



## THE NEW MEXICO SUPREME COURT IS SEEKING APPLICATIONS FOR THE FAMILY REPRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY COMMISSION

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy (OFRA) is a new state agency with the singular focus of providing high quality legal representation and services to children and families in the foster care system. The office was created by the Legislature in 2022 to serve children, parents, custodians, and guardians in child abuse and neglect cases, as well as eligible young adults who benefit from continued care under the Fostering Connections Act. OFRA is an independent adjunct agency of the Executive branch, and will be overseen by a thirteen-member commission. The Family Representation and Advocacy Commission is tasked with the following duties:

- The Commission shall exercise independent oversight of OFRA to review and approve standards and provide guidance and support to the director.
- The Commission shall review and approve fair and consistent policies for the operation of OFRA and the provision of services to eligible adults under the Fostering Connections Act and to children and parents, custodians or guardians whose children are, or are at risk of being placed, in the legal custody of the Children, Youth and Families Department.

Commission members will:

- Possess significant experience in the representation of children, youth, parents, custodians or guardians in abuse and neglect proceedings, or
- Possess significant experience with the child welfare system as a parent, custodian, guardian or former foster youth, or
- Demonstrate a commitment to high-quality legal representation or to working with and advocating for the population served by the Office.

The Chief Justice of the New Mexico Supreme Court will appoint **five members** to the Commission, including the following:

- Two members who either served as former Children's Court Judges or attorneys in the child welfare system,
- One member who is a youth with lived experience in the legal custody of the Children, Youth and Families Department,

One member who is a parent with lived experience having one or more children in the legal custody of the Children, Youth and Families Department, and

One member with lived experience in the child welfare system as a youth, a parent, or both.

The following persons shall not be appointed to serve on the Commission:

- Current employees of the Children, Youth and Families Department
- Current employees of OFRA
- Current judges, judicial officials or their employees, and
- Persons who currently contract with or receive funding from the Office or their employees.

Persons interested in serving on the Commission may apply by sending a letter of interest to Elizabeth A. Garcia, Clerk of Court, by email to [nmsupremecourtclerk@nmcourts.gov](mailto:nmsupremecourtclerk@nmcourts.gov), or by first class mail to P.O. Box 848, Santa Fe, NM 87504.

Applicants should limit their letters to two pages, indicate which of these five positions they are seeking, and describe (1) why they wish to serve on the Commission, (2) what they bring to the Commission, and (3) their experience with the child welfare system.

**The deadline to apply is Friday, June 24, 2022.**