

Minnesota Children’s Justice Act Task Force (CJA): Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of CJA?

The Minnesota Children’s Justice Act (CJA) Task Force (Task Force) is established under the [Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act](#) (CAPTA). Per CAPTA, the Task Force is a multidisciplinary task force on children’s justice and child maltreatment, composed of professionals with knowledge and experience relating to the criminal justice system and issues of child physical abuse, child neglect, child sexual abuse and exploitation, and child maltreatment-related fatalities.

What duties do CJA members have?

The Task Force is charged with reviewing and evaluating:

- Investigative, administrative and criminal judicial handling of child maltreatment cases
- Experimental, model and demonstration programs, and
- State laws, ordinances, regulations, protocols and procedures.

The Task Force then makes policy, practice and/or training recommendations to the State for systemic, equitable improvement of children’s justice.

Who are the panel members?

The Task Force must include at least one of each of the following voting members (CAPTA members):

- Law enforcement representative: up to 2 seats
- Criminal court judge: up to 2 seats
- Civil court judge: up to 2 seats
- Prosecuting attorney: up to 2 seats
- Defense attorney: up to 2 seats
- Attorney for children: up to 2 seats
- Guardian ad litem (i.e. court-appointed special advocate representative): up to 2 seats
- Health professional: up to 2 seats
- Mental health professional: up to 2 seats
- Child protective service agency representative: up to 2 seats
- Individual experienced working with children with disabilities: up to 2 seats

- Individual experienced working with homeless children and youths: up to 2 seats
- Parent/representative of a parent group: up to 2 seats
- Foster care adult survivor: up to 2 seats
- Adult former victims of child abuse and neglect: up to 2 seats

What is the panel application and selection process?

The application is a **multiple-step process**. All steps **MUST** be completed to be considered.

1. Interested applicants first complete an electronic application through the Minnesota Secretary of State's (MNSOS) [Boards and Commissions Open Positions](#) portal.
2. Upon receipt of the Secretary of State's application, the department will email a supplemental application form (Word file) provided by the CJA Application Review Committee to the email address listed on the MNSOS application. *This supplemental application must also be completed to be considered.*
3. Once the application is received, the CJA Application Review Committee, comprised of current panel members and department staff, will review the application.
4. The members will contact selected applicants to schedule an interview and use a rubric tool to score the applicant. Prospective applicants will also be invited to ask questions during this time.
5. The CJA will then recommend candidates to the Commissioner of Human Services. The Commissioner will make final decisions and appointments to the panels.
6. All applicants will be contacted to inform them of the decision regarding their application.

How long are council members' terms of service?

CAPTA member seats carry a term of four years. The terms of half of these seats expire with the governor's term (the first Monday in January). The terms of the other half of the seats expire one year later (the first Monday in January of the following year). Members may serve until their successors are appointed. Members whose terms are due to expire may reapply for another four-year term, but they may not serve more than two consecutive terms. There is no lifetime limit to the number of terms an individual may serve.

Additional questions about the panels?

Contact us at CRP.CJA.applications.DHS@state.mn.us or 651-431-3821.

Minnesota Department of Human Services Child Safety and Preservation Unit, 444 Lafayette Rd N, St. Paul, MN, 55155.

To obtain this information in a different format, call (651) 431-2400. For questions about accessibility, contact Eric Falk, Minnesota Department of Human Services ADA coordinator, at eric.falk@state.mn.us or 651-431-3039.