

Overview of Residential Treatment Facility Admissions Advisory Board

The Residential Treatment Facility (RTF) Admissions Advisory Board was created pursuant to Part NNN of Chapter 58 of the Laws of 2020 which amended section 9.51 of the Mental Hygiene Law. What follows is a description of the statutory provisions establishing the Board, followed by an overview of the Board's authority, operations, and member roles and responsibilities.

Statutory Provisions

Board Composition

The Commissioner of the Office of Mental Health (OMH) shall consult with the Executive Director of the Council on Children and Families (CCF) regarding the selection of individuals to be Board members. The RTF Admissions Advisory Board shall include representatives that reflect the racial, ethnic, and geographic diversity of the state. The RTF Admissions Advisory Board members must include:

- representatives of the state member agencies that compose CCF as specified in Social Services Law § 483 (Council on children and families)
- local agency representatives under the jurisdiction of a member agency of CCF as specified in Social Services Law § 483 (Council on children and families),
- family representatives with lived experience with RTFs
- medical directors from RTFs
- representatives from hospitals with pediatric inpatient psychiatric beds that are not operated by OMH

Authority

The Board has the right to visit RTFs. The Co-Chairs will determine if visits to RTFs to obtain specific information are necessary for the Board to prepare the statutorily mandated Annual Report. Visits to RTFs shall include one Board member who is an RTF Medical Director and one person with lived experience. If a minor with lived experience is included in the visits, they must be accompanied by their parent/legal guardian. Other Board members to be included in an RTF visit will be determined by consent by a majority of the total membership of the Board. The total number of Board members permitted to visit an RTF at one time shall be limited to five (5). RTFs will be notified of a Board visit at least ten (10) business days in advance. Board members who participate in an RTF visit will report to the Board on their visit at the next meeting of the Board.

The Board has the right to review RTF clinical records. Board requests to RTF(s) for specific clinical record(s) determined to be necessary to prepare the statutorily mandated Annual Report will require approval of the Co-Chairs. Clinical records will be shared via encrypted electronic mail. The Board shall be bound by the confidentiality requirements of Mental Hygiene Law [§ 33.13 \(Clinical records\)](#).



Obligations

The Board shall issue an annual report on the disposition of eligible applications for admission to RTFs. Such report shall include, but not be limited to: the number of children that applied to each RTF, the number of children admitted to each RTF, the number of children transferred from a hospital operated by the OMH and subsequently transferred to another hospital, the average length of stay for residents at each RTF, the number of children served at each RTF, and the number of involuntary placements and/or transfers from OMH operated inpatient facilities which occur each calendar year. The RTF Admissions Advisory Board annual report shall be posted on OMH’s website and submitted to the governor, the speaker of the assembly and the temporary president of the senate by March first for the previous calendar year.

Board Operations

Meeting Schedule

The RTF Admissions Advisory Board shall meet as often as deemed necessary by the Co-Chairs in order prepare the statutorily mandated annual report. At minimum, the Board shall meet at least one time in each full calendar year via videoconference. The Board shall meet at the request of its Co-Chairs. The scheduled meeting time will be devoted to the development of the annual report which may include presentations and discussions on select topics.

Membership Terms

Members shall be appointed for terms of three years. Each Board member shall have the right to resign at any time with written notice to the Board Co-Chairs.

For representatives of families and young people with lived experience, unless otherwise specified in the resignation notice, the resignation shall take effect upon receipt thereof, and the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. The Co-Chairs will select new family and young people representatives by contacting current and past families served by RTFs.

For representatives from member CCF agencies, local agency representatives under the jurisdiction of a member agency of CCF, representatives of hospitals with pediatric inpatient psychiatric beds that are not operated by OMH, and medical directors from RTFs, a resignation notice must provide at least 45-days notice and identify a proposed replacement.

Current Membership

OMH Region Key:		
LI – Long Island	NYC – New York City	HR – Hudson River
CNY – Central New York	WNY – Western New York	



OMH Region	Name	Title	Representative Type	Representative Agency (if applicable)
Statewide	Dr. Ann Sullivan	Commissioner	Co-Chair	NYS Office of Mental Health
Statewide	Vanessa Threatte	Executive Director	Co-Chair	NYS Council on Children and Families
Statewide	Elana Marton	Deputy Director and Counsel	Council on Children and Families (CCF)	NYS Council on Children and Families
Statewide	Suzanne Bolling	Assistant Counsel, NYSED Office of Special Education	CCF Member Agency	NYS Education Department
Statewide	Gail Geohagen-Pratt	Deputy Commissioner, Child Welfare and Community Services	CCF Member Agency	NYS Office of Children and Family Services
Statewide	Dr. Myla Harrison	Medical Director, Division of Medical and Dental Directors	CCF Member Agency	NYS Department of Health
Statewide	Dr. Sarah Kuriakose	Associate Commissioner	CCF Member Agency	NYS Office of Mental Health
Statewide	Dr. Jill Pettinger	Deputy Commissioner of Statewide Services	CCF Member Agency	NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities
WNY	Elijah Chace	Young Person	Young person with lived experience with RTFs	N/A
WNY	Wendy Chace	Caregiver	Family member with lived experience with RTFs	N/A
CNY	Allison Fahmy	Young Person	Young person with lived experience with RTFs	N/A
WNY	Caregiver*	Caregiver	Family member with lived experience with RTFs	N/A
CNY	Caitlin Kilts	Caregiver	Family member with lived experience with RTFs	N/A
CNY	Caregiver*	Caregiver	Family member with lived experience with RTFs	N/A



OMH Region	Name	Title	Representative Type	Representative Agency (if applicable)
CNY	Amy Cunningham	Commissioner	Local Governmental Unit	Onondaga County, Department of Children and Family Services
CNY	Richelle Gregory	Director of Community Services	Local Governmental Unit	Clinton County, Community Services Board
HR	Michael Orth	Commissioner	Local Governmental Unit	Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health
HR	Dr. Angela Adger-Antonikowski	Associate Dean, Community Outreach & Medical Education; Clinical Psychologist, Departments of Neurology & Psychiatry	Representative from a hospital	Albany Medical College
LI	Charlotte Poland	Social Worker Supervisor Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	Representative from a hospital with pediatric inpatient psychiatric beds	Nassau University Medical Center
LI	Brian Pritchard	Associate Executive Director	Representatives from hospitals with pediatric inpatient psychiatric beds	South Oaks Hospital
NYC	Rachel Surwit Teitel	Social Worker Supervisor	Representative from a hospital with pediatric inpatient psychiatric beds	NYC Health and Hospitals-Bellevue
CNY	Christine VanDelinder	Unit Social Worker	Representative from a hospital with pediatric inpatient psychiatric beds	SUNY Upstate Medical Center
CNY	Dr. John Lynch	RTF Medical Director	RTF Medical Director	Hillside Children's Center
WNY	Elizabeth McPartland	Chief Executive Officer	Representative of RTF agency	Child and Family Services of Erie County (operates Conners RTF)



OMH Region	Name	Title	Representative Type	Representative Agency (if applicable)
WNY/CNY	Maria Cristalli	Chief Executive Officer	Representative of RTF agency	Hillside Children's Center (operates Hillside Monroe RTF, Scottsville RTF, Emerson RTF, and Finger Lakes RTF)
NYC	Traci Donnelly	Chief Executive Officer	Representative of RTF agency	The Child Center of NY
NYC/LI	Suzette Gordon	Chief Executive Officer	Representative of RTF agency	SCO Madonna Heights
NYC	Dr. Ayodola Adigun	Psychiatrist	Representative of RTF agency	The Child Center of NY, RTF

*Consent to share name publicly is pending.

Board Member Attendance

Members are expected to attend Board meetings as requested. If a member is unable to attend a Board meeting, they are expected to provide notice to OMH at the omh.sm.RTFadvisoryboard@omh.ny.gov.

A Board member who is absent from three consecutive regular meetings of the Board is encouraged to re-evaluate, with the Board Co-Chairs, their commitment to the RTF Admissions Advisory Board. The Board may deem a Board member who has missed three consecutive meetings, without such a re-evaluation with the Co-Chairs, as having resigned from the Board. If said member is representing a CCF member agency, local agency under the jurisdiction of a CCF member agency, hospital, or RTF, they must identify a replacement.

Board Roles and Responsibilities

Co-Chair Responsibilities:

- Preside at all meetings
- If unable to attend a meeting, the Co-Chairs are responsible for designating another Board member to serve in this capacity
- Identify and invite members to the Board in compliance with Mental Hygiene Law 9.51
- Consult on removal of a Board member for cause, providing opportunity for the member to respond in writing
- Consult on how often to meet
- Oversee the production of an annual report to the governor, the speaker of the assembly, and the temporary president of the senate as required by Mental Hygiene Law section 9.51(c).
- Designate a CCF or OMH staff member to prepare the minutes for each meeting of the Board



- Conduct the meeting according to Robert's Rules of Order
- Ensure a quorum of the Board is present for any votes
- Ensure actions of the Board are determined by a vote by a quorum of the board unless otherwise indicated in the *RTF Admissions Advisory Bylaws*
- Uphold the *RTF Admissions Advisory Board Bylaws*
- Comply with *RTF Admissions Advisory Board Code of Conduct*

Board Member Role and Responsibilities:

- Attend Board meetings
- Provide notice to OMH RTF Admissions Advisory Board support staff via the omh.sm.RTFadvisoryboard@omh.ny.gov when unable to attend a Board meeting
- If unable to attend three meetings in a row, report to Co-Chairs regarding intent to remain a member via omh.sm.RTFadvisoryboard@omh.ny.gov
- Review agenda and supporting materials prior to Board meetings
- Develop an understanding of the program type, target population, eligibility process, pre-admission process and practices, and data trends
- Comply with *RTF Admissions Advisory Board Code of Conduct*