

Division of Licensing and Background Checks (DLBC) Utah Child-Placing Adoption Agency Consortium

Monday, August 3, 2026

1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Multi Agency State Office Building, Room 1045

195 N 1950 W, Salt Lake City, UT 84116

Public Virtual Attendance: <https://utah-gov.zoom.us/j/85477739642>

This meeting was recorded. An audio copy of this recording and all other meeting materials can be found on the Utah Public Notice Website ([Utah Child-Placing Adoption Agency Consortium](#)).

Attendees

Consortium members attending: Meghan Anderson, Tara Romney Barber, Denise Garza, Yvonne Johanson, Lauren Murray, Randy Mitchell, Laraine Moon, Donna Pope, Steve A. Sunday

DLBC staff attending: John Ortiz, Dustin Penman, Kamille Sheikh, Jada Stelmach

Agenda

1. Welcome - John Ortiz (DLBC)

- a. Meeting Introduction
 - i. The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:00 PM by John Ortiz.
 - ii. John Ortiz read the introductory script, outlining that the meeting is being held in-person and virtually, hosted by the Utah Division of Licensing and Background Checks (DLBC), under the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and is being recorded.
- b. Roll Call for Consortium Business
 - i. A roll call was conducted to establish a quorum.
- c. Open and Public Meetings Act
 - i. John Ortiz outlined the public meeting guidelines, noting that the public comment is limited to two minutes per person and must pertain to matters within the scope of the consortium.

- d. Approval of Minutes
 - i. Approval of the July 2026 meeting minutes was moved by Steve Sunday and seconded by Meghan Anderson. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Mission and Purpose - Kamille Sheikh (DLBC)

- a. Kamille Sheikh reviewed the statutory changes related to [House Bill 51 \(2026 General Session\)](#) that created the Consortium and updated requirements for licensed child-placing adoption agencies.
- b. The statute is the foundation for the development of the Consortium's bylaws and procedure for reviewing any request for birth parent expenses that exceed the financial limit in Subsection 26B-2-127(14).
- c. DLBC staff are working to update the Child Placing Adoption Agency rule (R501-7) within 180 days of the implementation of statutory changes from HB 51 (2026 General Session). The rule draft will be shared with the Consortium members for review and feedback.

3. International Adoptions and Other Updates - John Ortiz (DLBC)

- a. [HB 51 \(2026 General Session\)](#) does not apply to international adoption cases. Licensed child-placing adoption agencies exclusively handling international adoptions are exempt from required reporting, mandatory participation, and Consortium membership fees detailed in Section 26B-2-127.
- b. Court approval is no longer required to exceed statutory financial limits. The authority to approve birth parent expenses above the legal limits has been granted to the Consortium.

4. Review of Proposals and Brainstorm Session - Kamille Sheikh (DLBC)

- a. Consortium members from the licensed child-placing adoption agencies presented their proposals for the procedure to evaluate requests from any licensed child-placing adoption agency that exceeds financial limits.
 - i. Premier Adoption (Lauren Murray): Proposed a standardized needs assessment rubric to objectively score high-needs pregnancy cases across consistent categories (housing, medical, safety, transportation) and suggested bi-weekly or as-needed meetings for urgent cases.
 - ii. Adoption Life (Meghan Anderson): Shared a concise, standardized financial request form adapted from Idaho practice that categorizes requested

- overages, captures specific justifications, and documents known state assistance without imposing undue reporting burdens.
- iii. Active Love Adoptions (Laraine Moon): Highlighted the need for rapid turnaround procedures to handle unexpected crisis expenses (e.g., job loss, C-section complications, bed rest, emergency transportation) that arise after an initial budget is established.
 - iv. Love & Light (Denise Garza): Emphasized that agencies often absorb over-cap expenses into agency fees rather than passing costs to adoptive families, urging streamlined digital/portal-based voting to prevent delays for mothers in crisis.
 - v. Nightlight Christian Adoptions (Randy Mitchell): Recommended establishing an internal percentage/cap threshold for cases allowed to exceed \$8,000 per agency, requiring a two-thirds majority vote for overage approvals, and ensuring no direct cash payments are made to birth mothers.
 - vi. Heart to Heart (Donna Pope): Stressed the difficulty of locating immediate, safe housing/shelter options post-COVID and supported adopting an objective rubric to remove emotion from evaluations.
- b. The Consortium agreed to use an objective rubric combined with a standardized financial request form for reviewing any request from a licensed agency that exceeds the financial limits under [Subsection 26B-2-127\(14\)](#). DLBC staff will clarify statutory definitions regarding living expense caps versus weekly allowances, as well as birth father eligibility, under [Section 26B-2-127](#). DLBC staff will draft standard operating procedures (SOPs) to share with the Consortium for review and feedback.
 - c. DLBC staff highlighted that pursuant to [Subsection 26B-2-127\(9\)\(i\)](#), the Consortium and DLBC must report to the Health and Human Services Interim Committee on or before October 1, 2026. The report will compile data regarding completed adoptions, out-of-state transportation instances, and birth parent fee/expense totals, which DLBC will pull directly from existing affidavits of fees to avoid redundant reporting burdens for agencies.

5. Public Comment

- a. The floor was opened for public comment. It was confirmed that no members of the public requested to comment.

6. Adjourn

- a. Kamille Sheikh called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
- b. Yvonne Johanson motioned to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded by Tara Romney Barber. The motion was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:30 PM.

UNAPPROVED