



# **Interview Questions Discussion**

## ***OCA Nominating Committee***

November 18, 2025



# 01 | Introductory and Professional Background

## ***Introductory and Professional Background:***

- Could you please introduce us to your background and what led you to apply for the Child Advocate position. In your response, we would like to hear more about the milestones in your career that have prepared you for this role, as well as why this opportunity feels like the right next step for you.
- Please describe in detail your experience working in juvenile justice, child welfare, or other youth systems that give you the skills necessary to be the next Child Advocate, including how you would employ these skills to create meaningful change and maintain a truly independent office.
- Please discuss the different ways you have been able to contribute and expand public service in your profession.



## 02 | Transparency, Communication and Public Trust

### ***Transparency, Communication, and Public Trust:***

- Describe a time when families, youth, or community stakeholders expressed distrust or dissatisfaction with how a system or agency was serving them. How did you approach understanding their concerns, rebuilding trust, and driving meaningful change?
- As the Child Advocate for Massachusetts, your leadership role is dedicated to ensuring that child serving executive agencies deliver timely, safe, and effective services. What are some concrete mechanisms you will use to keep the Office of the Child Advocate's core mission at the center while still holding partners across government, courts, nonprofits, and community groups accountable to shared outcomes?
- How often would you be willing to meet with a group of impacted families? (across all systems)



## 03 | Cross-System Coordination and Complex Cases

### ***Cross-System Coordination and Complex Cases:***

- Tell us about a time when a child or family case you or your organization was working on fell through the cracks because multiple systems failed to coordinate. How did you intervene? What did you learn?
- What opportunities do you see for improving cross-agency and cross-secretariat collaboration to improve outcomes for children?
- Given the diverse pathways children and families experience in receiving care and services, how will you ensure that the OCA addresses their needs across all child-serving agencies?



## 04 | Leadership and Independence

### ***Leadership and Independence:***

- Describe a time you were asked to make a recommendation or decision that might have been politically sensitive. How did you ensure your approach remained unbiased and child-centered?
- What has been the hardest decision you have had to make as a leader? How did you work to come to that decision? Please describe the outcome.
- Please describe your experiences with, understanding of, and priorities for juvenile justice-involved youth.
- Please outline your priorities for the first 12 months in this office and what steps you will take to achieve measurable progress.



## 05 | Oversight and Accountability

### ***Systemic Oversight and Accountability:***

- Tell us about a time you identified systemic failures within a large organization or public agency. How did you assess the situation and drive reform?
- Share an example of when you faced resistance while pushing for greater transparency or accountability. What did you do to overcome it?
- Give an example of when you worked across multiple organizations or government systems to resolve a case or policy issue affecting children. What challenges did you face, and what was the outcome?
- What is your vision for effective oversight, and what role, if any, do you see for collaboration and innovation in oversight?



## 05 | Oversight and Accountability

### ***Systemic Oversight and Accountability (continued):***

- How would you incorporate into the OCA's work the experience of community residents and professionals with personal experience in child welfare and other juvenile systems?
- The OCA is an independent agency within the Executive Branch, with oversight responsibility for child-serving agencies that include those serving juvenile justice-involved youth. Please describe your experiences with, understanding of, and priorities for this population.



## 06 | Strategic Vision and System-wide Impact

### ***Strategic Vision and System-wide Impact:***

- Given the diverse pathways children and families experience in receiving care and services, how will you ensure the OCA addresses their needs across all child-serving agencies?
- What opportunities do you see for improving cross-agency and cross-secretariat collaboration to improve outcomes for children?



# 07 | DEIA and Lived Experience

## *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access and Lived Experience*

- Tell us about a time when you intentionally incorporated the voices of people with lived experience into decision-making. How did that change the outcome?
- Describe a situation when you had to address disparities affecting marginalized groups (e.g., Black, LGBTQ+ youth) within a system. What steps did you take to ensure equity?
- Tell us about a time you led or influenced policy that addressed systemic bias or inequity in child welfare or juvenile justice. What specific strategies did you use?
- The CDC described a number of experiences that can occur before a person's 18th birthday that can have negative effects on their social, emotional, and cognitive development. Can you describe some of these Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and which one or 2 do you feel is likely to have the most detrimental impact? How would this be addressed by the OCA?



## 07 | DEIA and Lived Experience

### *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access and Lived Experience (continued)*

- How will you integrate the perspectives of people with lived experience into your work as Massachusetts Child Advocate? Please give an example from a previous position.
- Can you discuss how you would utilize this position to encourage stakeholders in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems to work toward a more equitable society? Please discuss how you would do this through collaboration and provide at least one specific example of a step you would take in your first year as the Child Advocate.
- Equity often gets named but not operationalized. How will you embed equity into real decision-making across child-serving agencies, especially when priorities, resources, or power dynamics differ?



## 07 | DEIA and Lived Experience

### ***Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access and Lived Experience (continued)***

- Can you tell us how you envision implementing change in the racial or ethnic disparities for families impacted by unnecessary system harm to change in the Commonwealth?
- Access to resources and geography are Social Determinants of Health. There are more services for children and adolescents in urban and suburban areas than in more rural regions of the state despite DCF, DYS, and other agencies having the capacity to contract for these services statewide. Western and Central Massachusetts lag behind on family preservation services and community-based services that allow children and youth to remain at home while receiving care or to address parenting issues that are not creating imminent risk. What are some ways in which the OCA can begin to address the disparities in available services for children in youth in the Central and Western Regions of the state?



# 08 | Trauma-Informed Practice and Data/Communication

## ***Trauma-Informed Practice***

- Describe how you have applied trauma-informed principles in your work to shape policy or respond to a child or family crisis.

## ***Data and Communication***

- Describe how you have used information and system data to uncover patterns of harm or inequity in a child or family-serving system. What actions resulted from your findings?
- Give an example of how you communicated complex data or findings to the public or policymakers in a way that led to action or reform.
- How would you use data to drive change for child and family services, and what metrics in particular do you think are critical indicators of well-being for families and effectiveness of our child and family-serving systems? What outcomes would you prioritize for setting goals for improvement?