implement the approved recommendations. Rather, the group will check-in periodically at Council meetings to report on progress and receive feedback from Council members and the public.

² Adapted from "Levels of Involvement in Decision-Making;" Interaction Associates, Inc.; 2007

VI. Communications

The Council primarily communicates with the public and members through its website (www.chhs.ca.gov/initiatives/CACChildWelfareCouncil/) and e-mail, in addition to the quarterly Council meetings. Committees and workgroups hold in-person and conference call meetings. All Council, committee and workgroup meetings are open to the public. Pursuant to Bagley-Keene Act requirements, the policies for public notice of meetings are as follows:

California Child Welfare Council

Public notice must be given for the date, time, location and conference call number of all Council meetings and the meetings must be accessible to the public. If a Council member joins the meeting via conference call, public notice must be given for the location from which the Council member is calling, and the location must be accessible to the public. No public notice or disclosure of location is required for non-Council members to join the meeting via conference call.

Child Welfare Council Committees and Task Forces

Members of Council committees and workgroups meet after Council meetings and may meet in between meetings for the purpose of carrying out approved Council work plans. Meetings and conference calls are convened by the respective chairs of these groups and do not need to be noticed publically if membership on the group is less than a quorum of the full Council. If membership on the group includes a quorum of the full Council or more, then public notice must be given for the date, time location and conference call number of the meeting, and the meeting must be accessible to the public.

VII. Resources

The pace of Council work is dependent on whether resources are available to support its work plan. In addition to limited paid state staff, the volunteer time contributed by Council members, state staff, county staff, advocates, and consumers of services allows the work to progress. Foundation support has funded consultation for special projects.

Council Members' Time and Expertise

Council members donate considerable resources to the work of the Council through their participation at Council meetings, committee meetings, and workgroup meetings. On a voluntary basis, some Council members work on projects between meetings based on their respective areas of expertise.

Non-Council Members' Time and Expertise

Many child welfare stakeholders who are not on the Council are involved in supporting the Council's work through attendance at Council meetings and participation on committee and workgroup meetings. They also volunteer to work on projects between meetings based on their respective areas of expertise. Staff from departments represented on the Council also provide considerable support to the work of the Council and its committees and workgroups.

Grants and In-kind Contributions

Members of the Council, its Committees and Task Forces may obtain grants or in-kind contributions to support projects related to the respective work plans.

Council Staff

The Administrative Office of the Courts donates 0.25 full time equivalent Council staff time. The Administrative Office of the Courts also provides equipment, supplies, facilities and meeting materials, and covers the travel expenses of Council members who are current and former foster youth. The California Health and Human Services Agency donates 0.50 full time equivalent Council staff time and also maintains the Council website. Additional staff resources are available through grants from foundations to support designated projects.

Reimbursement for Expenses

Foster youth and former foster youth who are members of the Council are reimbursed by the State of California for all actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as Council members. All other Council members' time and travel costs are covered in-kind by their state, county and nonprofit employers or through their own individual contributions.

Bylaws

I. AUTHORITY

The Child Welfare Council's general authority is granted under Sections 16540-16545 of the Welfare and Institutions Code. Under this statute, the Council is authorized to serve as an advisory body responsible for improving the collaboration and processes of the multiple agencies and the courts that serve the children and youth in the child welfare and foster care systems. The Council shall monitor and report the extent to which child welfare and foster care programs and the courts are responsive to the needs of children in their joint care.

II. ORGANIZATION

The authorized membership of the Council is comprised of:

- The Secretary of California Health and Human Services, who shall serve as co-chair.
- The Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court, or his or her designee, who shall serve as co-chair.
- The Superintendent of Public Instruction, or his or her designee.
- The Chancellor of the California Community Colleges, or his or her designee.
- The Executive Director of the State Board of Education.
- The Director of Social Services.
- The Director of Health Services.
- The Director of Mental Health.
- The Director of Alcohol and Drug Programs.
- The Director of Developmental Services.
- The Director of the Youth Authority.
- The Administrative Director of the Courts.
- The State Foster Care Ombudsperson.
- Four foster youth or former foster youth.
- The chairpersons of the Assembly Human Services Committee and the Assembly Judiciary Committee, or two other Members of the Assembly as appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.
- The chairpersons of the Senate Human Services Committee and the Senate Judiciary Committee, or two other members appointed by the President pro Tempore of the Senate.
- Leaders and representatives of county child welfare, foster care, health, education, probation, and mental health agencies and departments, child advocacy organizations; labor organizations, recognized professional associations that
 - represent child welfare and foster care social workers, tribal representatives, and
 - other groups and stakeholders that provide benefits, services, and advocacy to families and children in the child welfare and foster care systems, as recommended by representatives of these groups and as designated by the co-chairs.

(Authority: Welfare and Institutions Code §16541)

Members of the Council not specifically identified in statute shall not accrue more than three absences from Council meetings within one year. If such member is absent from more than three meetings, he or she shall be deemed to have resigned from the Council and the co-chairs shall appoint a new member,

except in cases where the member's absence has been excused by one of the co-chairs (Welfare and Institutions Code Section 16541).

Official Address

*California Health and Human Services Agency
1600 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814*

Committees

Committees may be appointed by the co-chairs. Committees may be composed of council members, experts in specialized fields, foster youth, program stakeholders, state and county child welfare and foster care staff, child advocacy organizations, members of the judiciary, foster care public health nurses, or any combination thereof. Committees may advise the Council on any functions of the Council, may assemble information, make recommendations to the Council, but shall not exercise any of the powers vested in the Council.

(Authority: Welfare and Institutions Code §16542)

III. MEETINGS

The Council shall meet at least quarterly, at the call of the co-chairs, at times and locations convenient to the public as it deems appropriate.

(Authority: Welfare and Institutions Code §16541.5)

Notice of Meetings

Notice of Council meetings, special meetings and Committee meetings shall be given pursuant to Government Code § 11125 of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act. Notices shall be mailed to all members of the Council and all other interested persons, at least ten (10) days prior to each meeting. Notice shall be given and made available on the Health and Human Services website at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting and shall include the name, address and telephone number of any person who can provide further information prior to the meeting. The notice of a meeting of the Council shall include a specific agenda for the meeting, with a brief description of the items of business to be transacted or discussed in either open or closed session.

Quorum

A majority of the members of the Council shall constitute a quorum.

(Authority: Government Code §11122.5)

Designees

The Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Chancellor of California Community Colleges may send an alternate or designee who may be counted for a quorum and vote. No other alternate or designee may be counted for a quorum or vote.

Open Meetings

All meetings of the Council shall be open to the public. Closed meetings can only be held in accordance with provisions of Government Code § 11126.

(Authority: Government Code § 11123)

Written Material

Any writings distributed to any member of the Council for discussion or consideration at a public meeting, are public records under Government Code § 6250 et seq., the California Public Records Act, and shall be made available to members of the public. A reasonable fee for reproduction and mailing of materials may be charged to any person requesting a copy of a public document. The Council shall not be required to make public information which is proprietary, privileged or otherwise protected.
(Authority: Government Code § 6254 and §11125.1)

Mailing List

An official Council mailing list shall be maintained and annually updated, consisting of all interested persons, public agencies, etc., requesting notification of meetings.

VI. AMENDMENTS

Amendment

All amendments to these Bylaws, except where specified by statute, may be adopted at any regular business meeting by a majority affirmative vote of the total authorized membership of the Council.

DRAFT

Authorizing Statute

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) The State of California undertakes the responsibility of providing a safe environment and developmental opportunities for over 85,000 children and youth who have been removed from their homes and placed in foster care because of instances of abuse and neglect.

(b) According to the California Performance Review report, although the state is responsible for ensuring that foster children and youth receive mandated services through several different departments, California's services to support its foster children's basic needs is not nearly sufficient to meet all of their needs. Even though the incidence of emotional, behavioral, and developmental problems among foster children and youth is three to six times greater than among nonfoster children, 25 percent of foster children and youth are not receiving timely medical care, one-half are not receiving needed mental health services and one-half are not receiving dental care. Similarly, 75 percent of foster youth are working below grade level, nearly one-half do not complete high school, and as few as 15 percent attend college. Statewide leadership and coordination between departments and agencies is essential to addressing these dismal outcomes and providing foster children and youth with critically needed support and services at the local level.

(c) Even if the state successfully decreases the number of foster children and youth entering the system, the state must ensure that current foster youth are self-sufficient at the time they emancipate from the system. The state is currently failing in this measure. Unemployment rates for emancipated youth are estimated at 50 percent, nearly one-third of foster children and youth will become homeless within one year of emancipating, fewer than 15 percent of foster youth enroll in college, and approximately one-third of foster youth will be on public assistance shortly after emancipating.

(d) A recent report from the State Department of Social Services found the indirect costs of child mistreatment and foster care, such as juvenile delinquency, adult criminality, and lost productivity to society, total \$95 billion annually. Fiscally sound, long-term investment in the state's children now should reap future savings for the state that can be reinvested to keep at-risk children and families self-sufficient and out of the child welfare system. Moreover, advocating for more flexible federal funding of our state's child welfare system will enable resources to be used to better support families in need and keep more families intact.

(e) In 2001, the Legislature passed the Child Welfare System Improvement and Accountability Act of 2001 (Chapter 678 of the Statutes of 2001), which was an important first step toward improving outcomes for California's foster children and youth. The legislation provided the legal framework for monitoring the county-run child welfare service programs through data collection and review of that data, the ultimate goal being to use the data to improve outcomes for the children and youth in foster care. The first county reviews and improvement plans were implemented in 2004.

(f) In addition to providing services to foster youth, the state's Child Welfare Redesign final report stressed the importance of providing preventative supports to those families who come in contact with child welfare services but whose children are not removed from the home. The goal of these supports is to provide families the tools to prevent a child's removal. This effort results in stronger families and decreased foster care placements. However, successful implementation of preventative services, like foster care, requires a coordinated oversight among many agencies, programs, and services.

(g) Despite this improved oversight and vision for improvement, the child welfare system, including the state, the counties, and the courts, suffers from the lack of a cohesive structure, state leadership, and

communication between agencies serving foster children and youth. In 2003, the Little Hoover Commission found that clear leadership and oversight is lacking in California's foster care program and recommended the designation of a new program leader that has the authority to reform the foster care system. Most recently, the California Performance Review report decried this lack of cohesion and similarly concluded that state leadership is needed to repair a foster care system in crisis. The bipartisan national Pew Commission on Foster Care in a report issued last year recommended states establish broad-based commissions on children in foster care to demonstrate effective collaboration on behalf of children.

(h) Creating a comprehensive structure for statewide leadership to address the needs of children in the child welfare system will support and improve the important reform work enacted through the Child Welfare System Improvement and Accountability Act of 2001 by providing clarity about the roles and responsibilities of the state, improving quality assurance and accountability, and facilitating communication between the many stakeholders involved in the child welfare system. Most importantly, these changes will help ensure that California is able to meet the needs of the children and youth in its care.

(i) An independent and impartial ombudsperson that is readily available to the public is essential to protecting the well-being of children, youth, and families.

SECTION 2. This act shall be known and may be cited as the Child Welfare Leadership and Performance Accountability Act of 2006.

SECTION 3. Chapter 5.5 (commencing with Section 16540) is added to Part 4 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

CHAPTER 5.5. Child Welfare Leadership and Performance Accountability

16540. The California Child Welfare Council is hereby established, which shall serve as an advisory body responsible for improving the collaboration and processes of the multiple agencies and the courts that serve the children and youth in the child welfare and foster care systems. The council shall monitor and report the extent to which child welfare and foster care programs and the courts are responsive to the needs of children in their joint care. The council shall issue advisory reports whenever it deems appropriate, but in any event, no less frequently than annually, to the Governor, the Legislature, the Judicial Council and the public. A report of the Child Welfare Council shall, at a minimum, include recommendations for all of the following:

(a) Ensuring that all state child welfare, foster care and judicial funding and services for children, youth, and families is, to the greatest extent possible, coordinated to eliminate fragmentation and duplication of services provided to children or families who would benefit from integrated multiagency services.

(b) Increasing the quality, appropriateness, and effectiveness of program services and judicial processes delivered to children, youth, and families who would benefit from integrated multiagency services to achieve better outcomes for these children, youth, and families.

(c) Promoting consistent program and judicial excellence across counties to the greatest extent possible while recognizing the demographic, geographic, and financial differences among the counties.

(d) Increasing collaboration and coordination between county agencies, state agencies, federal agencies, and the courts.

(e) Ensuring that all state Title IV-E plans, program improvement plans, and court improvement plans demonstrate effective collaboration between public agencies and the courts.

(f) Assisting the Secretary of California Health and Human Services and the chief justice in formulating policies for the effective administration of the child welfare and foster care programs and judicial processes.

(g) Modifying program practices and court processes, rate structures, and other system changes needed to promote and support relative caregivers, family foster parents, therapeutic placements, and other placements for children who cannot remain in the family home.

(h) Developing data and information sharing agreements and protocols for the exchange of aggregate data across program and court systems that are providing services to children and families in the child welfare system. These data-sharing agreements shall allow child welfare agencies and the courts to access data concerning the health, mental health, special education, and educational status and progress of children served by county child welfare systems subject to state and federal confidentiality laws and regulations. They shall be developed in tandem with the establishment of judicial case management systems as well as additional or enhanced performance measures described in subdivision (b) of Section 16544.

(i) Developing systematic methods for obtaining policy recommendations from foster youth about the effectiveness and quality of program services and judicial processes, and ensuring that the interests of foster youth are adequately addressed in all policy development.

(j) Implementing legislative enactments in the child welfare and foster care programs and the courts, and reporting to the Legislature on the timeliness and consistency of the implementation.

(k) Monitoring the adequacy of resources necessary for the implementation of existing programs and court processes, and the prioritization of program and judicial responsibilities.

(l) Strengthening and increasing the independence and authority of the foster care ombudsperson.

(m) Coordinating available services for former foster youth and improving outreach efforts to those youth and their families.

16541. The council shall be comprised of the following members:

(a) The Secretary of California Health and Human Services, who shall serve as cochair.

(b) The Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court, or his or her designee, who shall serve as cochair.

(c) The Superintendent of Public Instruction, or his or her designee.

(d) The Chancellor of the California Community Colleges, or his or her designee.

(e) The executive director of the State Board of Education.

(f) The Director of Social Services.

(g) The Director of Health Services.

(h) The Director of Mental Health.

(i) The Director of Alcohol and Drug Programs.

(j) The Director of Developmental Services.

(k) The Director of the Youth Authority.

(l) The Administrative Director of the Courts.

(m) The State Foster Care Ombudsperson.

(n) Four foster youth or former foster youth.

(o) The chairpersons of the Assembly Human Services Committee and the Assembly Judiciary Committee, or two other Members of the Assembly as appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.

(p) The chairpersons of the Senate Human Services Committee and the Senate Judiciary Committee, or two other members appointed by the President pro Tempore of the Senate.

(q) Leaders and representatives of county child welfare, foster care, health, education, probation, and mental health agencies and departments, child advocacy organizations; labor organizations, recognized professional associations that represent child welfare and foster care social workers, tribal representatives, and other groups and stakeholders that provide benefits, services, and advocacy to families and children in the child welfare and foster care systems, as recommended by representatives of these groups and as designated by the cochairs.

16541.5. The council shall meet no less frequently than each quarter of the state fiscal year and at the call of the cochairst at a time and location convenient to the public as it may deem appropriate. All meetings of the council shall be open to the public. Members shall serve without compensation, with the exception of foster youth members who shall be entitled to reimbursement for all actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

16542. The cochairst may appoint committees composed of council members, experts in specialized fields, foster youth, program stakeholders, state and county child welfare and foster care staff, child advocacy organizations, members of the judiciary, foster care public health nurses, or any combination thereof, to advise the council on any functions of the council and the services provided through the child welfare and foster care programs and the courts. Members of these committees shall receive no compensation from the state for their services with the exception of foster youth members, who shall be entitled to reimbursement for all actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. The committees may assemble information and make recommendations to the council, but shall not exercise any of the powers vested in the council. The council may seek input from groups and individuals as it deems appropriate including, but not limited to, advisory committees, the judiciary and child welfare and foster care program stakeholders.

16543. Consistent with state and federal law, the council shall have access to aggregate data and information concerning the child welfare and foster care systems held by any state or local department, agency, or court that serves children, youth, and families receiving child welfare and foster care services subject to state and federal confidentiality laws and regulations.

16543.5. It is the intent of the Legislature to inspect other state child welfare and foster care systems over the course of the 2007-08 Legislative Session, for the purpose of examining effective administrative structures of leadership. It is further the intent of the Legislature to conduct legislative hearings through the Assembly Select Committee on Foster Care, and other standing committees, and to review reports and recommendations of other commissions and bodies, including the California Blue Ribbon Commission on Foster Care and the Little Hoover Commission, to determine if a reconfigured administrative structure would provide statewide leadership and coordination between departments and agencies, which are essential to improving outcomes for current and former foster children and youth throughout the state.

16544. The secretary shall ensure that all of the federal Child and Family Services Review outcome measures and all of the California Child and Family Service Review System outcome indicators, along with any performance goals and federal outcome standards, are clearly posted on the State Department of Social Service's Internet Web site. Before any of the federal goals or any of the California Child and Family Service Review System outcome indicators are added, deleted, or amended, the secretary shall consult with the Child Welfare Council and ensure that there has been a public process for the submission of comments and recommendations.

16545. By April 1, 2008, the Judicial Council shall adopt, through rules of court, performance measures designed to complement and promote those measures specified in subdivision (a) of Section 16544 so that courts are able to measure their performance and track their own progress in improving safety, permanency, timeliness, and well-being of children and to inform decisions about the allocation of court resources. In adopting performance measures, the Judicial Council shall consult with the council, and the secretary. The performance measures shall be based on data that is available from current or planned data collection processes and to the greatest extent possible shall ensure uniformity of data reporting.