

## Rhode Island

### [RHODE ISLAND POLICY AND PRACTICE STANDARDS WORK GROUP \(Department of Children, Youth, and Families\)](#)

#### *System of Care*

<b>Background:</b>	<p>Rhode Island is an umbrella children's agency which covers child welfare, children's behavioral health and juvenile justice. The original Practice Guidance Work Group was developed as part of Phase II of the conversion of the State's service delivery system into a system of care. Made up of managers, supervisors, frontline workers, and some central office staff, the Practice Guidance Work Group was charged with developing the practice guidance for the Family Services Unit, Probation, and the Rhode Island Training School. DCYF leadership was so pleased with the Work Group's results that they asked the group to continue their work following completion of the Practice Guidance. A charter was created in June 2010 with the goal of creating a forum for ongoing dialogue between the DCYF leadership and the field on how to improve practice to achieve better outcomes. The Group's name was changed to the Policy and Practice Standards Work Group.</p>
<b>Purpose/Scope:</b>	<p>The Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) Policy and Practice Standards Work Group has three main functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• With the DCYF leadership and System of Care (SOC) Design/Implementation Team, the Work Group contributes to and reviews all products needed for Phase II SOC roll-out to ensure consistency with and fidelity to the Practice Guidance.</li><li>• The Work Group serves as a "swat team" representing the field which helps the DCYF leadership and the SOC Design/Implementation Team address problems and issues that emerge as Phase II is rolled out. In this function, Work Group members bring forward issues that need addressing that have been identified by their colleagues in the field, and also serve as DCYF "ambassadors," going back to the field to explain needed adjustments and changes to their colleagues and bringing back subsequent feedback.</li></ul> <p>The Work Group serves as a forum for regular, ongoing dialogue between the DCYF leadership and the field on how to improve practice to achieve better outcomes. Data is used in this forum to monitor changes in outcomes that may result from changes in practice.</p>
<b>Stakeholders Involved:</b>	<p>Rhode Island is a state-administered child welfare system. It is currently in the process of changing all of its operations (family services, youth services, probation, training school) into a unified System of Care. Phase I was operationalized three years ago and is targeted at deflecting children, youth, and families from coming into the system. Phase II is being implemented now and targets all other DCYF services.</p> <p>Typically, the Work Group's membership consists of approximately 20 members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One supervisor and one worker from each of the four Family Services Unit (FSU) regions (eight members). When any of these positions becomes vacant, a replacement member is selected by the regional director.</li><li>• Two clinical social workers and two managers from the Youth Development Center and the Youth Assessment Center (four members). When any of these positions become vacant, a replacement member is selected by the Acting Superintendent.</li><li>• Two supervisors and two workers from Probation (four members). Vacancies are filled by the Assistant Administrator of Probation and Parole.</li><li>• The director of Data and Evaluation (one member).</li><li>• One representative from the DCYF Policy Office (one member).</li></ul>

- Central office staff who serve as SOC Network managers.

Additional members may be added to the Work Group by recommendation of the Work Group to the DCYF leadership or by the leadership itself.

**Contact Info:**

Christopher Strnad, Administrator, [Christopher.strnad@dcyf.ri.gov](mailto:Christopher.strnad@dcyf.ri.gov), (401) 528-3766

Lori Fernandex, Casework Supervisor, [Lori.Fernandes@dcyf.ri.gov](mailto:Lori.Fernandes@dcyf.ri.gov), (401) 528-3915

JoAnn Niksa, Probation and Parole Supervisor, [JoAnn.Niksa@dcyf.ri.gov](mailto:JoAnn.Niksa@dcyf.ri.gov), (401) 528-3520