



**COLORADO**

**Department of  
Regulatory Agencies**

Colorado Office of Policy, Research &  
Regulatory Reform

# 2023 Sunset Review

Colorado Fire Commission

Colorado Human Trafficking Council

Colorado Natural Areas Council

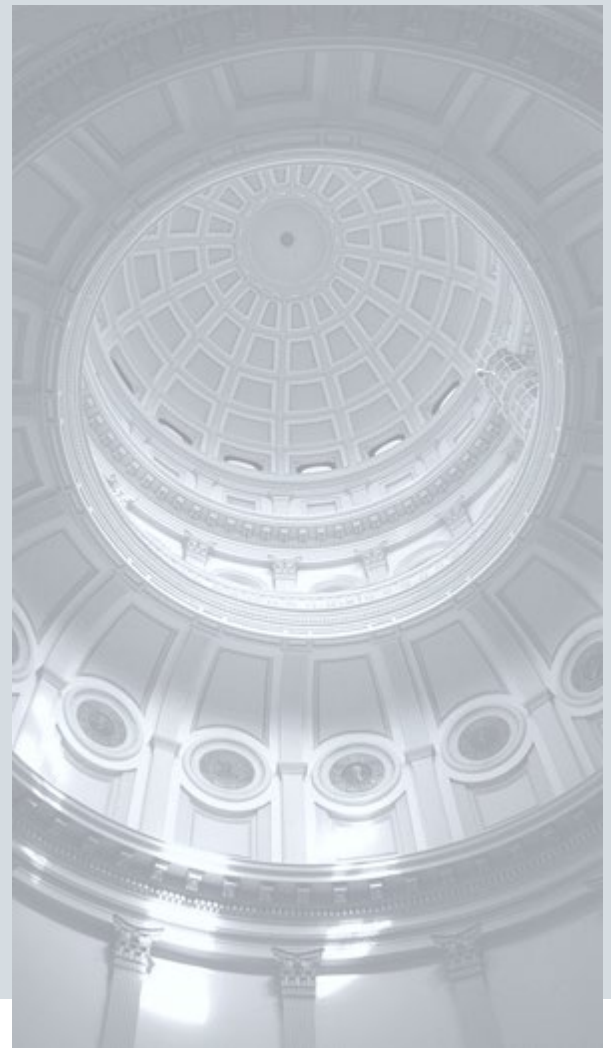
Concurrent Enrollment Advisory  
Board

Senior Dental Advisory Committee

State Advisory Council for Parent  
Involvement in Education

Suicide Prevention Commission

Youth Restraint and Seclusion  
Working Group



October 13, 2023



**COLORADO**

**Department of  
Regulatory Agencies**

Executive Director's Office

October 13, 2023

Members of the Colorado General Assembly  
c/o the Office of Legislative Legal Services  
State Capitol Building  
Denver, Colorado 80203

Dear Members of the General Assembly:

The General Assembly established a sunset review process for advisory committees and boards in 1986 as a way to analyze and evaluate their efficacy and to determine whether they should continue. Pursuant to section 2-3-1203, Colorado Revised Statutes, the Colorado Office of Policy, Research and Regulatory Reform (COPRRR) at the Department of Regulatory Agencies undertakes a review process culminating in the release of multiple reports each year on October 15.

A national leader in regulatory reform, COPRRR takes the vision of their office, the department, and more broadly of our state government seriously. Specifically, the office contributes to the strong economic landscape in Colorado by ensuring that we have thoughtful, efficient, and inclusive regulations that reduce barriers to entry into various professions, and that open doors of opportunity for all Coloradans.

As part of this year's reviews, COPRRR has completed its evaluations of the Colorado Fire Commission, Colorado Human Trafficking Council, Colorado Natural Areas Council, Concurrent Enrollment Advisory Board, Senior Dental Advisory Committee, State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education, Suicide Prevention Commission and Youth Restraint and Seclusion Working Group. I am pleased to submit this written report, which will be the basis for COPRRR's oral testimony before the 2024 legislative committees of reference.

The report discusses the effectiveness of the committees in carrying out the intention of the statutes and makes recommendations as to whether they should be continued.

To learn more about the sunset review process, among COPRRR's other functions, visit [coprrr.colorado.gov](http://coprrr.colorado.gov).

Sincerely,

Patty Salazar  
Executive Director





## 2023 Sunset Reviews of Advisory Committees

### ***Continue the Colorado Fire Commission.***

The Fire Commission was created in 2019 to enhance public safety through an integrated statewide process focused on the fire service's capacity to conduct fire management, among other things. As the prevalence and severity of fires continue to increase, the Fire Commission's expertise and the relationships it develops will help to ensure the safety of the public through the future security of Colorado's fire systems. Therefore, the Fire Commission should be continued.

### ***Continue the Colorado Human Trafficking Council.***

The Human Trafficking Council was created in 2014 to, among other things, convene leadership from community-based and statewide anti-trafficking efforts, improve services and help to prevent human trafficking in the state. Since the Human Trafficking Council engages in training, data collection, victims' access to services, statutory reform and outreach campaigns to enhance the effectiveness of efforts to reduce human trafficking, it should be continued.

### ***Continue the Colorado Natural Areas Council.***

CNAC was created in 1977 to advise the Colorado Natural Areas Program on the recognition and protection of areas that contain natural features of statewide significance. Since CNAC makes recommendations regarding the designation, protection, use and monitoring of natural areas in the state, it should be continued.

### ***Continue the Concurrent Enrollment Advisory Board.***

The Advisory Board was created in 2009 to help to create pathways between high schools and institutions of higher education to double the number of postsecondary degrees and reduce the number of students who drop out of high school. Since the Advisory Board fills an important, ongoing need, it should be continued.

### ***Continue the Senior Dental Advisory Committee.***

The Advisory Committee was created in 2014 to assist the Senior Dental Program in providing access to dental care to individuals 60 years of age or older whose income and resources are insufficient to meet the costs of such care. Since the Advisory Committee provides the Program with technical expertise, it should be continued.

### ***Continue the State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education.***

The Council was created in 2009 to review best practices and recommend to policy makers, strategies to increase parent involvement in public education. Since the Council has participated in the development of training content and statewide outreach to foster partnerships regarding parental involvement in education, it should be continued.

### ***Continue the Suicide Prevention Commission.***

The Commission was created in 2014 to provide public and private leadership for suicide prevention and intervention. Since the Commission provides an important forum to focus and guide statewide and local suicide prevention efforts, it should be continued.

### ***Continue the Youth Restraint and Seclusion Working Group.***

The Working Group was created in 2016 to advise the Division of Youth Services on its use of restraint and seclusion. As the use of seclusion and inappropriate restraint techniques can be especially harmful to youth, the General Assembly should continue the Working Group.

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## Background

### Introduction

As part of the sunset review of an advisory committee, the advisory committee that is scheduled to repeal must submit to the Department of Regulatory Agencies, through the Colorado Office of Policy, Research and Regulatory Reform (COPRRR), on or before July 1 of the year preceding the year in which the advisory committee is scheduled to repeal:<sup>1</sup>

- The names of current members of the advisory committee;
- All revenues and all expenditures, including advisory committee expenses, *per diem* paid to members, and any travel expenses;
- The dates all advisory committee meetings were held and the number of members attending the meetings;
- A listing of all advisory proposals made by the advisory committee, together with an indication as to whether each proposal was acted upon, implemented or enacted into statute; and
- The reasons why the advisory committee should be continued.

Importantly, sunset reviews of advisory committees do not, generally, analyze the underlying program to which the committee is expected to render advice or recommendations. If an advisory committee is sunset, the underlying program will continue.

### Sunset Process

As with sunset reviews of programs, agency officials and other stakeholders can submit input regarding an advisory committee through a variety of means, including at [coprrr.colorado.gov](http://coprrr.colorado.gov).

The Colorado Fire Commission, Colorado Human Trafficking Council, Colorado Natural Areas Council, Concurrent Enrollment Advisory Board, Senior Dental Advisory Committee, State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education, Suicide Prevention Commission and Youth Restraint and Seclusion Working Group shall terminate on September 1, 2024, unless continued by the General Assembly. It is the duty of COPRRR to conduct an analysis and evaluation of these advisory committees pursuant to section 2-3-1203, Colorado Revised Statutes.

The purpose of these reviews is to determine whether these committees should be continued for the protection of the public and to evaluate their performance. COPRRR's findings and recommendations are submitted via this report to the legislative committees of reference of the Colorado General Assembly.

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<sup>1</sup> § 2-3-1203(2)(b)(I) and (II), C.R.S.

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# Colorado Fire Commission

## Creation, Mission and Make-Up

In 2019, the Colorado Fire Commission (Fire Commission) was created in the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control within the Department of Public Safety (Division and DPS, respectively) as a result of the passage of Senate Bill 19-040 with the mission to,<sup>2</sup>

...enhance public safety in Colorado through an integrated statewide process focused on the fire service's capacity to conduct fire management and use, preparedness, prevention, and response activities to safeguard lives, property, including utility and communication infrastructure, and natural resources, and increase the resiliency of local and regional communities.

The Fire Commission presently consists of 33 members, appointed to serve four-year, staggered terms.<sup>3</sup> Of those, 24 voting members are appointed the following manner:<sup>4</sup>

- One member who is the Executive Director of DPS (Executive Director), or their designee;
- One member who is the Director of the Division, or their designee;
- One member who is the chief of a wildland fire management section within the Division, or their designee;
- One member who is the State Forester, or their designee;
- One member who is the Director of the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, or their designee;
- One member who is the Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, or their designee; and
- One member of the 9-1-1 Advisory Task Force established by the Colorado Public Utilities Commission.

Eighteen additional Fire Commission members are appointed by the Executive Director in the following manner:

- Two members who are appointed from nominees that are submitted by a statewide organization representing fire chiefs, one of which must represent the Western Slope and one of which must represent the eastern portion of the state;
- Two members who are appointed from nominees that are submitted by a statewide organization representing professional firefighters;
- Two members who are appointed from nominees that are submitted by a statewide organization representing volunteer firefighters;
- Four members who are appointed from nominees that are submitted by a statewide organization representing county sheriffs, at least one of which must represent the

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<sup>2</sup> § 24-33.5-1233(4)(a), C.R.S.

<sup>3</sup> § 24-33.5-1233(3)(e), C.R.S.

<sup>4</sup> § 24-33.5-1233(3)(a), C.R.S.

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Western Slope and at least one of which must represent the eastern portion of the state;

- Two members who are appointed from nominees that are submitted by a statewide organization representing counties, one of which must represent the Western Slope and one of which must represent the eastern portion of the state;
- Two members who are appointed from nominees that are submitted by a statewide organization representing municipalities;
- Two members who are appointed from nominees that are submitted by a statewide organization representing special districts; and
- One member who is appointed from nominees that are submitted by a statewide organization representing emergency managers.

The following non-voting *ex officio* members are also appointed by the Executive Director to the Fire Commission:<sup>5</sup>

- One member who represents a nonprofit organization with expertise in nationally recognized safety standards;
- Two members who represent water providers, with one member representing the Western Slope and one member representing the eastern portion of the state; and
- One member who represents the insurance industry.

Additionally, the Executive Director may appoint other non-voting *ex officio* members with expertise in specific areas of study to aid the Fire Commission in fulfilling its duties.<sup>6</sup>

The Fire Commission may also include the following non-voting *ex officio* members:<sup>7</sup>

- One member from the United States Forest Service,
- One member from the Bureau of Land Management, and
- One member from the National Park Service.

The Fire Commission also designates objectives to a variety of task forces and working groups in order to focus on specific aspects of the Fire Commission's legislative mandates. These include:

- Retention and Recruitment Subcommittee - Develops recruitment and retention solutions to ensure an adequate workforce to sustain the state's fire services;
- Delegation of Authority Subcommittee - Evaluates statutory language for any needed revisions to align with current practices of wildfire management in the state;
- Prescribed Fire Subcommittee - Develops a prescribed fire strategy to establish a pace and trajectory toward the long-term goal of creating forest and community conditions in which management ignitions and natural ignitions can be implemented to scale;

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<sup>5</sup> §§ 24-33.5-1233(3)(b)(I), (II), and (III), C.R.S.

<sup>6</sup> § 24-33.5-1233(3)(b)(IV), C.R.S.

<sup>7</sup> § 24-33.5-1233(3)(c), C.R.S.



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- Training and Certification Subcommittee - Focuses on ensuring that fire services across the state are properly equipped and receive sufficient training;
  - Data Subcommittee - Focuses on ways to more effectively collect and utilize data to develop an accurate understanding of a variety of metrics, including the number of injuries and fatalities, overall fire losses, as well as the causes and origins of wildland fires;
  - High Risk Hazards Subcommittee - Develops best practice recommendations regarding high-risk hazards for the State as well as local jurisdictions and first-responders. Related recommendations may include wildland resiliency, energy storage (such as lithium-ion batteries), and engineering methods to increase the safety of Colorado's communities;
  - Wildland Urban Interface Subcommittee - Addresses risks associated with Colorado's populations that reside in the Wildland Urban Interface;
  - Coordination of Fire-Based Resources Subcommittee - Coordinates fire-based resources for maximization and to minimize duplication, including the Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System and the Rocky Mountain Area Interagency Dispatch Study;
  - Joint Emergency Fire Fund/CFC Large Fire Fund Subcommittee - Focuses on the creation of a stable funding mechanism for large wildland fire suppression costs, as well as updating and reforming the Emergency Fire Fund; and
  - Legislative Subcommittee - Focuses on alignment of statutory language in bills that implement the recommendations of the Fire Commission and monitors legislative proposals that may impact fire service in the state.

## Responsibilities of the Fire Commission

The Fire Commission is tasked by the General Assembly with powers and duties, including, but not limited to:<sup>8</sup>

- Developing an accurate understanding of Colorado's fire problems;
- Evaluating funding mechanisms for effective response to large fires;
- Assessing the capacity of the State to provide emergency fire support and technical expertise to local communities;
- Developing performance measures of overall response effectiveness and the identification of improvement areas;
- Strengthening regional and statewide coordination of mutual aid resources;
- Developing recommendations regarding best practices related to high-risk occupancies;
- Developing and publishing an assessment of fire treatment costs and cost distribution in coordination with the Colorado State Forest Service;
- Developing approaches and recommendations regarding Colorado's fire service concerns and issues; and

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<sup>8</sup> § 24-33.5-1233(4)(b), C.R.S.

- Forecasting upcoming resource and funding challenges and trends that affect fire services as well as the ability of state and local jurisdictions to respond to fire and mitigate hazards.

## Revenues and Expenditures

Table 1 provides the total revenues and expenditures for the Fire Commission during fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23.

**Table 1**  
**Fire Commission Revenues and Expenditures**

Fiscal Year 21-22		Fiscal Year 22-23	
Revenue Type	Total Revenue	Revenue Type	Total Revenue
General Fund	\$247,554	General Fund	\$247,554
Expenditure Type	Total Expenditures	Expenditure Type	Total Expenditures
Staffing	\$84,747	Staffing	\$73,101
Communications	\$1,176	Communications	\$770
Consultants	\$32,850	Consultants	\$24,688
Supplies and Related Expenses	\$75,881	Supplies and Related Expenses	\$95,820
Per Diem	\$80	Per Diem	\$0
Travel Expenses	\$9,487	Travel Expenses	\$9,305
Total	\$204,221	Total	\$203,683

The table indicates that, although some costs have fluctuated, the total expenses of the Fire Commission have remained stable during fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23.

Additionally, all members of the Fire Commission serve without compensation, but each voting member and *ex officio* non-voting members appointed by the Executive Director may be reimbursed for actual and necessary travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> § 24-33.5-1233(3)(f), C.R.S.

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## Meetings of the Fire Commission

Table 2 reflects the total number of meetings held by the Fire Commission in fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23, as well as the total number of Fire Commission members in attendance for each meeting.

**Table 2**  
**Fire Commission Meetings**  
**Fiscal Years 21-22 through 22-23**

Meeting Date	Number of Members in Attendance
July 13, 2021	28
October 18, 2021	21
January 11, 2022	30
April 12, 2022	24
July 12, 2022	25
October 17, 2022	28
January 12, 2023	22
April 13, 2023	21
July 13, 2023	22

The Fire Commission meets on a quarterly basis, and the average attendance of Fire Commission members was approximately 25 members per meeting.

## Proposals and Their Status

During fiscal year 21-22, Fire Commission recommendations were implemented in statute through the passage of the following bills:<sup>10</sup>

- Senate Bill 21-166 entitled, *Colorado Fire Commission Recommendations*, implemented recommendation 20-01 by establishing the Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System and recommendation 20-02 by updating the Mutual Aid statutes to support the Colorado Coordinated Regional Mutual Aid System;
- Senate Bill 21-227 entitled, *State Emergency Reserve*, partially addressed Recommendation 20-03, to establish a State responsibility and Large Wildland Fire Fund by providing increased sustainability in state funding sources for the State Emergency Reserve Fund; and
- Senate Bill 21-049 entitled, *Department of Public Safety Supplemental* and Senate Bill 21-205, the *Long Appropriations Bill*, provided an additional \$1.8 million as a

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<sup>10</sup> 2022 Colorado Fire Commission Annual Report, Colorado Fire Commission. pp. 7-8.

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result of Recommendation 20-04, which recommended that an enhanced state assistance program be implemented, starting in 2021.

During fiscal year 22-23, Fire Commission recommendations were implemented in statute through the passage of the following bills:

- Senate Bill 22-206 entitled, *Disaster Preparedness and Recovery Resources*, included Recommendation 21-01, which recommended implementing the Colorado State Fire Coordination Center to provide 24/7 dispatch capabilities for the state’s fire-based resources;
- Senate Bill 23-013 entitled, *Fire Investigations*, included recommendations 21-03 and 20-05, which recommended implementing a data-driven program to reduce risks and strengthen the state’s fire services;
- Senate Bill 23-214, the *2023-24 Long Bill*, included recommendation 21-04 to support the statewide community risk reduction initiative; and
- Senate Bill 23-166 entitled, *Establishment of a Wildfire Resiliency Code Board*, included recommendation 22-01 regarding the establishment of a board to address the issues pertaining to the state’s wildlife urban interface.

## Reasons for Continuation

The Fire Commission is comprised of members from a variety of state and federal government entities as well as statewide organizations to provide recommendations to strengthen the capabilities and responsiveness of fire services, develop wildfire management practices, and refine methods for the collection and utilization of data throughout the state of Colorado through a comprehensive approach.

The Fire Commission addresses a range of complex issues and is unique in its ability to bring together a wide variety of stakeholders to address increasing demands on Colorado’s local, regional, and statewide fire system mechanisms.

## Analysis and Recommendation

The prevalence and severity of fires within the state continue to increase. The Commission fulfills an essential role through the expertise it provides and the relationships it develops to help ensure the safety of the public through the future security of Colorado’s fire systems. Therefore, the General Assembly should continue the Fire Commission.

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# Colorado Human Trafficking Council

## Creation, Mission and Make-Up

Human trafficking continues to be prevalent in every state in the United States, including Colorado. In fact, the National Human Trafficking Hotline reported that 602 signals were received from Colorado in 2021, including calls to the hotline, texts, emails, and online notifications. Of the 602 signals received, 150 potential situations of human trafficking were identified, and 240 potential victims were involved in these situations of human trafficking.<sup>11</sup>

The Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.), contain three sets of statutes in Title 18 that relate specifically to human trafficking, and provide a definition of the act of human trafficking in its various forms.

Section 18-3-503(1), C.R.S., provides that an individual is guilty of human trafficking for involuntary servitude if they,

knowingly sell, recruit, harbor, transport, transfer, isolate, entice, provide, receive, or obtain by any means another person for the purpose of coercing the other person to perform labor or services...

Section 18-3-504(1)(a), C.R.S., provides that an individual is guilty of human trafficking for sexual servitude if they,

knowingly sell, recruit, harbor, transport, transfer, isolate, entice, provide, receive, or obtain by any means another person for the purpose of coercing the person to engage in commercial sexual activity...

Further, section 18-3-504(2), C.R.S., provides that an individual is guilty of human trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude if they,

knowingly sell, recruit, harbor, transport, transfer, isolate, entice, provide, receive, obtain by any means, maintain, or make available a minor for the purpose of commercial sexual activity...

The Colorado Human Trafficking Council (Human Trafficking Council) was established in fiscal year 14-15 by House Bill 14-1273 as an outcome of recommendations listed in the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Law's *Uniform Act on Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking* (Act). The Act recommended increased coordination within each state through the creation of state human trafficking councils to develop plans, collect and review related data, promote public awareness, and conduct training and related activities regarding human trafficking on the state level.

The Human Trafficking Council is housed in the Department of Public Safety (DPS).

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<sup>11</sup> National Human Trafficking Hotline. *Colorado*. Retrieved September 22, 2023, from [humantraffickinghotline.org/en/statistics/colorado](https://humantraffickinghotline.org/en/statistics/colorado)

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Section 18-3-505(1)(a), C.R.S., defines the purpose of the Human Trafficking Council as,

...bring[ing] together leadership from community-based and statewide anti-trafficking efforts, to build and enhance collaboration among communities and counties within the state, to establish and improve comprehensive services for victims and survivors of human trafficking, to assist in the successful prosecution of human traffickers, and to help prevent human trafficking in Colorado.

The Human Trafficking Council presently consists of 31 members serving four-year terms<sup>12</sup> who are appointed in the following manner:<sup>13</sup>

- Two representatives from the Department of Human Services, appointed by the Executive Director of that department;
- One representative of the Department of Law, appointed by the Attorney General;
- One representative of the Department of Labor and Employment, appointed by the Executive Director of that department;
- One representative appointed by the Executive Director of DPS from the Colorado State Patrol who addresses the issues of human smuggling and human trafficking;
- One representative appointed by the Chief Justice of the Colorado Supreme Court to represent the Judicial Branch; and
- One representative appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture.

The Governor or their designee appoints the following Human Trafficking Council members:<sup>14</sup>

- One representative from a statewide association of police chiefs;
- One representative from a statewide association of county sheriffs;
- One representative from a statewide coalition for victims of sexual assault;
- One representative from a statewide organization that offers services to crime victims;
- One representative from a statewide immigrant rights organization;
- One representative from a statewide organization of district attorneys;
- One representative from a statewide organization of criminal defense attorneys;
- Three to five representatives from regional or city-wide human trafficking task forces or coalitions;
- One representative from a nonprofit organization that provides treatment or housing for human trafficking victims;
- One representative from a college or university department that conducts research related to human trafficking;
- One representative from a statewide organization that works as a legal advocate for at-risk, neglected, and abused children;

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<sup>12</sup> § 18-3-505(3)(a), C.R.S.

<sup>13</sup> §§ 18-3-505(1)(b)(I) through (IV), (XXII), and (XXIII), C.R.S.

<sup>14</sup> §§ 18-3-505(1)(b)(V) through (XXI), (XXIV), and (XXV), C.R.S.

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- Two representatives who offer direct services to victims of human trafficking;
  - One representative from a faith-based organization that offers assistance to victims of human trafficking;
  - Two representatives who are each a director of a county department of social services, one from an urban county and the other from a rural county;
  - One representative who provides child welfare services working for a county department of social services;
  - Four representatives who are former victims of human trafficking, two of whom are former victims of involuntary servitude, and the other two of whom are former victims of sexual servitude;
  - One representative of a statewide coalition for victims of domestic violence;
  - One representative of an organization for victims of labor trafficking or an individual with extensive professional experience in advocating for victims of labor trafficking; and
  - One representative of a child advocacy center.

The Human Trafficking Council also designates objectives to a variety of task forces and working groups in order to focus on specific aspects of the Human Trafficking Council's legislative mandates. These include:

- Criminal Justice Task Force - Addresses barriers associated with the criminal records of human trafficking survivors resulting from their trafficking experiences;
- Equitable Access Task Force - Examines the intersection of identity and experience and how these factors may impact service provision to victims and survivors of human trafficking;
- Survivor Engagement Task Force - Works to codify the ways in which the Human Trafficking Council engages with the survivor community to inform the Human Trafficking Council's work and makes recommendations regarding how the Human Trafficking Council can improve engagement;
- Education Task Force - Examines the availability of educational resources, including trainings, services, and other resources available for victims and survivors of human trafficking;
- Public Awareness Working Group - Provides guidance regarding campaign implementation strategy related to the Human Trafficking Council's statewide, multi-year public awareness campaign and develops campaign materials;
- Multidisciplinary Team Working Group - Builds upon the Human Trafficking Council's expertise, experience, and promising practices to formulate a multidisciplinary toolkit to increase identification of human trafficking of children and youth, as well as to connect them to available services; and
- Legislative Task Force - Provides feedback regarding proposed human trafficking-related legislation and makes additional recommendations for legislative reform.

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## Responsibilities of the Human Trafficking Council

The Colorado General Assembly specified that the Human Trafficking Council should meet a minimum of four times per year and complete the following legislatively mandated tasks:<sup>15</sup>

- Make recommendations to the judiciary committees of the Colorado House of Representatives and Senate (judiciary committees) prior to January 1, 2016, regarding:
  - The potential establishment of a grant program for organizations that provide services to human trafficking victims, including consideration regarding how such a grant program should be funded;
  - Providing legislative recommendations concerning:
    - The prosecution of or granting of immunity to a child victim of commercial sexual exploitation for offenses related to that exploitation;
    - The creation of other legal protections, including statutory defenses for child victims of commercial sexual exploitation for offenses related to that exploitation, and the creation of changes to Title 19, C.R.S., to implement those legal protections or defenses; and
    - Standards, guidelines, or mandates regarding the assessment, placement, and treatment of child victims of commercial sexual exploitation through Title 19, C.R.S.;
- Provide reports to the judiciary committees by January 1, 2017, and each year thereafter regarding the work of the Human Trafficking Council in the previous year;
- Make recommendations as are deemed necessary regarding statutory changes that would facilitate the prosecution and punishment of individuals engaged in human trafficking and to protect victims of human trafficking;
- Develop an implementation plan for a public awareness campaign to educate the public about human trafficking that includes easily accessible and readily available victims services contact information;
- Develop training standards and curricula for organizations that aid victims of human trafficking, for those who work in or frequent places where human trafficking victims are likely to appear, and for law enforcement agencies;
- Identify best practices for the prevention of human trafficking including, but not limited to, prevention of child sex trafficking and involuntary servitude trafficking;
- Report to the judiciary committees annually regarding data collection relating to the prevalence of human trafficking, and the efforts of law enforcement to combat human trafficking in Colorado;
- Research and pursue funding opportunities for the Human Trafficking Council; and
- Provide reports to the judiciary committees by January 1, 2019, regarding the post-enactment review of section 18-7-201.3, C.R.S.

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<sup>15</sup> § 18-3-505(4), C.R.S.



## Revenues and Expenditures

Table 3 provides the total revenues and expenditures for the Human Trafficking Council during fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23.

**Table 3**  
**Human Trafficking Council Revenues and Expenditures**

Fiscal Year 21-22		Fiscal Year 22-23	
Revenue Type	Total Revenue	Revenue Type	Total Revenue
General Fund	\$339,934	General Fund	\$289,404
Expenditure Type	Total Expenditures	Expenditure Type	Total Expenditures
Staffing	\$319,236	Staffing	\$256,096
Communications	\$3,056	Communications	\$2,402
Consultants	\$4,035	Consultants	\$16,200
Supplies and Related Expenses	\$11,554	Supplies and Related Expenses	\$8,922
Per Diem	\$54	Per Diem	\$0
Travel Expenses	\$1,999	Travel Expenses	\$5,784
Total	\$339,934	Total	\$289,404

Travel expenses reported by the Human Trafficking Council increased significantly between fiscal year 21-22 and 22-23. According to Human Trafficking Council staff, the COVID-19 pandemic had previously limited the amount of travel to in-person meetings by Human Trafficking Council members, as well as the number of trainings and conferences that staff was able to perform throughout the state. Therefore, the increase in travel reflects a return to in-person meeting participation and outreach.

The table above demonstrates that staffing expenditures decreased in fiscal year 22-23. During this time period, some staff left to pursue other opportunities and there was a lag time in filling these vacancies, in addition to a short period of time in which one federal grant ended and General Fund dollars covered some staff salaries while waiting for the new grant to start.

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## Meetings of the Human Trafficking Council

Table 4 reflects the total number of meetings held by the Human Trafficking Council in fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23, as well as the total number of members in attendance for each meeting.

**Table 4**  
**Human Trafficking Council Meetings**  
**Fiscal Years 21-22 and 22-23**

Meeting Date	Number of Members in Attendance
July 23, 2021	30
August 27, 2021	28
September 24, 2021	27
October 22, 2021	27
November 19, 2021	24
January 27, 2022 (virtual retreat)	28
January 28, 2022 (virtual retreat)	27
February 25, 2022	25
March 25, 2022	24
April 22, 2022	26
May 20, 2022	25
June 24, 2022	19
July 22, 2022	26
August 26, 2022	30
September 23, 2022	33
October 28, 2022	29
November 18, 2022	26
January 27, 2023	26
February 24, 2023	27
March 24, 2023	35
April 28, 2023	27
May 19, 2023	28
June 23, 2023	25

The average attendance of Human Trafficking Council members was approximately 27 members per meeting.

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## Proposals and Their Status

During 2021, Human Trafficking Council staff secured a two-year grant from the Colorado Victims Services fund in the amount of \$1.25 million to continue its work regarding the *This is Human Trafficking* statewide campaign. Between January 2021 and December 2022, the grant funded the deployment of three designated media flights, utilizing a range of statewide tactics to maximize awareness.

These tactics included airport signage, light rail wraps, city bus signage, bus stop shelters, billboards, gas station televisions, traditional radio ads, and broadcast and streaming television commercials. Additionally, digital media tactics were utilized including paid social media, sponsored news articles, Pandora audio and banner ads, mobile phone advertising, and targeted podcast audio ads. All materials were available both in English and in Spanish, and all media materials included both English and Spanish. During Summer 2021, partnerships were developed across the state for campaign material distribution, and over 100 partner organizations received materials for posting.

In Fall 2022, a grassroots outreach effort was conducted by targeting four regions of the state for on-the-ground distribution of campaign materials (Durango, Burlington and the eastern I-70 corridor, Steamboat Springs and the western I-70 corridor, and Salida/Buena Vista and along U.S Highway 285).

During calendar years 2021 through 2022, a variety of outcomes were achieved, including, but not limited to:

- An overall 47.5 percent increase in call and text volume to Colorado’s Human Trafficking hotline since the campaign’s launch,
- A 39 percent increase in tips to Colorado’s Human Trafficking hotline,
- A 57 percent increase in requests for referrals from the hotline, and
- A 44 percent increase in call from individuals who identified as survivors who called the hotline.

The Human Trafficking Council also developed a variety of recommendations in calendar years 2021 and 2022, largely through the Human Trafficking Council’s appointed task forces. The following information provides recommendations relayed each calendar year, and any known outcomes for each recommendation are included as well.

### Calendar Year 2021 Recommendations

- The Criminal Justice Task Force made a variety of recommendations, including, but not limited to:
  - Develop new, comprehensive statutes that provide criminal record relief for survivors of human trafficking regarding arrests and adjudications without time limits or additional restrictive conditions;
  - Ensure that future Colorado statutes that involve relief from criminal records that occurred as a result of human trafficking experiences allows for the use of official documentation that creates a presumption of eligibility; and

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- Align all Colorado statutes and/or enact new statutes to protect confidentiality, or to allow for documents to be filed under seal. If the conviction under consideration involves a crime in which the Colorado Victim's Rights Act (VRA) applies, the victim of the crime should have their rights met in accordance with the VRA.
  - The Equitable Access Task Force made a variety of recommendations, including, but not limited to:
    - Continue to increase training for professionals who may work with individuals who present with human trafficking risk factors. As a result of this recommendation, Human Trafficking Council staff provided related trainings to a variety of nonprofit organizations and government entities during calendar years 2022 and 2023;
    - Fund and utilize the regional navigator model to assist individuals experiencing human trafficking with access to resources. The Human Trafficking Council's *Innovate Colorado* project from calendar years 2017 through 2021 initially created and implemented the use of the navigator model as a pilot in specific areas across the state, which is now currently being delivered on a statewide basis by the Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking, a nonprofit organization;
    - Develop conversations with nonprofit organizations regarding the types of information they should include in letters of support or verification letters on behalf of human trafficking survivors in order for the human trafficking survivor to be able to receive public benefits through the Department of Human Services;
    - Encourage benefits representatives of the county-level departments of human services to hold office hours twice a month at nonprofit organizations, satellite offices, or other community service organizations to provide human trafficking survivors with the ability to appear and complete public benefits applications; and
    - Expand the state's Colorado Address Confidentiality Program to include human trafficking victims.
  - In 2021, the Human Trafficking Council established the Survivor Engagement Task Force which crafted recommendations including, but not limited to:
    - Continue to place survivor voices and survivor engagement at the center of the work of the Human Trafficking Council;
    - Include survivors from all demographics and forms of human trafficking in the work performed by the Human Trafficking Council and also within the work performed by anti-trafficking organizations;
    - Promote opportunities for survivor engagement wherever they may exist;
    - Provide technical assistance to increase survivor engagement; and
    - Find and advocate for equitable compensation for survivor leaders and experts with lived experience.

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## Calendar Year 2022 Recommendations

- The Legislative Task Force made a variety of recommendations, including, but not limited to:
  - Pursue legislation to modify section 18-3-505(3)(a), C.R.S., in order to allow for compensation of human trafficking survivor representatives that are appointed to the Human Trafficking Council;
  - Amend the state’s public code to provide a bridge of public benefits for pre-certified foreign national victims of human trafficking, such as Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits; and
  - Pursue legislative action to allow human trafficking survivors to pursue vacatur (to set aside) for crimes that occurred as a result of their human trafficking experience that do not involve the VRA.
  
- The Equitable Access Task Force made a variety of recommendations, including, but not limited to:
  - Organizations with existing anti-human trafficking programs should expand awareness and availability of programming into rural communities;
  - Service providers and organizations that conduct *Know Your Rights* presentations should work together to increase awareness regarding this programming option. As an outcome of this recommendation, the Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network has increased *Know Your Rights* presentations, and the Denver Anti-Trafficking Alliance has been performing outreach regarding human trafficking, with a predominant focus on the *Know Your Rights* presentations, for both migrant shelter staff and migrants;
  - Organizations should place a focus on the types of technologies that are being utilized by at-risk populations; and
  - Organizations should include human trafficking victim advocacy through the expansion of domestic violence and sexual assault victim advocacy programs.
  
- In calendar year 2022, the Survivor Engagement Task Force continued to refine its recommendations from calendar year 2021, with a goal of codifying the engagement of survivors and survivor leaders, with a focus on mentorship and recruitment. As a result, this task force made a variety of additional recommendations, including, but not limited to:
  - Recruitment and retention of survivors and survivor leaders through the continuance of the Survivor Engagement Task Force as a dedicated advisory committee. As a result, the task force received prioritization from the Human Trafficking Council to continue its work in 2023;
  - Develop a formalized mission statement for the Human Trafficking Council to utilize for recruitment. As a result, the Human Trafficking Council developed a mission statement at its annual retreat in January, 2023; and
  - Formalize processes to obtain feedback from survivors and survivor leaders within the community or seated on the Human Trafficking Council. As a result, the Human Trafficking Council was able to identify barriers and gaps to improve engagement.

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All the above recommendations were addressed by the Survivor Engagement Task force in 2023, including concrete action steps for implementation. Any recommendations made by the Human Trafficking Council for calendar year 2023 will be available in the 2023 Annual Report, which will be released in January 2024.

### Reasons for Continuation

During fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23, the Human Trafficking Council has made significant strides regarding increased inclusion of survivors and survivor leaders. Additionally, the Human Trafficking Council has developed a wide variety of recommendations through its task forces with goals including expanding outreach and training opportunities, as well as continued statutory reform.

Furthermore, the Human Trafficking Council has additional work to perform. For example, the Human Trafficking Council plans to continue its many programs and outreach opportunities, including providing human trafficking prevention training to healthcare providers, law enforcement, and education staff, as well as ongoing data collection to further understand human trafficking occurrences in Colorado. Additionally, the Human Trafficking Council plans to continue work through the *This is Human Trafficking* statewide outreach campaign, as well as the *Connecting Colorado* project, which aims to address challenges and gaps in combatting human trafficking of children and youth.

### Analysis and Recommendation

The collaborative work of the Human Trafficking Council addresses many complex issues related to human trafficking through engagement in training, data collection, victims' access to services, statutory reform, and outreach campaigns to increase public awareness to enhance the effectiveness of human trafficking reduction efforts in Colorado. For these reasons, the General Assembly should continue the Human Trafficking Council.

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# Colorado Natural Areas Council

## Creation, Mission and Make-Up

In 1977, the General Assembly enacted the Colorado Natural Areas Act (Act) and created the Colorado Natural Areas Council (CNAC). CNAC was created to advise and make recommendations for the Colorado Natural Areas Program (Program).<sup>16</sup> This is a program under Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) in the Department of Natural Resources that focuses on the recognition and protection of areas that contain a natural feature of statewide significance.<sup>17</sup>

CNAC is comprised of seven members, appointed by various appointing authorities:<sup>18</sup>

- One member representing the Parks and Wildlife Commission (PWC), appointed by the PWC;
- One member representing the State Board of Land Commissioners, appointed by the State Board of Land Commissioners; and
- Five members appointed by the Governor.

Members from the PWC and State Board of Land Commissioners serve three-year terms.<sup>19</sup>

The Governor must appoint individuals with a substantial interest in the preservation of natural areas.<sup>20</sup> All members appointed by the Governor serve for four-year terms<sup>21</sup> and can serve no more than two successive terms.<sup>22</sup>

## Responsibilities of CNAC

Statutory responsibilities of CNAC are as follows:<sup>23</sup>

- Review and approve the Natural Areas Registry (Registry), which is a list of potential areas for designation;
- Advise the PWC on the designation, management, protection, and use of designated natural areas;
- Seek and recommend the designation of natural areas by the PWC;
- Review and make recommendations to the PWC on criteria for and selection of natural areas to be included in the Registry and the Natural Areas System;
- Make recommendations regarding scientific research, educational use, interpretive programs, and public information pertaining to designated natural areas;

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<sup>16</sup> § 33-33-106(1), C.R.S.

<sup>17</sup> § 33-33-104(2), C.R.S.

<sup>18</sup> § 33-33-106(2), C.R.S.

<sup>19</sup> § 33-33-106(2)(a), C.R.S.

<sup>20</sup> § 33-33-106(2)(b), C.R.S.

<sup>21</sup> § 33-33-106(2)(b), C.R.S.

<sup>22</sup> § 33-33-106(3), C.R.S.

<sup>23</sup> § 33-33-107, C.R.S.

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- Make recommendations on the negotiation and enforcement of agreements with landowners;
  - Advise the PWC on the disbursement of funds; and
  - Review and make recommendations on PWC reports made to the Governor on the status of the program.

A “natural area” means, in part, a physical and biological area that has geologic, scientific, or educational value based on its natural features.<sup>24</sup> Natural areas can be found on public or private land.<sup>25</sup> Natural areas provide benefits such as:<sup>26</sup>

- Habitats for rare or endangered animal or plant species;
- Examples of the “native condition” in studies relating to air, water, soil, and habitat productivity;
- “Outdoor classrooms and laboratories” for the scientific study by students of all ages; and
- Areas of natural beauty, inspiration, and diversity.

For any natural area to become designated, it must first be added to the Registry. The Registry is a list of sites approved by CNAC as eligible for designation.<sup>27</sup> Permission is required from the landowner to be added to the registry.<sup>28</sup> Landowners can be government agencies or private individuals.<sup>29</sup>

Once negotiations begin, Articles of Designation are drawn up with the landowner. The Articles of Designation constitute an agreement made with the entity or government agency having ownership or control of the land.<sup>30</sup> It includes a legal description of the land<sup>31</sup> and defines the respective rights and duties of both the owner and the PWC.<sup>32</sup>

CNAC will meet to discuss Articles of Designation at length, and whether any amendments are necessary.<sup>33</sup> The PWC will then ultimately ratify Articles of Designation based on recommendations of CNAC.<sup>34</sup> After, the site is officially designated as a Natural Area.<sup>35</sup> The PWC may, with the approval or upon the request of the owner of the land and with the approval of CNAC, amend Articles of Designation for any Natural Area if required.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> § 33-33-103(8), C.R.S.

<sup>25</sup> § 33-33-108(1), C.R.S.

<sup>26</sup> § 33-33-104(2), C.R.S.

<sup>27</sup> § 33-33-103(10), C.R.S.

<sup>28</sup> § 33-33-108(1), C.R.S.

<sup>29</sup> § 33-33-108(1), C.R.S.

<sup>30</sup> § 33-33-108(2)(a), C.R.S.

<sup>31</sup> § 33-33-108(2)(g), C.R.S.

<sup>32</sup> § 33-33-108(2), C.R.S.

<sup>33</sup> § 33-33-107(1)(g), C.R.S.

<sup>34</sup> § 33-33-108(1), C.R.S.

<sup>35</sup> § 33-33-108(1), C.R.S.

<sup>36</sup> § 33-33-108(3), C.R.S.



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## Revenues and Expenditures

CNAC does not generate revenue. Members of CNAC receive no compensation for service on CNAC but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.<sup>37</sup> Costs incurred by CNAC are paid for by CPW.

In fiscal year 22-23, CNAC had \$1,781 in expenditures for food and travel expenses for CNAC members. In fiscal year 21-22, CNAC had \$603 in expenditures due to food and travel expenses.

## Meetings of CNAC

Table 5 provides the meeting dates for CNAC in fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23, as well as the number of members in attendance.

**Table 5**  
**Meetings of CNAC**  
**Fiscal Years 21-22 and 22-23**

Meeting Date	Number of Members in Attendance
9/28/21	6
12/2/21	7
3/30/22	7
6/16/22	5
9/21/22	6
12/7/22	6
3/30/23	5
6/6/23	7

Table 5 indicates that the majority of members were in attendance for the previous eight meetings.

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<sup>37</sup> § 33-33-106(5), C.R.S.

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## Proposals and Their Status

CNAC advises the Program on the designation, protection, and use of natural areas. Since fiscal year 21-22, the Council has accomplished the following:

- March 2022 - Approved the registration of the Coal Creek Tallgrass Prairie Natural Area. Recommended designation to PWC, whose final approval resulted in designation.
- December 2022 - Approved amendments to the Articles of Designation for the Colorado Tallgrass Prairie Natural Area. PWC's final approval resulted in a boundary expansion of the natural area.
- December 2022- Approved amendments to Articles of Designation for the White Rocks Natural Area. PWC's final approval resulted in a boundary expansion of the natural area.

## Reasons for Continuation

Importantly, this is a sunset review of CNAC only. It is not a sunset review of the entire Program.

CNAC was created in 1977 in order to help implement the Program, which works with interested landowners to create state designations of natural areas. A "natural area" means, in part, a physical area that has geologic, scientific, or educational value based on its natural features.

Natural areas are found on public or private land and are designated through land management agreements with landowners. The Program is the only statewide program within Colorado that provides a method for recognizing natural areas.

As part of the 1977 Act, the General Assembly tasked CNAC to make recommendations to the Program, including which potential locations should be designated. This includes discussion of the Articles of Designation drawn up with the landowner. In reviewing potential locations, CNAC undertakes a thorough evaluation of each site, its Articles of Designation, and any continued agreements that may need to be made with the landowner. CNAC brings together multiple perspectives, which makes it adept at addressing any complexities such as negotiations with landowners and enforcement of certain Articles of Designation. These complexities can continue with changing circumstances, such as a change in ownership of land, which require amendments to an area's Articles of Designation.

The PWC will usually accept or deny any Articles of Designation for potential sites based on recommendations of CNAC. CNAC also continuously provides direction on the formulation and implementation of the Program's strategic plan. Hence, the expertise of CNAC is vital to the operation of the Program.

Since its inception in 1977, CNAC has helped approve a total 96 designated Natural Areas in Colorado. Additional proposed sites are actively being identified and registered. Natural

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areas contain unique natural features such as rare plants, wildlife, invertebrates, natural communities, geologic features and fossils. Once a designation is approved, sites are added to the statewide Natural Areas System. Monitoring of natural features is implemented by the Program, resulting in protection of these areas. CNAC's direction on the identification, registration, and designation of natural areas helps to protect Colorado's significant natural features and biodiversity.

As a result of these accomplishments, CNAC is highly beneficial and integral to the Program.

## **Analysis and Recommendation**

CNAC is entrusted with making recommendations to the Colorado Natural Areas Program, CPW, and the PWC. While only one new natural area was designated in the past two fiscal years, additional sites have been identified and registered.

Moreover, currently identified sites still require support depending on each of their unique circumstances, and CNAC has spent much of the last two years working to realign its priorities with a strategic focus on filling gaps in the Natural Areas System.

Since work remains for CNAC, and because it is vital to the operation of the Program, the General Assembly should continue CNAC.

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# Concurrent Enrollment Advisory Board

## Creation, Mission and Make-Up

The Concurrent Enrollment Advisory Board (Advisory Board) was established via House Bill 09-1319 and is housed in the Department of Education (CDE). The purpose of the Concurrent Enrollment Act (Act), among other things, is to create pathways between high schools and institutions of higher education to fulfill the Colorado promise of doubling the number of postsecondary degrees and reducing the number of students who drop out of high school.

Additionally, Senate Bill 19-176 provided updates to programs which utilize the Act in Colorado as a program foundation. Key updates from the bill include:

- Beginning in 2020-21, Concurrent Enrollment must be offered at no tuition cost to qualified students - Local Education Providers (LEPs), which are school districts, boards of cooperative services, district charter schools or institute charter schools,<sup>38</sup> continue to pay up to only the tuition rate set by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (unless the LEP is located outside the boundaries of all community college service areas);
- Students who complete a Concurrent Enrollment course must receive credit that applies to high school graduation requirements;
- Courses must apply to developmental education or a postsecondary degree, certificate, or gateway course, or are transferable among state institutions of higher education; and
- Clarifies that Concurrent Enrollment does not include:
  - Simultaneous enrollment in a high school course and Advanced Placement course, or International Baccalaureate course;
  - A postsecondary course that does not fall under the definition of concurrent enrollment (i.e., college level courses offered outside of the Act); or
  - Simultaneous enrollment in a postsecondary course and an early college or Pathways in Technology Early College High School.

The Advisory Board consists of 16 members appointed to serve three-year terms. The members include:<sup>39</sup>

- Three representatives from the state system of elementary and secondary education appointed by the Commissioner of Education, including at least one member who represents a rural public school or school district and at least one member who represents a school district where a relatively low percentage of recent high school graduates have enrolled in institutions of higher education;
- Five representatives from the state systems of higher education appointed by the Executive Director of the Department of Higher Education, including two members who represent the Colorado Community College System, one member who

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<sup>38</sup> § 22-35-103(13), C.R.S.

<sup>39</sup> § 22-35-107(2)(a-e), C.R.S.

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represents a public, four-year institution of higher education, one member who represents a local district college, and one member who represents an area technical college;

- Five representatives appointed by the Governor, including at least one member who has experience in postsecondary student counseling, student admissions, and financial aid; at least one member who has experience in public budgeting and finance; a parent of a student enrolled in public school; and a student enrolled in high school;
- The Director of Accreditation and Regional Services within CDE, or their designee; and
- Two representatives of postsecondary career and technical education programs, one of whom is the Director of Career and Technical education within the state system of community and technical colleges and one of whom represents the state system of elementary and secondary education and is appointed by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education.

### Responsibilities of the Advisory Board

The Advisory Board has the following duties:<sup>40</sup>

- Establishing guidelines for the administration of the Accelerating Students through Concurrent Enrollment (ASCENT) program;
- Advising and assisting LEPs and institutions of higher education in preparing cooperative agreements;
- Making recommendations, as necessary, to the General Assembly, the State Board, and the Commission of Higher Education concerning the improvement or updating of state policies relating to concurrent enrollment programs, including but not limited to recommendations of policies that will allow every LEP in the state to have adequate resources to enter into at least one cooperative agreement;
- On or before December 1, 2022, considering and making recommendations to the State Board and the education committees of the House of Representatives and Senate, or any successor committees, regarding the feasibility of a waiver process whereby a LEP, on behalf of a qualified student, could apply to CDE for a waiver of certain statutory provisions, which waiver would allow the LEP to designate the student as an ASCENT program participant in the second year following the year in which the qualified student was enrolled in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade of the LEP so long as the qualifying student:
  - Was so designated in the year directly following the year in which the qualified student was enrolled in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade of the LEP;
  - Requires 15 or fewer credit hours of postsecondary course work to achieve a postsecondary credential; and
  - Is eligible for free or reduced-price lunch;

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<sup>40</sup> § 22-35-107(6), C.R.S.

- Submitting to the State Board for its approval or disapproval of recommendations; and
- Collaborating with persons from CDE, the Department of Labor and Employment, the Colorado Community College System, the local district colleges, area technical colleges, and the Colorado Workforce Development Council to create a set of standard recommendations to advise and assist LEPs in creating cooperative agreements to include course work related to apprenticeship programs and internship programs as options within a LEP’s concurrent enrollment program. The Advisory Board must complete the standard recommendations and make them available to LEPs by January 1, 2016.

**Revenues and Expenditures**

The Advisory Board’s only expenditures in fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23 amounted to \$77.25 in in fiscal year 21-22 to provide lunch for six Advisory Board members at the Advisory Board member summer retreat.

**Meetings of the Advisory Board**

Table 6 provides the Advisory Board meeting dates and the number of members in attendance at each meeting.

**Table 6  
Advisory Board Meetings  
Fiscal Years 21-22 through 22-23**

Meeting Date	Number of Members in Attendance
07/22/2021	11
10/28/2021	13
01/27/2022	13
04/28/2022	15
07/07/2022	9
10/27/2022	13
01/26/2023	13
04/27/2023	14

The Advisory Board meets quarterly, or four times per year, and Table 6 indicates that the attendance by Advisory Board members was fairly constant.

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## Proposals and Their Status

The following information provides details as to the proposals of the Advisory Board in fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23.

### Fiscal Year 2021-22

- Legislators requested and received feedback on how to remove barriers for students participating in the ASCENT program during the January 2021 Advisory Board meeting. The feedback was incorporated into House Bill 22-1390 and resulted in:
  - Reducing the number of postsecondary credits that a student needs to qualify for the program from 12 credits to 9 credits; and
  - Removing the statewide cap of 500 ASCENT slots, thereby allowing any student that meets the eligibility requirements to participate.

### Fiscal Year 2022-23

The advisory proposal for the ASCENT Waiver was sent to CDE's Legislative Policy Team. The proposal was shared with the General Assembly but was not taken up during the 22-23 legislative session.

## Reasons for Continuation

The Advisory Board has been helpful to both state agency staff and the General Assembly throughout its existence. The Advisory Board has been involved in creating important documents that guide the work of concurrent enrollment practitioners in the field, such as the Teacher Recruitment Education and Preparation and ASCENT Guidelines. Advisory Board meetings are well attended by both the Advisory Board members and the public, and the legislature has consulted the Advisory Board on various postsecondary readiness topics.

## Analysis and Recommendation

The Advisory Board fills an important, ongoing need, as concurrent enrollment, including 5th and 6th year programs ASCENT and TREP, have seen an increase across Colorado. Therefore, the General Assembly should continue the Advisory Board.

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# Senior Dental Advisory Committee

## Creation, Mission and Make-Up

In 2014, the General Assembly created the Senior Dental Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) within the Colorado Dental Health Care Program for Low-Income Seniors (Senior Dental Program).

The Senior Dental Program was enacted to provide access to dental care to individuals 60 years of age or older (older adults) whose income and resources are insufficient to meet the costs of such care.<sup>41</sup> It provides grants throughout the state to public health agencies, community health centers, private dental practices, safety net clinics, and foundations.<sup>42</sup> The Advisory Committee's mission is to advise the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) on the operation of the Senior Dental Program.<sup>43</sup> It also makes recommendations to the Medical Services Board regarding grant procedures for the Senior Dental Program.<sup>44</sup>

In 2019, the General Assembly passed House Bill 19-1326, which gave the Advisory Committee authority to determine the maximum amount per procedure that can be reimbursed by the Senior Dental Program's grantees.

The Advisory Committee is made up of the following 11 individuals, each appointed by the Executive Director of HCPF:<sup>45</sup>

- A member representing HCPF;
- A dentist in private practice providing dental care to the senior population who represents a statewide organization of dentists;
- A dental hygienist providing dental care to seniors;
- A representative of either an agency that coordinates services for low-income seniors, or the office in the Department of Human Services responsible for overseeing services to seniors;
- A representative of an organization of Colorado community health centers;
- A representative of an organization of safety-net health providers that are not community health centers;
- A representative of the University of Colorado School of Dental Medicine;
- Two consumer advocates;
- A senior who is eligible for services under the program; and
- A representative of a foundation with experience in making dental care grants.

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<sup>41</sup> § 25.5-3-402(1)(a), C.R.S.

<sup>42</sup> § 25.5-3-402(1)(c), C.R.S.

<sup>43</sup> § 25.5-3-406(2)(a), C.R.S.

<sup>44</sup> § 25.5-3-406(2)(b), C.R.S.

<sup>45</sup> § 25.5-3-406(1), C.R.S.



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Members of the Advisory Committee serve three-year terms and serve without compensation.<sup>46</sup>

## Responsibilities of the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee is tasked with advising HCPF on the operation of the Senior Dental Program.<sup>47</sup> It also makes recommendations to the state's Medical Services Board regarding promulgation of rules for the Senior Dental Program.<sup>48</sup> These recommendations include:<sup>49</sup>

- Defining covered dental care services;
- Whether to require eligible seniors to make a co-payment and, if so, the circumstances and amount of the co-payment;
- The distribution formula for the availability of funds to each area of the state;
- Dental health-care services grant procedures, criteria, and standards, including preference for qualified grantees; and
- A maximum amount per procedure that can be spent by qualified grantees and qualified providers. The amount must not be less than the reimbursement schedule for fee-for-service dental fees under the Colorado Medical Assistance Act (which encompasses the state's Medicaid program).

In consultation with HCPF, the Advisory Committee also reviews the operation and effectiveness of the Senior Dental Program and develops the grant application.<sup>50</sup> However, the Advisory Committee does not directly review requests for grants, nor does it recommend approvals or denials.

## Revenues and Expenditures

The Advisory Committee generates no revenue and had no expenses in either fiscal year 21-22 or fiscal year 22-23.

## Meetings of the Advisory Committee

Table 7 illustrates the dates of Advisory Committee meetings for fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23, as well as the number of members in attendance at each.

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<sup>46</sup> § 25.5-3-406(1)(b), C.R.S.

<sup>47</sup> § 25.5-3-406(2)(a), C.R.S.

<sup>48</sup> § 25.5-3-406(2)(b), C.R.S.

<sup>49</sup> § 25.5-3-406(2)(b), C.R.S.

<sup>50</sup> § 25.5-3-404(2)(a), C.R.S.

**Table 7**  
**Meetings of the Advisory Committee**  
**Fiscal Years 21-22 through 22-23**

Meeting Date	Number of Members in Attendance
10/19/21	11
1/25/22	Cancelled
4/26/22	8
7/19/22	Cancelled
10/11/22	9
1/17/23	10
4/11/23	Cancelled

Table 7 indicates that the majority of members were in attendance during meetings of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee meets as necessary and at the call of the Advisory Committee Chair (Chair).<sup>51</sup> Currently, the Chair has meetings scheduled quarterly. Cancelled meetings were a result of not having enough agenda items to warrant a meeting.

### **Proposals and Their Status**

The Advisory Committee is charged with advising HCPF on the operation of the Senior Dental Program and making recommendations to the state's Medical Services Board regarding grant procedures. The Advisory Committee has accomplished the following:

- April 2022 - Recommended that two new dental procedures (primary closure of a sinus perforation and intravenous moderate sedation) be added to the Senior Dental Program's fee schedule. The Advisory Committee also recommended co-pay amounts associated with procedures to be added to the Senior Dental Program fee schedule. HCPF took these recommendations to the Medical Services Board, and they were subsequently adopted into rule.
- January 2023 - Recommended that two new dental procedures (maxillary and mandibular partial denture-flexible base) be added to the Senior Dental Program's fee schedule. The Advisory Committee also recommended co-pay amounts associated with the procedures to be added to the Senior Dental Program fee schedule. HCPF took these recommendations to the Medical Services Board, and they were subsequently adopted into rule.

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<sup>51</sup> § 25.5-3-406(1)(c)(I), C.R.S.

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## Reasons for Continuation

Importantly, this is a sunset review of the Advisory Committee only. It is not a sunset review of the Senior Dental Program.

The Advisory Committee was created in 2014 to help implement the Senior Dental Program. The Senior Dental Program provides grants to serve seniors whose income and resources are insufficient to meet the costs of dental care. The Advisory Committee advises HCPF and the Medical Services Board on the operation of the Senior Dental Program. The Advisory Committee also reviews the operation and effectiveness of the program and develops the grant application.

The Advisory Committee is integral to the operation of the Senior Dental Program. It provides advice on matters such as which dental procedures should be covered under the grant, the amounts at which they should be covered, and whether covered older adults should be partially responsible for those costs. These matters often require significant, technical expertise on the aging population and on the advent of new dental care technology.

The Advisory Committee brings together a variety of perspectives including private practitioners, professors from educational institutions, and representatives from health providers throughout the state. The opinions and knowledge of these individuals, especially dental providers and educators, prove helpful to HCPF in understanding why each potential dental procedure may or may not need to be covered under the Senior Dental Program.

Advisory Committee members come from all parts of the state, both urban and rural regions. Though not statutorily required, this is helpful in identifying which counties may require assistance. It also helps identify the types of seniors that might typically qualify under the Senior Dental Program, and whether they can make co-payments. Understanding these circumstances is crucial to the success of the Senior Dental Program. During fiscal year 21-22, there were 30 grantees, which helped to serve older adults in 41 different counties. In total, 4,286 individuals received services through the Senior Dental Program.

As a result, the Advisory Committee is highly beneficial and integral to the Senior Dental Program.

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## Analysis and Recommendation

The Advisory Committee is charged with advising HCPF on the operation of the Senior Dental Program. It is also statutorily tasked with making recommendations to the state's Medical Services Board regarding grant procedures.

Although only four new dental procedures were added in the past two fiscal years, the Advisory Committee is still needed to ensure the Senior Dental Program is operating properly and has the technical expertise needed to understand the aging population and their dental needs. The Advisory Committee is made up primarily of dental practitioners and educators, making it well equipped to understand the advent of new dental procedures and the needs of older adults throughout the state. The Advisory Committee also reviews the operation and effectiveness of the Senior Dental Program and develops the grant application.

Since the Advisory Committee is needed to ensure proper operation of the Senior Dental Program, the Advisory Committee still has work to accomplish. Hence, the General Assembly should continue the Advisory Committee.

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# State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education

## Creation, Mission and Make-Up

The State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education (Council) was established via Senate Bill 09-90 and is housed in the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). The purpose of the Council is to, among other things, review best practices and recommend to policy makers and educators, strategies to increase parent involvement in public education, thereby helping to improve the quality of public education and raise the level of students' academic achievement throughout the state.<sup>52</sup>

Section 22-7-303(2), Colorado Revised Statutes, states that the Council consists of the following members:

- The following members of the Council are appointed by the State Board of Education (State Board):
  - One person from each Congressional District who is a parent of a child enrolled in a publicly funded preschool program, in any of grades kindergarten through 12, or in a state-supported institution of higher education. Four of the members must be members of a school accountability committee or a school district accountability committee. In making the appointments the State Board shall consider the student populations that are significantly represented in the state;
  - A representative from each of two state-based nonprofit organizations that specialize in promoting the involvement of parents of traditionally underserved populations;
  - A representative from a nonprofit organization that specializes in promoting the involvement of parents of students with disabilities;
  - A representative from a nonprofit organization that partners with funding providers, state agencies, and service providers to assist organizations in providing services to improve the health and well-being of families and children;
  - A representative of a statewide organization of parents and teachers;
  - A representative of a statewide organization that represents school executives;
  - A representative of a statewide organization that represents members of school district boards of education;
  - A representative of a statewide organization that represents teachers;
  - A representative of a statewide organization that represents charter schools;
  - A representative of a statewide organization that represents career and college guidance counselors; and
  - A person with expertise in early childhood care and education;

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<sup>52</sup> § 22-7-301(2), C.R.S.

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- One or more representatives from CDE, appointed by the Commissioner of Education, with expertise in the following areas:
    - Strategies to close the achievement and growth gap;
    - The program for the education of migrant children;
    - Federal Title I programs;
    - The English language proficiency program;
    - The education of exceptional children;
    - The family literacy education grant program;
  - Two persons appointed by the Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE); and
  - A representative of the Department of Human Services appointed by the Executive Director of that department.

### Responsibilities of the Council

The Council must inform, at a minimum, the early childhood councils, public schools, school districts, the State Charter School Institute, CDE, the State Board, CDHE, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, and the governing boards for the state institutions of higher education concerning best practices and strategies, aligned with the national standards for family-school partnerships, for increasing parent involvement in public education and promoting family and school partnerships. These include, but are, not limited to, best practices and strategies in the following areas:<sup>53</sup>

- Creating and implementing programs to effectively involve parents in improving their children's education and levels of academic achievement. To identify these best practices and strategies, the Council must review the programs implemented in other states and the results of state and national research conducted in this area;
- Involving parents in programs to raise academic achievement, increase high school graduation rates, decrease student dropout rates, and close the achievement and growth gap;
- Involving parents in response to intervention programs in public schools and school districts;
- Involving parents in programs to raise academic achievement, improve the persistence rate, and improve the on-time graduation rate of students enrolled in institutions of higher education;
- Increasing parent involvement in education-related committees at the local and state levels;
- Designing and implementing parent education programs and centers and parent leadership training programs;
- Creating and implementing family-to-school liaison positions; and
- Establishing and implementing school-based parent information resource centers.

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<sup>53</sup> § 22-7-304(1), C.R.S.

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The Council must recommend to the State Board and to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education plans for statewide parent involvement initiatives, which may include, but need not be limited to:<sup>54</sup>

- Requiring each school district and the State Charter School Institute, as part of the accreditation process, to increase the level of parent involvement in education; and
- Initiatives to increase admissions to institutions of higher education and the degree completion rate and to reduce the need for remediation.

The Council must also provide training and other resources designed to help school district accountability committees and school accountability committees increase the level of parent engagement with the public schools and with school districts, including increasing the number of parents serving on school district accountability committees and school accountability committees.<sup>55</sup> The Council must do the following:

- The Council must work with CDE to provide regional training programs for school district accountability committees and school accountability committees. At a minimum, the training programs must address parent leadership and increasing parent engagement with school district accountability committees and school accountability committees, including best practices for parent engagement with school district accountability committees and school accountability committees.
- The Council must work with CDE to provide regional training programs for school districts and charter schools concerning best practices and skills for district and school personnel in working with parents.<sup>56</sup>
- The Council, in consultation with CDE and CDHE, must identify key indicators of successful parent engagement in education and use the indicators to develop recommendations for methods by which CDE and CDHE may measure and monitor the level of parent engagement with elementary and secondary public schools and with institutions of higher education in Colorado.<sup>57</sup>
- On or before December 31, 2013, and on or before December 31 each year thereafter, the Council must report to the State Board, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, and the education committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives, or any successor committees, the Council's progress in promoting parent engagement in the state and in fulfilling its duties.<sup>58</sup>

## Revenues and Expenditures

The Council realized no revenues in either fiscal year 21-22 or 22-23. It also incurred no expenses in fiscal year 21-22. Expenditures in fiscal year 22-23 amounted to \$5,181.93, which included \$144.90 for travel, \$1,960 for meeting space and \$3,077.03 for meals.

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<sup>54</sup> § 22-7-304(2), C.R.S.

<sup>55</sup> § 22-7-304(3)(a), C.R.S.

<sup>56</sup> § 22-7-304(3)(c), C.R.S.

<sup>57</sup> § 22-7-304(4), C.R.S.

<sup>58</sup> § 22-7-304(5), C.R.S.

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## Meetings of the Council

Table 8 provides the Council meeting dates and the number of Council members in attendance at each meeting for fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23.

**Table 8  
Council Meetings  
Fiscal Years 21-22 through 22-23**

Meeting Date	Number of Members in Attendance
8/17/21	19
11/16/21	21
2/8/22	22
5/17/22	19
8/30/22	15
11/15/22	15
2/14/23	20
5/16/23	15

As Table 8 indicates, the Council meets every three months with an average of 18 Council member in attendance.

## Proposals and Their Status

At each Council meeting, Council members have an opportunity to provide feedback to various offices within CDE and to community partners about how to improve family-school-community partnering. The Council does not make formal proposals that would lead to statutory changes. Because the feedback is more informal, the Council does not always learn whether it is acted on. Table 9 delineates, for the last two years, the organizations to which the Council provided feedback, as well as the nature of that feedback.



**Table 9  
Council Feedback**

Meeting Date	Office/Unit/Group Seeking Feedback
8/17/21	<u>Denver Zoo</u> : Feedback about how to provide free programming to more families across Colorado.
11/16/21	<p><u>Colorado Department of Human Services</u>: Representatives from the Office of Early Childhood and Marzano Research attended the Council meeting for feedback on the near final draft of the Early Childhood Framework.</p> <p><u>Accountability and Continuous Improvement Unit</u>: Council members learned about the performance framework website for families and community members. They received a link to provide feedback outside of the meeting.</p>
2/8/22	<u>Colorado Department of Human Services</u> : Representatives from the Office of Early Childhood and Marzano Research attended a Council meeting for the second time to share how they incorporated feedback from the November 2021 meeting. Members had an opportunity to share their thoughts on the revisions and brainstorm how to share the framework when it is complete.
5/17/22	<u>Charter School Institute and Keystone Policy Center</u> : Sought feedback about a survey it is developing about perception gaps between families and teachers about engagement.
8/30/22	<p><u>Colorado Education Initiative (CEI)</u>: The Council provided feedback on a parent-facing document about different types of assessments. The group had many questions about the purpose and next steps. The feedback was incorporated into both the initial document and follow-up supports. CEI held a second feedback session outside of the Council’s regular meeting time in spring 2023.</p> <p><u>Office of Family, School, and Community Partnerships</u>: Sought feedback to redesign the Council’s website (content and navigation). Member feedback was incorporated and is now visible on the current website.</p>
11/15/22	<u>Office of Family, School, and Community Partnerships</u> : The Council reviewed the updated website to see that its feedback was incorporated and to provide any other thoughts.
2/14/23	<p><u>University of Nebraska</u>: A professor from the University of Nebraska attended a Council meeting to share information about the Teachers and Parents as Partners (TAPP) program and seek input about recruiting rural districts for a study. Feedback was incorporated and helped with recruitment, which will ultimately benefit districts in Colorado.</p> <p><u>Health 365</u>: A representative from Health 365, and a former Council Chair, attended the meeting to share about health-based resources for families and to ask about how to spread the word to districts and community organizations.</p>
5/16/23	<u>Office of Family, School, and Community Partnerships</u> : Council members participated in a consensus activity to revise the Council’s mission and visions, in preparation for reauthorization in 2024.

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## **Reasons for Continuation**

The Council predominantly functions as an advisory group working closely with state agencies, statewide organizations, non-profit organizations and parent representatives to amplify the discussion of best practices and strategies for increased parental involvement in the educational process. The Council will continue to provide related feedback, presentations, and develop customized training content in the coming years to further its legislatively mandated goals.

## **Analysis and Recommendation**

The Council works to emphasize the importance of partnerships between schools, communities, and families, and has held feedback discussions at each of its meetings. The Council has also participated in the development of training content and statewide outreach in order to foster partnerships and promote the Council's stated objectives regarding parental participation in the educational process. In addition, the Council has been considered a model example by other states in the development of similar advisory councils. Therefore, the General Assembly should continue the Council.

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# Suicide Prevention Commission

## Creation, Mission and Make-Up

The General Assembly established the Suicide Prevention Commission (Commission) in 2014. The purpose of the Commission is to provide public and private leadership for suicide prevention and intervention, establish statewide priorities and advise the Office of Suicide Prevention (OSP) in the Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE).<sup>59</sup> OSP is tasked with managing and coordinating the Commission.<sup>60</sup>

The Commission consists of 26 members appointed by the Executive Director of CDPHE (Executive Director),<sup>61</sup> including a representative from OSP<sup>62</sup> and each of the following organizations:

- A hospital with an on-site emergency department,<sup>63</sup>
- An interfaith organization,<sup>64</sup>
- A nonprofit community service club,<sup>65</sup>
- A philanthropic foundation,<sup>66</sup>
- The Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) in the Department of Human Services,<sup>67</sup>
- The Colorado Youth Advisory Council,<sup>68</sup>
- The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing,<sup>69</sup> and
- The Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado (SPCC).<sup>70</sup>

Additionally, the Commission must include at least three members who represent the business community, one of whom represents a rural area,<sup>71</sup> and a representative from each of the following professions or industries:

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<sup>59</sup> §§ 25-1.5-111(1)(a), (b) and (c), C.R.S.

<sup>60</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(I), C.R.S.

<sup>61</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a), C.R.S.

<sup>62</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(I), C.R.S.

<sup>63</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(XVI), C.R.S.

<sup>64</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(XXII), C.R.S.

<sup>65</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(XXI), C.R.S.

<sup>66</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(XIV), C.R.S.

<sup>67</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(II), C.R.S.

<sup>68</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(XI), C.R.S.

<sup>69</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(XXIV), C.R.S.

<sup>70</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(VII), C.R.S.

<sup>71</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(XIX), C.R.S.

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- Agricultural and ranching industry,<sup>72</sup>
  - Higher education,<sup>73</sup>
  - K-12 education,<sup>74</sup>
  - Law enforcement,<sup>75</sup>
  - Medical providers or first responders,<sup>76</sup> and
  - Oil and gas industry from a rural area.<sup>77</sup>

The Commission must also include the following individuals:

- A family member of a person who died by suicide;<sup>78</sup>
- A licensed mental health professional;<sup>79</sup>
- A person who has attempted suicide, recovered and is now thriving;<sup>80</sup>
- A representative of an employee assistance program or human resources in the private sector;<sup>81</sup>
- A representative of the Colorado School Safety Resource Center (CSSRC) with experience in bullying, including cyberbullying;<sup>82</sup>
- A representative of the suicide prevention nonprofit community;<sup>83</sup> and
- A veteran or an active member of the U.S. military, who has been affected by suicide.<sup>84</sup>

The Executive Director is required to appoint members who are representative of different ethnic backgrounds and regions of the state with high suicide rates, including rural areas. The Executive Director must also appoint members that have expertise with groups that experience high rates of suicide and suicide attempts, including:<sup>85</sup>

- Individuals of disproportionately affected diversities and genders;
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth and adults;
- People with disabilities;
- Senior adults;
- Veterans and active-duty military personnel; and
- Working-age men.

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<sup>72</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(XVII), C.R.S.

<sup>73</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(IV), C.R.S.

<sup>74</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(V), C.R.S.

<sup>75</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(III), C.R.S.

<sup>76</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(XV), C.R.S.

<sup>77</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(XVIII), C.R.S.

<sup>78</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(XII), C.R.S.

<sup>79</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(VIII), C.R.S.

<sup>80</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(XIII), C.R.S.

<sup>81</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(VI), C.R.S.

<sup>82</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(XXIII), C.R.S.

<sup>83</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(XXI), C.R.S.

<sup>84</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(a)(X), C.R.S.

<sup>85</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(b), C.R.S.

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The Executive Director must appoint co-chairs of the Commission, one representing the private sector and one representing the public sector.<sup>86</sup>

Members of the Commission may be reimbursed for travel expenses.<sup>87</sup>

## Responsibilities of the Commission

In addition to providing leadership for comprehensive suicide prevention, establishing priorities for comprehensive suicide prevention and advising OSP, the Commission must create subgroups to develop strategies and plans for the implementation of OSP priorities.<sup>88</sup>

Specifically, the Commission is responsible for establishing an opportunity for government agencies, community members, business leaders and lawmakers to:<sup>89</sup>

- Study existing suicide prevention policies;
- Evaluate upcoming opportunities and challenges; and
- Make recommendations to OSP, the Governor's Office and the General Assembly to improve and modernize suicide prevention policies and programs.

The Commission is also tasked with:

- Increasing local and national partnerships and resources,<sup>90</sup>
- Stimulating the creation of comprehensive suicide prevention locally,<sup>91</sup>
- Encouraging suicide prevention programs and strategies throughout the state to collaborate,<sup>92</sup> and
- Studying state resources dedicated to suicide prevention.<sup>93</sup>

Finally, the Commission is tasked with:

- Making recommendations for provider and responder education and training programs dedicated to suicide prevention and intervention and support for individuals affected by suicide;<sup>94</sup>
- Working with OSP to create a primary and secondary school component that addresses interventions for individuals affected by suicide and suicide attempts to include in the statewide suicide prevention plan;<sup>95</sup> and
- Creating a plan for follow-up care of survivors who have been treated in an emergency department following a suicide attempt.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(d), C.R.S.

<sup>87</sup> § 25-1.5-111(2)(c), C.R.S.

<sup>88</sup> §§ 25-1.5-111(1)(a), (b), (c) and (d), C.R.S.

<sup>89</sup> § 25-1.5-111(1)(e), C.R.S.

<sup>90</sup> § 25-1.5-111(1)(f), C.R.S.

<sup>91</sup> § 25-1.5-111(1)(j), C.R.S.

<sup>92</sup> § 25-1.5-111(1)(g), C.R.S.

<sup>93</sup> § 25-1.5-111(1)(h), C.R.S.

<sup>94</sup> § 25-1.5-111(1)(k), C.R.S.

<sup>95</sup> § 25-1.5-111(1)(l), C.R.S.

<sup>96</sup> § 25-1.5-111(1)(m), C.R.S.

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## Subcommittees of the Commission

At this time, the Commission has four active workgroups:

- Older Adults Workgroup;
- Governor’s Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and Their Families;
- Youth-Specific Initiatives Workgroup; and
- Postvention Workgroup.

### Older Adults Workgroup

This workgroup supports suicide prevention among older adults by identifying resources, gaps and needs, and it develops recommendations for the Commission to consider. The workgroup’s goals include bringing together partners from a variety of disciplines, organizations, ethnic backgrounds and identities to discuss older suicide prevention, resources, gaps and needs and develop recommendations specifically to support older adults. In January 2023, the Commission approved this workgroup’s recommendation: Establish older adult-specific gatekeeper trainings that support and serve older adults and that are available, accessible and inclusive for peers, community members and workplaces.

### Governor’s Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and Their Families

This workgroup, which stemmed from the Governor’s Challenge, offers a space to continue this work, promotes ways to reduce stigma surrounding suicide in the veteran community, supports veteran-specific strategies for suicide prevention and develops recommendations for the Commission to consider. The workgroup is currently addressing the importance of peer support as a key suicide prevention strategy for veterans and is working to identify next steps to increase the availability of peer support in Colorado.

### Youth-Specific Initiatives (YSI) Workgroup

This workgroup supports Coloradans up to the age of 24 who experience greater disparities related to suicide. Since 2021, this workgroup has finalized three sets of recommendations with multiple embedded strategies to support youth and young adults, and the Commission approved all of these recommendations.

- In 2021, the Commission approved the YSI Workgroup’s recommendation to create supportive, inclusive and safe communities, especially for Black, Indigenous and Youth of Color.
- In 2022, the Commission approved the YSI Workgroup’s revised recommendation to create supportive, safe and inclusive communities for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual and Two-Spirit (LGBTQIA2S+) youth and young adults.

- In 2022, the Commission approved the YSI Workgroup’s recommendation to support comprehensive suicide prevention strategies that specifically address the unique needs and experiences of young adults aged 19 to 24.

Postvention Workgroup

This workgroup supports people impacted by suicide and works collaboratively to identify inclusive, accessible and appropriate resources for Colorado communities. It has begun to identify postvention resources that are currently available in Spanish so that it may identify gaps. Workgroup participants are also working on shared guidance to provide resources for suicide attempt and suicide loss survivors.

**Revenues and Expenditures**

The Commission is funded by the General Fund. In fiscal year 21-22, the Commission’s expenditures were \$82,644, and in fiscal year 22-23, the expenditures were \$85,144. Expenditures were for staffing and supplies.

**Meetings of the Commission**

Table 10 illustrates the meeting dates of the Commission in fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23 and the total number of members in attendance.

**Table 10  
Commission Meetings  
Fiscal Years 21-22 through 22-23**

Meeting Dates	Members in Attendance
July 30, 2021	8
October 29, 2021	18
January 28, 2022	19
April 29, 2022	16
July 29, 2022	17
October 28, 2022	15
January 28, 2023	16
April 28, 2023	13

On average, 15 members attended each meeting in the two fiscal years reported above. While the Commission includes 26 member seats, not every seat was filled during this period. Typically, about 21 of the 26 seats were filled at any one time.

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## Proposals and Their Status

In fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23, Commission workgroups moved beyond the foundations of a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention to address specific gaps, communities and populations that experience higher rates and counts of suicidal despair, attempts and deaths by suicide. Recent recommendations focused on building out previous recommendations to be more appropriate and specific to targeted populations. Recommendations are intended to guide OSP, as well as partners across the state.

### Recommendations Approved in 2021

*Strengthen equitable economic stability and supports, including food security, affordable housing, livable wage and other family-friendly workplace policies, access to representative care and broadband internet access.*

- OSP supported this recommendation through the Colorado-National Collaborative's (CNC) "Economic Stability and Supports" pillar. Funding from federal grants and the state General Fund support eight agencies implementing the comprehensive approach to suicide prevention across 15 Colorado counties. These eight CNC agencies work with local partners and programs to support economic stability and supports within their communities.
- OSP supports workplace policies and supported a pilot Worker Well-Being Summit in June 2023.

*Create supportive, inclusive and safe communities, especially for Black, Indigenous and Youth of Color.*

- OSP supports this recommendation through the Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) Youth Suicide Prevention and Early Intervention Grant, which it was awarded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on August 31, 2022. OSP identified Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) youth as a priority for this grant and is working to ensure that the programs funded through OSP use these dollars to address disparities impacting BIPOC youth in Colorado.
- OSP has shared this recommendation with other state agencies, including the BHA and the CSSRC. BHA representatives have shared this recommendation with their teams. The CSSRC implemented this recommendation by providing more trainings specific to youth-serving adults and by ensuring that conference programs aligned with this recommendation.

*Support Coloradans Experiencing Suicidal Despair to Reduce Harm and to Support Alternatives to Forced Treatment.*

- OSP provided pilot Alternatives to Suicide (A2S) and Intentional Peer Support (IPS) trainings in 2021 to align with this recommendation. Community partners across Colorado now run A2S support groups and continue to provide peer support through the IPS training.



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- OSP has provided presentations with BHA partners on these recommendations.
  - These recommendations also inform OSP grant implementation, specifically the Zero Suicide and the GLS youth suicide grants.

### Recommendations Approved in 2022

*Support spiritual communities in implementing comprehensive strategies and evidence-based or evidence-informed programming that are relevant to their communities in preventing suicide; identifying and referring individuals in suicidal crises to appropriate supports; and providing appropriate postvention resources, supports and messaging following a suicidal crisis, suicide attempt and death by suicide.*

- OSP shared these recommendations with the Spiritual Communities Workgroup to share with their networks. OSP provides resources for free to faith communities to use in implementing and supporting suicide prevention efforts within their communities.

*Support comprehensive suicide prevention strategies that specifically address the unique needs and experiences of young adults ages 19 to 24.*

- OSP addressed these recommendations within the GLS grant narrative. Also, this recommendation informs provider trainings and lethal means safety initiatives.
- The SPCC used these recommendations to highlight a need for supporting young adult suicide prevention efforts, which led to a student identification crisis line bill.

### Recommendations Approved in 2023

*Older adult-specific gatekeeper trainings are available, accessible and inclusive for peers, community members and workplaces that support and serve older adults.*

- To meet this need, OSP is supporting the development of different gatekeeper trainings, including Mental Health First Aid; Question, Persuade and Refer; and Talk Saves Lives. This workgroup will present a pilot training at an upcoming meeting to solicit comments.

## **Reasons for Continuation**

The Commission is valuable to Coloradans because it provides a forum to:

- Discuss key issues and gaps related to suicide;
- Create a transparent structure for community engagement and participation; and
- Issue formal recommendations for statewide partners and OSP to implement.

The Commission's purpose as a formal advisory body ensures that individuals representing a variety of sectors, organizations and lived experiences work together to address suicide

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in Colorado and make statewide recommendations rooted in best practices, equity, lived experience and data.

OSP has implemented the recommendations of the Commission to the extent that funding from other sources has allowed. Nationally regarded programs that now serve Coloradans statewide, such as Zero Suicide, Sources of Strength and the Follow-Up Project, have come out of Commission recommendations.

Partnering organizations look to Commission recommendations for guidance and alignment. Two examples include the CSSRC and Inside Out Youth Services, a Colorado Springs-based nonprofit that supports LGBTQIA2S+ youth.

Commission workgroups provide a collaborative space for members of the public to share their experiences and to work with partners across the state to address suicide prevention at the state and local levels. Recommendations of the Commission are developed in the Commission's workgroups, and members of the public who participate in the workgroups have an opportunity to see their comments and experiences make their way into recommendations that have a statewide impact.

Through the workgroups, OSP staff and Commissioners have an opportunity to hear directly from community members and consider the impact of their programs and work. OSP staff attend Commission workgroups to work alongside community partners and to ensure that Colorado's suicide prevention efforts are as appropriate to all communities as possible and meet the various needs the state.

## Analysis and Recommendation

Suicide is an important public health concern, especially in Colorado where the suicide rate is higher than in most other states. For Coloradans between the ages of 10 and 44, suicide is the second leading cause of death, and it is the eighth leading cause of death for all ages. In 2019, eight times as many Coloradans died from suicide than from motor vehicle accidents involving alcohol.<sup>97</sup>

The Commission provides an important forum for Coloradans, from both the public and private sectors, to focus and guide statewide and local suicide prevention efforts. Recently, the Commission identified addressing disparities that impact BIPOC youth as a state priority. The Commission also provided guidance for developing suicide prevention training and workplace policies. The work of the Commission resulted in funding to support community initiatives to prevent suicide in specific Colorado counties, and it also drove legislation to require higher education institutions to print crisis and suicide prevention contact information on student identification cards.

As there is still much work to be done, the General Assembly should continue the Commission.

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<sup>97</sup> American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. *Suicide Data: Colorado Fact Sheet (March 2022)*. Retrieved September 14, 2023, from [afsp.org/facts/colorado](https://afsp.org/facts/colorado)

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## Youth Restraint and Seclusion Working Group

### Creation, Mission and Make-Up

The Youth Restraint and Seclusion Working Group (Working Group) was established in 2016 to advise the Division of Youth Services (Youth Services) in the Department of Human Services (DHS) on the use of restraint and seclusion in Youth Services' facilities.<sup>98</sup>

The members of the Working Group include representatives from the following state officials, or their designees:<sup>99</sup>

- The Child Protection Ombudsman;
- The Commissioner of the Behavioral Health Administration;
- The Director of Behavioral Health within Youth Services;
- The Director of the Office of Children, Youth and Families in DHS (Children, Youth and Families); and
- The Director of Youth Services.

The Working Group also includes an employee of Youth Services, appointed by the Governor, who is a representative of an organization in Colorado that exists for the purpose of dealing with the state as an employer concerning issues between employees and the state.<sup>100</sup>

The members of the Working Group also include the following representatives:<sup>101</sup>

- Two individuals from nonprofit advocacy groups that work to restrict restraint or seclusion for youth or that represent children within the custody of Youth Services, one appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the other appointed by the President of the Senate;
- Two experts independent from Youth Services, who have expertise in adolescent development, adolescent brain development, trauma-responsive care of juveniles, positive behavior incentives in a juvenile correctional setting, evidence-based de-escalation techniques or the negative effects of seclusion on the adolescent brain, one appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives and the other appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;
- A person, appointed by the Governor, who does not work for DHS or Youth Services, who has worked as a staff member or as a senior executive in youth corrections and has experience working to establish a rehabilitative and therapeutic culture in a juvenile justice facility; and
- A parent of a person who was once committed to the custody of Youth Services, appointed by the State Public Defender.

The Director of Children, Youth and Families must serve as chair and schedule and convene the meetings of the Working Group.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> § 26-20-110(2), C.R.S.

<sup>99</sup> § 26-20-110(1), C.R.S.

<sup>100</sup> § 26-20-110(1), C.R.S.

<sup>101</sup> § 26-20-110(1), C.R.S.

<sup>102</sup> § 26-20-110(1), C.R.S.

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## Responsibilities of the Working Group

The Working Group is tasked with advising Youth Services on policies, procedures and best practices related to restraint, seclusion and alternatives to restraint and seclusion.<sup>103</sup> Twice a year, the Working Group has the authority to request information and data from DHS regarding the use of restraint and seclusion in Youth Services.<sup>104</sup>

The Working Group is also required to monitor the use of administrative confinement within Youth Services. Youth Services must share data with the Working Group regarding the amount of time that youth in secure state-operated and state-owned facilities have spent in confinement for administrative reasons. The Working Group may make recommendations to Youth Services and to the Public Health Care and Human Services Committee of the House of Representatives and the Health and Human Services Committee of the Senate about the use of administrative confinement.<sup>105</sup>

## Revenues and Expenditures

The Working Group does not generate any revenue, and in fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23, there were no expenditures.

## Meetings of the Working Group

The Working Group is required to meet twice a year.<sup>106</sup>

Table 11 provides the meeting dates of the Working Group in fiscal years 21-22 and 22-23 and the total number of members that attended each meeting.

**Table 11**  
**Meetings of the Working Group**  
**Fiscal Years 21-22 through 22-23**

Meeting Dates	Members in Attendance
July 13, 2021	7
January 7, 2022	6
July 25, 2022	6
January 13, 2023	4

While the Working Group has 12 member seats, only six of the seats are currently filled. Youth Services continues to recruit members, but it reports that it is difficult to find members who are interested in participating in the Working Group.

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<sup>103</sup> § 26-20-110(2), C.R.S.

<sup>104</sup> § 26-20-110(4), C.R.S.

<sup>105</sup> § 26-20-110(3), C.R.S.

<sup>106</sup> § 26-20-110(5), C.R.S.

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## Proposals and Their Status

While the Working Group has the authority to make recommendations to Youth Services and committees of the legislature, no formal proposals were voted on by the Working Group in fiscal years 21-22 or 22-23. The Working Group primarily reviews seclusion and restraint data and discusses successes and areas of continued development.

## Reasons for Continuation

Isolation and inappropriate restraint techniques in youth corrections settings can be physically and psychologically harmful to youth and result in long-term damage to youth who are subjected to these measures.

In 2016, watchdog organizations had difficulty obtaining information and data about the use of seclusion and restraint in the Division of Youth Corrections, now referred to as Youth Services, which runs state-owned and operated youth corrections facilities. At the time, the use of seclusion was significantly overused at these facilities.

Consequently, the General Assembly created the Working Group, renamed the division and passed legislation regarding the use of seclusion and restraint in Youth Services' facilities. Around the same time, a newly hired Director of Youth Services undertook measures to reform the use of seclusion, reduce the use of restraint and eliminate some of the forms of restraint being used.

After the Working Group was created, Youth Services made changes to the way it collected and reported data on its use of seclusion and restraint in its facilities.

The Working Group meets twice a year to review the data, and members of the Working Group question staff if they uncover data that is concerning, such as spikes in the use of restraint in specific facilities. Staff provide information to the Working Group about how it is addressing concerns raised by members and what is happening that may be contributing to the data. The members of the Working Group provide informal advice and suggestions to Youth Services, which Youth Services may act on. Youth Services may also conduct an investigation based on concerns raised by the Working Group. Staff of Youth Services then provides information to the Working Group about any follow-up by staff and changes that have been made to address areas of concern.

While Youth Services has not completely eliminated its use of seclusion, it has significantly reduced the use of seclusion in its facilities, including the incidents of seclusion and the length of time youth spend in seclusion. However, there is still room for improvement, especially related to the use of restraint.

The Working Group has not provided formal recommendations to Youth Services or to the legislature regarding the use of restraint and seclusion, but it does review the data that is provided by Youth Services, and when it notices areas of concern, it discusses these with Youth Services.

The Working Group also works with Youth Services to make sure that the data that is collected and reported is useful.

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## Analysis and Recommendation

The Working Group provides an inexpensive way for stakeholders to work with Youth Services without having to resort to expensive investigations, court cases or legislation to address issues with seclusion and restraint. While Youth Services must devote staff time to recruit members, coordinate meetings and staff meetings, the Working Group only meets twice a year and Youth Services reported no expenditures related to the Working Group.

Without the Working Group, there would be no requirement for Youth Services to capture or report data and information on the use of restraint and seclusion in Youth Services to the public, and there would be no public forum for stakeholders to meet with Youth Services to discuss areas of concern regarding reported data, gain an understanding of the context related to the data being reported or request changes to the way the data is collected or reported.

As the use of seclusion and restraint can be especially harmful to youth, the General Assembly should continue the Working Group.