

Panel Member - role description

Main responsibilities

1. To read circulated papers carefully before the meeting and to attend the meeting prepared to raise issues and to contribute to the panel discussion.
2. To take responsibility for participating in the making of a recommendation, on each case, drawing on both personal and professional knowledge and experience.
3. To attend meetings of the panel as specified in your agreement with the agency.
4. To be prepared to attend additional panels if possible, if requested.
5. To participate, with other members, in advising on policy and procedural matters as required.
6. To address adversity issues and promote anti discriminatory practice.
7. To safeguard the confidentiality of all panel papers and panel discussions.
8. To participate in induction and in training which will be at least one day per year.
9. To participate constructively in the annual appraisal of your central list panel membership.
10. To adhere to the agency's panel member code of conduct.

Person Specification

Experience and qualifications

- Experience, either professionally or personally or both, of the placement of children in foster families and of children being cared away from their birth family.
- A social work qualification will be necessary for some but not all panel members.

Knowledge

- An appreciation of the effect of separation and loss on children.
- An awareness of the richness of different kinds of families and their potential for meeting children's needs.
- Some understanding of the purpose and function of the panel and of the agency which the panel is serving, or a willingness to learn.

Abilities

- Good listening and communication skills.
- The ability to read, process and analyse large amounts of complex and sometimes distressing information.
- The ability to make an assessment and form a view, based on the written and verbal information presented to panel, and the confidence to articulate this at panel.
- The ability to use personal/and/or professional knowledge and experience to contribute to discussions and decision making in a balanced and informed manner.
- The ability to work cooperatively as part of a multi-disciplinary team.
- The ability to attend panel meetings as required, arriving on time, and to attend at least one panel training day each year.

Attitudes

- A commitment to keeping birth children within their own family or community where this is possible and to maintaining Family Time (Contact) between children living in foster care and their birth families where this appears to be in the child's best interests.
- A commitment to fostering as a way of meeting a child's needs, where this appears to be in the child's best interests.
- A commitment to safeguarding and promoting children's welfare in foster care.
- A valuing of diversity in relation to issues of ethnicity, religion, gender, disability and sexuality.
- An understanding of, and a commitment to, the need of confidentiality
- A willingness to increase knowledge and understanding of issues through reading, discussion and training.
- A willingness to contribute constructively to the annual review of your central list panel membership and, as required, to that of other panel members and the Chair.

Please be advised that our panel members are volunteers and as such while travel expenses can be claimed, it is an unpaid role.

Compiled using - Coram BAAF Effective Fostering Panels.