

Practice Alert



The Difference between the Alternative Care Review Board and the Fair Hearing process

This Practice Alert is to remind staff of the policy surrounding the use of the Alternative Care Review Board (ACRB) and the Fair Hearing process.

The Child Welfare Manual describes the ACRB process in [Section 6, Chapter 7.2](#). An excerpt summary of this section is here:

“The Alternative Care Review Board (ACRB) is to be used when the alternative care (foster/relative/adoptive or foster/adoptive care) parent disagrees with any decision made by Children’s Division (CD) regarding a case management issue involving an individual alternative care child who is, or has been, in the claimant’s physical custody.”

Resource parent licensing issues should be addressed by the Fair Hearing process described in [Section 6, Chapter 7.1](#).

“The Fair Hearing process is to be used for the following:

- *foster/relative home license status denial, issuance or revocation;*
- *adoptive home approval or denial;*
- *foster/adoptive care (FA) license approval, denial or revocation;*
- *adoption or legal guardianship subsidy”.*

Please review these sections for the steps to handle a referral to the ACRB or the Fair hearing process because they are very different. It is important to keep in mind that efforts should be made to work with the resource parent informally, through the chain of command if at all possible prior to using either process.

Referrals to DLS can sometimes result out of situations arising from either review process. As a reminder to staff, it is important to ensure that a case is staffed with supervisors and/or management before making this referral. Local staff should use all avenues, including informal meetings with the outside party, prior to making a referral to DLS.

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