
Wisconsin Legislative Council

STUDY COMMITTEE MEMO



Memo No. 04

TO: MEMBERS OF THE STUDY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC DISCLOSURE AND OVERSIGHT OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT INCIDENTS

FROM: Amber Otis, Staff Attorney, and Melissa Schmidt, Senior Staff Attorney

RE: Annual Reports from Citizen Review Panels in Wisconsin

DATE: December 3, 2020

At the last meeting of the Study Committee on Public Disclosure and Oversight of Child Abuse and Neglect Incidents on November 18, 2020, the committee generally discussed citizen review panels and the annual reports that these panels submit to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). In response to those discussions, this memo provides the committee with information about and examples of these annual reports.

The federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) generally requires states to establish at least three citizen review panels in order to receive CAPTA grant funds. Citizen review panels must be comprised of voluntary members and meet quarterly. Among other requirements, CAPTA requires each citizen review panel to report annually on its activities and recommendations to improve both the state and local child protective services (CPS) systems. Within six months, DCF must respond in writing and describe whether or how the state will incorporate the panel's recommendations, where appropriate, to make measurable progress in improving state and local CPS systems.

Wisconsin currently has eight citizen review panels. Each panel's activities vary widely, as do the length and content of each panel's annual report. The annual reports to DCF, as well as DCF's responses, are available on [DCF's website](#).

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