



## An Introduction to the Volunteer Case Review Program

# You can help us plan a future...

The Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) works in partnership with families and communities to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. When parents cannot ensure the safety of children in their home, DCF provides out-of-home care based on the child's individual needs. The case review process guides decisions made on behalf of children in DCF custody.

### What is a case review?

In accordance with Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 197, a child's case is reviewed every six months to ensure necessary services are being provided and to monitor progress toward establishing a permanent living situation for the child.

A case review panel consists of three members: the case reviewer from the DCF foster care review unit, a staff member from the local DCF office, and a volunteer case reviewer from the community. The family, youth, foster parents, therapists, medical professionals, and others working with the family may also attend case reviews.

### Who are volunteer case reviewers?

Volunteer case reviewers are community members who are not employed by DCF. Case reviewers choose to volunteer in the DCF area office most convenient to school, work or home.

## What decisions will the panel make?

The three-member case review panel determines whether:

- any concerns for the child's safety were identified through the review process
- continued placement of the child is necessary and appropriate
- progress is being made to determine a permanent living situation for the child

## When and where do reviews occur?

Each review lasts about an hour and a half and they are conducted at DCF area offices statewide. Reviews are scheduled Monday through Friday from 9-5 pm.

## What are the requirements to become a volunteer case reviewer?

- Age 18 or older
- Commitment to the welfare of children and families
- Fairness and objectivity
- Good communication skills
- Awareness of culturally sensitive issues
- Ability to encourage active, honest discussion among review participants
- Participation in pre-service training
- Available to review at least one case per month
- One year commitment

## What are the benefits of becoming a volunteer case reviewer?

- Support children in foster care and group care in your community
- Help identify services in your community to assist families working with DCF
- On-going support and training

## How can I apply?

For more information about applying to become a Volunteer Case Reviewer, visit our website [www.mass.gov/dcf](http://www.mass.gov/dcf)

Questions? Give us a call!  
617-748-2277 or 1-800-286-0323



Your time  
will help a  
family in  
need of  
community  
support.

Contact us!

