

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

Monday, September 21, 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/84908050453>

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, Donna Pope, Steve A. Sunday, Isaac Thomas (representing Laraine Moon)

DLBC staff attending: Florencia Schapira, Nicole Laub, Dustin Penman, Kamille Sheikh, Jada Stelmach

Other guests attending: Brittany Huff (Assistant Attorney General)

Agenda

1. Welcome - Florencia Schapira (DLBC)

- a. Meeting Introduction
 - i. The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:00 PM by Florencia Schapira (DLBC).
 - ii. Florencia Schapira (DLBC) 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 Utah 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. Approval of Agenda
 - i. Florencia Schapira (DLBC) requested adding an “Other Updates” item to the end of the agenda. Randy Mitchell made a motion to approve the additional agenda item. Yvonne Johanson seconded that motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- d. Open and Public Meetings Act
 - i. Brittany Huff, Assistant Attorney General, presented the annual Open and Public Meetings Act (OPMA) training.

2. Approval of August 2026 Minutes - Florencia Schapira (DLBC)

- a. Tara Romney Barber noted an error in the August 2026 minutes under “4. Review of Proposals and Brainstorm Session”, clarifying that an off-camera individual provided the Heart to Heart proposal rather than Donna Pope.
- b. Meghan Anderson made a motion to approve the August 2026 minutes with the correction. Tara Romney Barber seconded that motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Licensed Adoption Agency Rule (Rule R501-7) Update - Kamille Sheikh (DLBC)

- a. Kamille Sheikh (DLBC) gave an update on Rule R501-7 Child Placing Adoption Agencies. DLBC is completing a repeal and readoption of Rule R501-7 Child Placing Adoption Agencies for clarity, additional language for implementation of [HB 51 \(2026 General Session\)](#), and formatting aligned with the Rulewriting Manual for Utah and DHHS rule style guide.
- b. The draft rule will be sent to Consortium members for a 2-week review by September 30, 2026. Public comment of the rule will begin once posted in the Utah State Rules Bulletin. The target effective date of the rule is early 2027.
- c. The proposed updates:
 - i. Standardizes citations and incorporates statutory definitions.
 - ii. Outlines applicable federal, state, and local laws, and non-profit status requirements.
 - iii. Removes outdated terms and regulates post-adoption gift promises and birth-parent interactions.
 - iv. Aligns with [HB 51 \(2026 General Session\)](#) regarding fee itemization, direct service-provider payments, and revised uniform affidavit requirements.

- v. Requires documentation of independent legal counsel options, outlines 72-hour consent and relinquishment revocation conditions, and increases covered therapy allowance limit.

4. New Business - Florencia Schapira (DLBC)

- a. Review of Request to Exceed Birth Parent Financial Limitations Draft
 - i. Florencia Schapira (DLBC) shared the draft standard operating procedure (SOP) for requesting to exceed birth parent financial limitations to the consortium. Requesting child-placing adoption agencies must gather documentation and submit it to DLBC, which has up to five business days to distribute it to the Consortium.
 - ii. Denise Garza, Isaac Thomas, and Yvonne Johanson raised concerns regarding potential delays in urgent client care under a monthly schedule. DLBC agreed to consult legal counsel about hosting bi-monthly standing meetings that can be cancelled when no requests are pending.
 - iii. Vote: To clarify the SOP language to state that child-placing adoption agencies may submit an exception request at any point in the process, but cannot exceed or disburse funds beyond the \$8,000 cap without prior Consortium approval.
 - 1. Meghan Anderson: Yes
 - 2. Tara Romney Barber: Yes
 - 3. Denise Garza: No
 - 4. Yvonne Johanson: Yes
 - 5. Lauren Murray: Yes
 - 6. Randy Mitchell: Yes
 - 7. Laraine Moon: Yes
 - 8. Donna Pope: Yes
 - 9. Steve A. Sunday: Yes
 - 10. Isaac Thomas: Yes
 - iv. The Consortium established that requesting agencies must recuse themselves from voting on their own submissions, approvals require a simple majority vote, and all documentation must be retained permanently in the adoption case file.
 - v. Public member, Lance Rich, submitted a comment via Zoom chat suggesting to make a general exception for prior cases given that it has been more than 4 months that requests have not been processed.

- b. Workgroup to draft Consortium Bylaws
 - i. Due to time constraints, this scheduled agenda item was not addressed before the meeting adjourned.

5. Other Updates - Florencia Schapira (DLBC)

- a. Florencia Schapira (DLBC) announced that Dustin Penman (DLBC) is now the Foster Care Manager. Nicole Laub (DLBC) was introduced as the new Human Services Program Administrator.
- b. Florencia Schapira (DLBC) shared that the required annual adoption report was completed before the October 1 statutory deadline and delivered to the Legislative Interim Committee. This report includes 2025 agency adoption counts, out-of-state transport numbers, and fees. DLBC Division Director Shannon Thoman-Black will present to the interim committee alongside a designated Consortium member.

6. Public Comment - Florencia Schapira (DLBC)

- a. The floor was opened for public comment. The following public members gave comment on this agenda:
 - i. Lance Rich, representing himself, reiterated his chat comment regarding backlogged cases from the last four months, asking if the Consortium could grant a general exception for cases where expenses exceeded the \$8,000 cap prior to the approval process being established. Florencia Schapira (DLBC) made a note to add backlogged cases to the agenda for the next meeting.

7. Adjourn - Florencia Schapira (DLBC)

- a. Florencia Schapira (DLBC) called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
- b. Yvonne Johanson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tara Romney Barber seconded that motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- c. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:30 PM.