

Kentucky Child Fatality And Near Fatality External Review Panel 2025 Update



**Legislative Oversight and Investigations
Committee**

July 10, 2025

Child Fatality And Near Fatality External Review Panel



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- KRS 620.055
 - Panel conducts "comprehensive reviews of child fatalities and near fatalities...suspected to be a result of abuse or neglect."
 - Panel shall publish an annual report "consisting of case reviews, findings, and recommendations for system and process improvements..."

Legislative Oversight And Investigations Annual Reviews



KRS 6.922 & 620.055

- Legislative Oversight and Investigations Committee (LOIC) is required to conduct annual evaluations of the panel's operations, procedures, and recommendations

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LOIC Annual Reviews




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- 2025 LOIC evaluation focused on:
 - Implementation of recommendations from LOIC's 2024 evaluation
 - Statutory compliance and the development of findings and recommendations
 - Development of the new case management system
 - Operations and procedures

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Finding Area 1

2024 LOIC Recommendations




Summarized 2024 LOIC Evaluation Recommendations	Action Taken?
The panel should use a service such as certified mail or adopt policies determining the 90-day response deadline by which agencies are required to respond to panel recommendations.	Yes
The panel should update its notification letter format to include spaces for agencies to provide all of the required elements in their responses.	Yes
Panel staff should develop written procedures documenting its processes for review and approval by the panel chair and members.	No

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Finding Area 2

Statutory Compliance



- KRS 620.055 outlines panel requirements
 - Membership and appointment process
 - Meeting requirements
 - Reporting and notification requirements
- Panel has met all requirements

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Panel Membership

- 5 ex officio nonvoting members
- 17 voting members
 - 13 members are appointed
 - 4 ex officio voting members
- All panel positions are filled as of May 2025

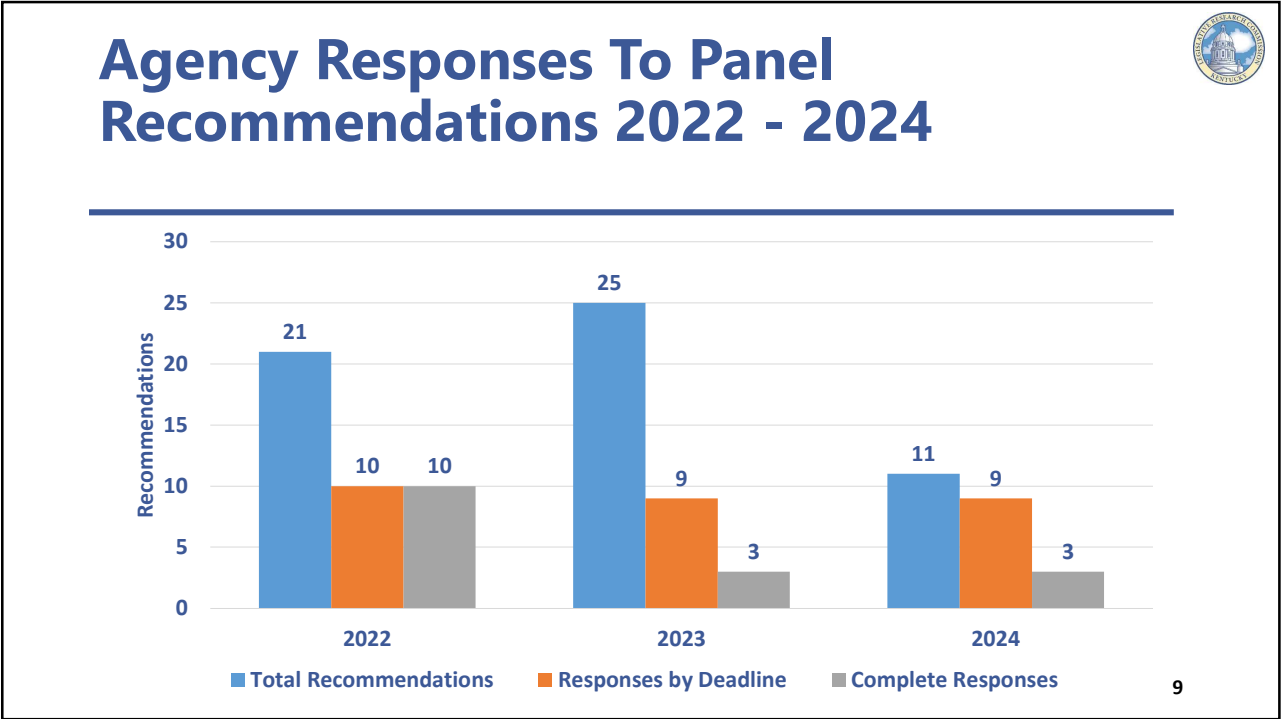
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Agency Notification

- KRS 620.055 (1) requires the panel to notify agencies of recommendations
- Agencies must provide response within 90 days with required elements
 - Intent to implement, explanation of how, and timeframe; or
 - Explanation for declining to implement

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- ### Finding Area 3 New Case Management System
- Currently using two software platforms
 - SharePoint
 - REDCap
 - Panel has been working with the Commonwealth Office of Technology (COT) to develop its new case management system
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Funding For Case Management System



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- \$200,000 (FY 2025) for a new case management system in 2024-2026 budget
 - Panel staff were concerned that funds would expire at the end of FY 2025
 - "Notwithstanding KRS 45.229, any portion of General Fund not expended for this purpose shall lapse to the Budget Reserve Trust Fund Account (KRS 48.705)."

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Funding For Case Management System



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- LOIC staff interviewed Justice Cabinet budget staff for clarification
 - Unused funds will remain available after July 1, 2025 via capital funds budget account
 - LOIC staff relayed information to panel staff

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Recommendation 2.1

Kentucky Child Fatality and Near Fatality External Review Panel staff should consult with the budget staff of the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet regarding how to use funds appropriated for the new case management system beyond FY 2025. If further clarity is needed regarding use of the appropriated funds, panel staff should contact the budget director of the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet.

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Finding Area 4 Internal Controls

- Panel's procedures have not been formalized into written standard operating procedures
- Benefits of developing and maintaining written procedures include:
 - Establishing and communicating internal control to staff
 - Retaining institutional knowledge
 - Communicating knowledge to external parties, new staff, or new panel members

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Finding Area 4 Internal Controls

- Development of written procedures is still in progress
 - Panel staff want to incorporate new case management system in written procedures
- Panel staff expressed concern that formal procedures would directly outline how panel operates
 - LOIC staff clarified that procedures apply to administrative functions and not how members conduct analysis.

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Recommendation 3.1

Panel staff should develop written procedures for review and approval by the panel chair and members. The written procedures should document the administrative processes by which panel staff obtain, store, review, and analyze cases; assist with developing findings and recommendations; assist with developing annual reports; and comply with the reporting requirements mandated by KRS 620.055(10). Activities of the panel members should be left to the discretion of the panel chair and members.

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Questions
