

CRB Reviews:

What to Expect - A Guide for Resource Parents



What is the CRB?

The CRB (Citizen Review Board) is a court program that is required by law to review foster care cases. The CRB is not a part of ODHS (Oregon Department of Human Services) Child Welfare. The CRB is part of the Judicial Department and an extension of Juvenile Court. The CRB helps to assess whether ODHS is making reasonable efforts, parents are making progress, and children's needs are being met.

Who are the CRB board members?

CRB reviews are led by a team of volunteers from your county. Our volunteers come from backgrounds related to law, psychology, child development, education, medicine, addiction recovery, and more. Many volunteers have personal experience related to foster care. All volunteers undergo extensive ongoing training.

The CRB brings transparency and public oversight to foster care cases and provides a place for parties to be heard. CRB volunteers care first and foremost about the well-being of vulnerable families in the child welfare system. They also value the contributions of resource parents, ODHS workers, CASAs, judges, attorneys, teachers, therapists, healthcare workers, and others in the child welfare system. Most importantly, they believe that every child deserves to be safe. Although CRB volunteers are responsible for asking sometimes difficult questions, delving into details of each case, and making decisions that not everyone will agree with, these values are the reason and inspiration behind everything they do.

Who will be at the CRB review?

Since attendance at CRB reviews is not mandatory for anyone but ODHS, and there is no RSVP required, no one knows exactly who will attend each review. However, there are usually between 5-10 people at CRB reviews (depending on how many people are involved in the case). CRB reviews are not open to the public and cannot be recorded.

The CRB invites legal parties and resource parents to CRB reviews. Legal parties are parents and their attorneys, children, and their attorneys, ODHS (the caseworker), CASA, and the Tribe (if applicable). ODHS may also request that CRB invite other people involved in the case such as grandparents, mentors, service providers, etc. The CRB does not send notices to children younger than 14 years old but sends them to their parents, attorney, resource parents, and CASA instead.

What will happen at the CRB review?

The CRB's role is to collect information, provide oversight through their findings and recommendations, give an opportunity for parties to be heard, and shed light on important issues in the case.

CRB reviews are not case planning meetings or court hearings. The board has no authority to change a child's permanency plan or placement. Instead, the board will go over some legal information, ask questions of the parties at the review, and make findings based on that information. The board also makes recommendations in each case.

Participation Your input is extremely valuable. Attending the CRB review also provides an opportunity to learn what else is happening in the case. You can attend a CRB review in person (if that option is offered in your county), online by video, or by phone. The legal notice mailed to resource parents and all legal parties provides instructions for the WebEx video platform. You may introduce yourself as "resource parent" to [protect confidentiality](#).

You may also submit input via email or letter in lieu of attendance; note that this information will be shared with all attendees.

Structure of a CRB Review At every review, the CRB starts by introducing the parties and going through some guidelines for the review. Next, the board goes over basic information of the case (permanency plan, entry date, ICWA status, etc.).

There are 10 questions that the law requires the board to answer. Please see the guide on the back of your notice letter (or click [here](#)) to read these 10 questions, which are called "findings." The board makes these findings by examining documents provided to them before the review and asking questions at the review.

The board members will most likely ask you questions, particularly during discussion of child safety, health, and well-being. This finding is all about how the children are doing, whether ODHS is ensuring appropriate services are in place for them, and whether there are any additional supports needed. You will not be asked for your input on every topic due to time constraints, but the board will give you a chance to provide input. As the child's daily caregiver, your input is critical. The reviews are held in a "question and answer" style, where a CRB board member asks questions, and individuals answer with any information they would like to provide. There is almost always a time when the board asks if anyone else has anything to add. That is a good time to speak up if there is an important issue that you feel has not yet been addressed. Although it may feel scary to speak up, we strongly encourage you to do so and advocate for the child in your home! After findings and recommendations are made, the board reads a closing statement, and the review is concluded.

After the Review CRB reviews are a great way to advocate for the child in your home and get your concerns directly to the judge without having to testify at court. The information that is collected at the review is included in a document called a "Findings and Recommendations" report, which is sent to all legal parties and to the judge. The judge uses this information in upcoming court hearings and to make further decisions in the case. ODHS is required to implement the board's recommendations (unless they respond in writing within 17 days that they do not intend to do so).

More Information For more about what to expect, please speak to your Caseworker or CRB Field Manager. The Field Manager's contact information is on the legal notice for your review (or click [here](#)).

We are grateful for your input and advocacy!