

Sample Citizen Review Panel News Release

Your Citizen Review Panel name and address (at either top or bottom of news release)

Date: Date you are releasing your news release

Contacts: Name, title and phone number of contact person for reporters to call

Possible headline: Minnesota Citizen Review Panels reach out to help communities in (name) County

(Number) volunteers in (Name) County are devoting their time and creative thinking to helping some of the county's most vulnerable citizens—children in the child protection system and their families—through their work on Minnesota Citizen Review Panels.

(Number) children are abused and neglected in (county) each year. To prevent children from further harm and to help families learn to better care for their children, these volunteer citizens are actively seeking ways to help. They are discussing how county agencies meet their responsibilities to safeguard children who may be victims of abuse and neglect, and offering an outside perspective on the internal workings of the child protection system.

(Quote from panel spokesperson about how the perspective of these volunteers will help improve the child welfare system in your county.)

(County) Citizen Review Panel members meet (monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, regularly) to review case files, analyze trends, suggest changes and make recommendations to key leaders in the child protection system. They are serving on the panels for two years through 200X.

(Quote from panel spokesperson about value that citizen's offer to their communities.)

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) is funding the two-year pilot program. DHS, which oversees the child protection system in each of the state's 87 counties, is working with Chisago, Ramsey and Washington Counties to form citizen review panels to gather input from community members to help improve the system for children.

For more information, call 651/215-1284 or 800/627-3529 for TTY service.