



MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Everyday Citizens Can Impact the Future of Michigan's Most Vulnerable Children by Serving on Foster Care Review Boards around the State

LANSING, MI, February 1, 2016 – The Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) Program, administered by the State Court Administrative Office of the Michigan Supreme Court, is seeking citizen volunteers in review boards around the state.

The local boards review randomly-chosen child abuse and neglect cases, and assess how these cases are being handled by the courts, the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services, and private child welfare agencies.

“This is important work because, in every case, the future of a child is at stake. It is rewarding work because we have the opportunity to make a positive impact on a child’s life,” said FCRB Program Manager James Novell. “Our volunteers work diligently to overcome systemic limitations to assure policies, court rules, and statutory standards are being properly applied to ensure the safety, well-being, and timely permanency for children and families in the foster care system.”

Anyone who has a strong interest in child welfare issues can apply to serve on one of the local boards, according to Novell, but younger adults are especially encouraged to apply, as the program aims to have as diverse a demographic makeup as possible to represent the area.

Although recruitment for board membership is year-round, volunteers are urged to submit their [applications and consents](#) by **February 28**, in time for the upcoming training session May 12-13 in Lansing. Interviews and background checks are required for all applicants.

Volunteers selected must reside within the counties of their local board, are appointed to a three-year term, and are required to attend monthly review meetings, in addition to training and occasional foster parent appeals. Currently, there are 27 review boards with more than 180 citizen volunteers who donate more than 21,000 hours annually to help promote the safety and well-being of Michigan's most vulnerable children.

[Click here](#) for more information on becoming a volunteer board member.

[Michigan's Foster Care Review Board Program](#) was created by the Michigan legislature in 1984, and serves as a statewide system of third-party review of the foster care system.

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