



**MELANIE M. CHESNEY**  
DEPUTY AUDITOR GENERAL

**ARIZONA AUDITOR GENERAL**  
**LINDSEY A. PERRY**

**JOSEPH D. MOORE**  
DEPUTY AUDITOR GENERAL

April 25, 2019

The Honorable Rick Gray, Chair  
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

The Honorable Anthony Kern, Vice Chair  
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

Dear Senator Gray and Representative Kern:

Our Office has recently completed a 42-month followup of the Arizona Foster Care Review Board regarding the implementation status of the 11 audit recommendations presented in the performance audit report released in September 2015 (Auditor General Report No. 15-110). As the attached grid indicates:

- 8 have been implemented.
- 2 have been partially implemented.
- 1 is in the process of being partially implemented.

Unless otherwise directed by the Joint Legislative Audit Committee, this concludes our follow-up work on the Arizona Foster Care Review Board's efforts to implement the recommendations from the September 2015 performance audit report.

Sincerely,  
Dale Chapman, Director  
Performance Audit Division

cc: David Byers, Administrative Director  
Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)

Caroline Lutt-Owens, Director  
AOC, Dependent Children's Services Division

# Arizona Foster Care Review Board

## Auditor General Report No. 15-110

### 42-Month Follow-Up Report

#### Recommendation

#### Status/Additional Explanation

#### Finding 1: FCRB should evaluate and enhance its board member recruitment strategies

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| 1. | The FCRB should evaluate the adequacy of its recruitment strategies and identify and implement new recruitment strategies, as needed, such as continuing to partner with other child welfare stakeholders to recruit board members. | <b>Implemented at 30 months</b> |
| 2. | FCRB staff should better support recruiting efforts by providing more administrative support for the State Board's Outreach Committee.  | <b>Implemented at 6 months</b>  |

#### Finding 2: FCRB should ensure that all reports are submitted to the juvenile court in a timely manner

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| 1. | The FCRB's Phoenix office should ensure that it distributes its review reports to the court in a timely manner by developing and implementing a method for tracking and monitoring its report distribution timeliness, as is done in the Tucson office. | <b>Implemented at 42 months</b> |
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#### Finding 3: FCRB should continue working with DCS to improve caseworker attendance at board reviews

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| 1. | To improve the value of review reports to the juvenile court, the FCRB should continue to collaborate with the DCS to assess the reason that caseworkers do not attend board reviews and develop and implement strategies to improve caseworker attendance.                         | <b>Implemented at 42 months</b><br>The FCRB reported that it has continued to collaborate with the DCS to improve caseworker attendance at board reviews, such as sending caseworker-attendance records to the DCS and notifying the DCS of upcoming board reviews. According to FCRB records, these efforts have resulted in small but continued improvement in overall caseworker attendance. |
| 2. | If the FCRB's collaboration with the DCS does not produce effective strategies for improving caseworker attendance, the FCRB should consider, in consultation with the DCS, whether to pursue changes in legislation that would require DCS caseworker attendance at board reviews. | <b>Implemented at 42 months</b><br>The FCRB reported that it has considered but does not plan to pursue legislation to require caseworker attendance because it continues to work with the DCS to improve caseworker attendance and DCS policy already requires caseworkers to attend in person or via telephone.   |

**Recommendation****Status/Additional Explanation****Finding 4: FCRB should resume providing child welfare system recommendations and program metrics to stakeholders**

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| 1. The FCRB should develop and implement a process for making recommendations for improving Arizona's child welfare system and for reporting key program metrics to provide stakeholders a broad and independent review of the DCS' permanency efforts. | <b>Partial implementation in process</b><br>The FCRB has not implemented a process for making recommendations but reported that it plans to publish periodic reports beginning with a report on a fiscal year 2017 initiative to address an increase in dependency cases in the courts. As of March 2019, the FCRB had begun drafting the report and planned to release it in summer 2019. |
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**Sunset factor #2: The extent to which the FCRB has met its statutory objective and purpose and the efficiency with which it has operated.**

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| 1. The FCRB should continue to collaborate with the IT department of the Arizona Supreme Court, Administrative Office of the Courts, to develop and implement a secure online system for distributing case information.  | <b>Partially implemented at 42 months</b><br>The FCRB has developed an online system for securely distributing case information. The FCRB has implemented the system in 3 counties and plans to finish implementing it state-wide by the end of 2019. |
| 2. The FCRB should develop and implement policies and procedures for better tracking and monitoring board members' completed training hours to ensure board members are staying current on child welfare issues and practices.                                       | <b>Implemented at 6 months</b>  |
| 3. FCRB management should take a more active role in overseeing the work performed by the State Board and its committees, such as following up on previously identified action items, to ensure the State Board and its committees effectively perform their duties. | <b>Implemented at 6 months</b>  |
| 4. The FCRB should continue to assess the State Board's size and consider pursuing statutory changes to reduce its size, as appropriate.   | <b>Implemented at 6 months</b>  |

**Sunset factor #3: The extent to which the FCRB serves the entire State rather than specific interests.**

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| 5. The FCRB should ensure that the information on its website is complete and up to date. | <b>Partially implemented at 42 months</b><br>Although the FCRB has updated some information on its website, it reported that it does not have the information technology resources to consistently update the website but will continue to do so as resources become available. It also reported that it plans to use its website primarily for recruiting and use its new secure online system to provide up-to-date information to board members. |
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