



State of Louisiana
Louisiana Department of Health
Office of Public Health

STATE CHILD DEATH REVIEW

March 17, 2026
12:00PM – 3:30PM

Location:

Louisiana State Police Headquarters
7919 Independence Blvd (Room 3000)
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Meeting link for members of the public:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ALYIUE4aTam5G3itC2sg6Q

The Bureau of Family Health is committed to promoting transparency, accessibility, and public engagement in all board, commission, and council meetings. The link to access the meeting online is provided for convenience for members of the public as a part of that commitment.

MINUTES

- I. Call to Order- Chair
 - a. The meeting was called to order at 12:03 pm by Dr. Gina Lagarde, Child Death Review Panel Chair.
- II. Roll Call-Chair
 - a. In- Person and Zoom members provided introductions, led by Kristen Sanderson.
 - b. Dr. Lagarde proceeded with roll call. It was determined that a quorum was not present.
 - c. Members present: Pamela Cart, Allison Casanova (Proxy), Sara Clark, Laura Clayton-Klienpeter, Rebecca DeLaSalle (Zoom), Cindy Duplessis, Susan Dupont (Proxy), Matthew Giefer, M.D. (Zoom), Nicholas Heinen, Rebecca Hook, Laurel Kitto, Gina Lagarde, M.D., Barry Minnich, Susan East Nelson, Denise O'Guinn, Crystal Pichon, Michelle Shelton (Proxy), Robyn Thomas, Rebecca Whittemore, M.D.,
 - d. Members not present: Regina Barrow (Sen.), Jessica Domangue (Rep.), Lisa Freeman, Benjamin Friedmann, Natalie Laborde, Lauren Meher, Melanie Montroll, Estelle Oertling, M.D., Zachary Popovich
 - e. Bureau of Family Health Staff present: Kristen Falgoust, Debra Feller, Shelley Ryan Gray, Julie Johnston, Kayla Livingston, Danielle Mistretta, Kristen Sanderson, Victoria Smith, Stefanie Winters
- III. Public Comment
 - a. Time was allotted for public comment. No comments were made.
- IV. Approval of Minutes – September 2025 Meeting
 - a. September, 16 2025 Meeting Minutes
 - i. September 16, 2025 Meeting minutes were not approved as quorum was not present.
- V. Legislative Mandate Review

- a. Child Death Review Panel Mandate was introduced to new panel members and reviewed with existing panel members.
- VI. Vacancy Announcements
 - a. The Vacant seat on the panel was reviewed. Panel members were advised to reach out to potential panel members along with contact information to fill the vacant seat. The current vacancy is Health professional with expertise in Sudden Infant Death Syndrome appointed from a list of three names submitted by the Louisiana State Medical Society.
- VII. Old Business
 - a. Agency & Panel Updates
 - i. Safe Sleep Campaign
 - 1. Several safe sleep materials for Safe Sleep Awareness Month are in development including a new poster and updated flyers. More information will be sent to the Panel members when approved.
 - 2. Panel members were informed that Safe Sleep presentations are always available by regional MCH coordinators.
 - b. Toxicology Workgroup Update
 - i. The Toxicology Workgroup has made progress in refining protocols for implementing routine toxicology screening for child fatalities and children in the emergency room. Regional Maternal & Child Health Coordinators (MCHCs), Emergency Room physicians, lab directors, and law enforcement are collaborating to revise and edit protocol and order sets to include urine toxicology with fentanyl screening when infant/child with an altered mental status or who is unresponsive is admitted to the Emergency Department. The group also reviewed the protocol and order set already developed by Region 5's MCHC and is receiving feedback from other regional hospitals.
 - c. Senate Resolution 177 – Child Access Prevention Report
 - i. Susan East Nelson, Louisiana Partnership for Children and Families, has a legislative bill tracker with relevant bills that she will distribute to panel members following the meeting.
 - d. Children's Advisory Cabinet Presentation
 - i. Kristen Sanderson presented Child Death Review data and recommendations at the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board meeting in November 2025 and was invited to present to the Children's Cabinet on April 2, 2026.
- VIII. New Business
 - a. 2026 Panel Goals
 - i. A comprehensive strategic action plan template will be forthcoming. This plan will ensure that all Child Death Review panel recommendations are clear, actionable, and measurable. Once finalized, the strategic plan will be presented at the next panel meeting.
 - ii. Bureau of Family Health staff are analyzing child death review data for 2022 – 2024 and will be developing the next annual report. New data will be presented at the next panel meeting.
 - iii. The panel discussed the possibility of adjusting meeting times to better accommodate members' availability. Kristen Sanderson will reach out to panel members who were not present to gauge interest in meeting at a different time.
 - iv. May is recognized as Drowning Prevention Month. Updated materials—including a fact sheet, prevention letter, and a social media campaign featuring infographics and video content—will be available at that time.
 - b. 2026 Potential Meeting Dates
 - i. June 23, 2026
 - ii. September 15, 2026
 - iii. December 15, 2026

1. Panel members agreed to the 2026 meeting dates

IX. Public Comment

- a. Time was allotted for public comment. No comments were made.

X. Break

XI. Case Review- **Fire-Related Injuries/Smoke Inhalation**

- a. Fire-Related death among children aged 10-14 was presented to panel members.
b. Five cases were reviewed by the CDR Panel. All cases were deemed preventable and recommendations were documented. Recommendations will be shared with panel members via secure email.

XII. Adjournment

- a. Laurel Kitto motioned to adjourn the meeting. Susan East Nelson seconded the motion and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 pm.

Next Meeting Details

June 23, 2026

12-3 PM

Louisiana State Police Headquarters

7919 Independence Blvd (Room 3000)

Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Note: The order of the agenda may not be followed exactly, to accommodate presenter schedules.

Presenters, members, and guests may submit requests for accessibility and accommodations prior to a scheduled meeting. Please submit a request to Kristen.Sanderson@LA.GOV at least 48 hours prior to the meeting with details of the required accommodations.

In lieu of verbal public comment, individuals may submit a prepared statement in accordance with Senate Rule 13.79. Statements should be emailed to Kristen.sanderson@la.gov and must be received at least 24 hours prior to the meeting to be included in the record for the meeting.

RS 40:2019:

§2019. Child death investigation

A. Findings and purpose.

(1) The legislature hereby finds and declares that:

(a) Protection of the health and welfare of the children of this state is a goal of its People, and the unexpected death of infants and children is an important public health concern that requires legislative action.

(b) Collecting data on the causes of unexpected deaths will better enable the state
To protect some infants and children from preventable deaths and will help reduce the
Incidence of such deaths.

(c) Identifying persons responsible for abuse or neglect resulting in unexpected death will better
enable the state to protect other children who may be under the care of the same persons and will
help reduce the incidence of such deaths.

(d) Multidisciplinary and multiagency reviews of child deaths can assist the state in the
investigation of child deaths, in the development of a greater understanding of the incidence and
causes of child deaths and the methods for preventing such deaths, and in identifying gaps in
services to children and families.