

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of the 2025 Interim

August 27, 2025

Call to Order and Roll Call

The third meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Families and Children was held on August 27, 2025, at 1:00 PM in Room 149 of the Capitol Annex. Representative Samara Heavrin, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Danny Carroll, Co-Chair; Representative Samara Heavrin, Co-Chair; Senators Matthew Deneen, Shelley Funke Frommeyer, Rick Girdler, Keturah J. Herron, Stephen Meredith, and Gex Williams; and Representatives Tina Bojanowski, Mike Clines, Stephanie Dietz, Steven Doan, Robert Duvall, Daniel Elliott, Kim Holloway, Kimberly Poore Moser, Michael Sarge Pollock, Steve Riley, Rachel Roarx, Sarah Stalker, and Nick Wilson.

Guests: Angela H. Yannelli, Chief Executive Officer, ZeroV; Dr. Mary E. Foley, Executive Director, Merryman House; Elizabeth Martin, President, Chief Executive Officer, The Center for Women and Families; Charles Aull, Vice President of Policy, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce; Kate Shanks, Senior Vice President of Public Affairs, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce; Kenneth Calloway, Senior Vice President of Human Resources, Century Aluminum; Liz McQuillen, Chief Policy Officer, Metro United Way; and Roger McCann, Director of Family Support, Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS).

LRC Staff: Ben Payne, Logan Bush, Cameron Franey, and Becky Lancaster.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the July 30, 2025, meeting was made by Representative Pollock, seconded by Representative Duvall, and approved by voice vote.

Legislative Hearing on the 2026-2027 Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) State Plan

Roger McCann, Director of Family Support, DCBS, CHFS, discussed the goals of the CSBG, CSBG funded programs, CSBG allocations, and CSBG impact on Kentucky households.

In response to Senator Meredith, Mr. McCann stated there is a series of reports throughout the year that the agency sends to the federal government showing the progress of the objectives.

A motion to approve the 2026-2027 CSBG state plan was made by Senator Meredith and seconded by Representative Pollock. With a vote of 21 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 0 pass votes, the 2026-2027 CSBG state plan was approved.

Items Received for Review

Chair Heavrin recommended all members of the committee review the half-year block grant status reports for the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), CSBG, Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant.

Update from KY's State-Designated Domestic Violence Shelter Programs

Angela H. Yannelli, Chief Executive Officer, ZeroV, discussed statewide domestic violence programs and support offered by ZeroV, regional office information, the number of individuals supported by ZeroV programs, and children's services for 2025.

Dr. Mary E. Foley, Executive Director, Merryman House, discussed the services offered by the Merryman House, the 2024 annual report highlights, and the rising demand and cost for services.

Elizabeth Martin, President, Chief Executive Officer, The Center for Women and Families, discussed the programs offered to survivors of domestic violence and the additional children-centered services provided. Ms. Yannelli discussed the additional funding needed to sustain supportive services, maintain shelter support services, and facilities maintenance.

In response to Representative Dietz, Ms. Martin stated it is not a requirement for a client to obtain an emergency protective order (EPO) to stay at a facility, and the average length of stay at The Center for Women and Families is six months. Dr. Foley stated the average length of stay at the Merryman House is six and one-half months. Ms. Yannelli stated all 15 statewide domestic violence programs receive approximately \$16 million from the federal government, which is 40 percent of their overall funding, and approximately \$18 million in state funding.

In response to Representative Stalker, Ms. Yannelli stated additional funding is always needed but the additional \$4 million per fiscal year requested is a reasonable ask to maintain due to inflation.

Discussion on the Kentucky Collaborative on Child Care

Kate Shanks, Senior Vice President of Public Affairs, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, discussed the Kentucky Collaborative on Child Care, access to child care, adequate child care services, and improving workforce participation.

Charles Aull, Vice President of Policy, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, discussed research on economic growth, positive workforce impacts of child care, and declining prime-age workforce participation.

Liz McQuillen, Chief Policy Officer, Metro United Way, discussed the availability and affordability of child care and the challenges for families, child care gap assessment, and median child care prices. Ms. Shanks discussed the establishment and purpose of the Kentucky Collaborative on Child Care.

Kenneth Calloway, Senior Vice President of Human Resources, Century Aluminum, discussed the collaborative's focus and Century Aluminum's support of building a stronger foundation for child care through public policy, philanthropy, nonprofits, and employers.

Ms. McQuillen discussed the priority of child care policy and access to career-level jobs. Ms. Shanks discussed creating a foundation for all types of supporters to assist with child care challenges. Mr. Aull gave an overview of eight of the 37 recommendations submitted by the collaborative to improve child care, child care data, funding, and resources for employers, employees, and families.

In response to Co-Chair Carroll, Mr. Aull stated there have been conversations about government structures, researched emerging national children cabinets or workforce cabinets in other states handling child care programs, and that there is not a consensus by the collaborative on the best form of child care governance.

In response to Representative Stalker, Mr. Aull stated the median child care prices come from a market rate study driven by local markets that varies by region that may create some inconsistencies. Ms. McQuillen stated the information in the slide is meant to show the variability in markets.

In response to Representative Williams, Ms. Shanks stated the collaborative's focus is to help families that need child care and want to be in the workforce but an individual staying home with children is also a valid option for families.

In response to Senator Funke Frommeyer, Mr. Aull stated as information is being gathered and conversations continue with the Executive Branch, the collaborative is hopeful for funding under a statutory directive to be cost-effective for tax payers.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:48 PM.