

Frequently Asked Questions

What is CPAC?

CPAC is a statewide, legally-mandated council comprised of active Child Placement Review (CPR) board volunteers. The mission of CPAC is to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Child Placement Review Act of 1978 in promoting the welfare of children in out-of-home placement and to advise New Jersey's three branches of government of the CPR Act's continued effectiveness. CPAC operates under the auspices of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC).

What other functions does CPAC perform?

CPAC sponsors two to three trainings a year. The trainings provide CPR board volunteers, Family Division court staff and state child advocacy groups with information on various topics that impact their work with children in out-of-home placement.

What is meant by “out-of-home placement?”

Out-of-home placement occurs when a child is removed from the home of the biological parents or legal guardian by the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) and placed in a temporary living arrangement, such as a resource home, formerly known as a foster home, or with a relative.

What happens when a child enters placement?

Federal law requires that all children entering placement be assigned a “permanency goal”— a clearly defined plan for the child to leave placement for a safe, healthy home. The goal for most children entering the system is to return home as soon as it is safe for them to do so. If reunification is not in the best interests of the child, an alternative placement is sought, such as adoption.

What is CPR?

The Child Placement Review (CPR) program involves court-appointed citizen volunteers who are trained members of CPR boards responsible for reviewing the cases of all children in out-of-home placement and making recommendations to the judge. There is at least one CPR board in each county.

What is the 45 Day Review?

The 45 Day Review is a comprehensive and structured session conducted by a CPR board 45 days after a child is placed out of the home. The board reviews information received by the DCP&P regarding the placement and identifies barriers that could prevent the DCP&P from attaining a safe, healthy permanent home for the child. Through group process and consensus, CPR members arrive at combined recommendations which are forwarded to the judge. Before making any recommendations, a CPR board always considers what is in the best interests of a child, with a focus on the child's health, safety and permanency. Safety is always paramount.

Aren't there caseworkers and attorneys who do this kind of work?

In addition to the judge, the caseworker and court staff, other individuals representing different interests may be involved in a child's case. They may include the child's parents and family members, resource parents and attorneys representing the DCP&P, parents or the child.

How do I become a CPR board volunteer?

The Judiciary website has information on applying for a volunteer position in your county, including vacancies in the CPR program, contact information, eligibility requirements and a volunteer application. Refer to www.judiciary.state.nj.us/volunteer/index.htm

How do I join CPAC?

You must be a CPR board volunteer in good standing for at least 12 months.