

MRAC Semi-Annual Report:

Semi-Annual Report on the Mandated Reporting to
Community Supporting Implementation Effort



Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting

*Communities Keeping Children Safe
and Families Together*

Reporting Period:

January – June 2026

Submitted by:

The Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee (MRAC) and Steering Committee, California Health & Human Services (CalHHS), CA Dept of Social Services (CDSS), and the Prevention & Early Intervention (PEI) Committee

Submitted to:

The California Child Welfare Council (CWC)

Prior Semi-Annual Reports:

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PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Consistent with the charge issued by the Council in September 2024—and in alignment with Recommendation 1 of the Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting Task Force—the semi-annual report of the Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee (MRAC) shares progress in advancing implementation of the recommendations of the MRCS Task Force, including the MRAC’s initial implementation plan.

The semi-annual reports will serve as the official record of the MRAC’s accountability to the Council, the Legislature, our public–private partners, and most importantly, to the children, families, and communities most impacted by California’s current mandated reporting policies and practices.

“In California, we have long demonstrated our commitment to supporting youth and preserving and strengthening families. The overrepresentation of children of color in the child welfare system is a profound and persistent issue that demands our continued attention. To this end, California has made many recent, historic investments to support youth and families as we work towards a more equitable system. We must continue working to ensure that every child, regardless of race, tribe, or background, can thrive in a safe and supportive environment, supported by a system that serves all families with fairness and equity.”

~ Kim Johnson, Secretary of California Health and Human Services
(quote from September 2024 when Secretary Johnson was Director of California’s Department of Social Services)

BACKGROUND

Why This Work Matters

Each year, nearly **400,000 children** in California are reported to Child Protective Services (CPS), yet **nearly 90%** of these allegations are not substantiated as abuse or neglect. Instead, many families—particularly Black/African American and Native American families—are swept into a system of surveillance and unnecessary reporting when what they need are supportive community resources that strengthen family stability, safety, and connection.

Recognizing this, the Child Welfare Council charged the statewide Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting (MRCS) Task Force with examining the drivers of over-reporting and recommending reforms rooted in equity, prevention, and trust. Formed in August 2023 and composed of 35 diverse members—over one-quarter of whom brought lived expertise—the Task Force advanced [14 comprehensive recommendations](#) to transform California’s approach to mandated reporting.

At the September 4, 2024 Child Welfare Council meeting, a motion was unanimously approved to accept the PEI Committee’s [Task Force report](#) and recommendations, and to develop a statewide implementation strategy in partnership with CalHHS, CDSS, the Prevention & Early Intervention (PEI) Committee, and other associated departments to turn the recommendations into sustainable action across the state for the well-being of children, families, and communities.

Standing Up the Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee

To move from recommendations to implementation, an interim “Planning Team” was established composed of the entities named in the motion—CalHHS, CDSS, and the PEI Committee. The purpose of the Planning Team was to fulfill Recommendation 1 by standing up the Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee (MRAC) in full alignment with the requirements set forth in the Task Force report. Per the recommendation, the MRAC is charged with ensuring that California’s transformation from mandated reporting to community supporting continues, and that disparities in the child welfare system are eliminated—not in rhetoric, but in measurable outcomes. To do this, the MRAC’s structure was intentionally designed to reflect the values of lived expertise, equity, and cross-system collaboration. Key components include:

- **Tri-Chairs were appointed**, representing Lived Expertise, Systems Leadership, and the Child Welfare Council. The Tri-Chairs meet weekly to guide direction, coherence, and alignment across partners.
- A **36-seat MRAC was established**, with ongoing commitments to lived expertise, racial equity, proximity to mandated reporting, and cross-sector representation. The MRAC meets monthly to build consensus and guide implementation.
- **Five Workgroups**—composed of members of the MRAC—were formed. The Workgroups are based on the “levers of implementation” that were stated in the Task Force report, and include: Data & Accountability, Training, Policy, Community Pathways, and Narrative Shift. Workgroups have been meeting at least twice monthly to develop detailed plans with specific objectives and deliverables.

This work has been made possible by a coordinated, committed partnership between CalHHS, CDSS, and the CWC’s Prevention & Early Intervention Committee, as well as public-private partners including CDSS, CDPH, Casey Family Programs, and Safe & Sound. Their shared investment has created an enduring backbone structure—allowing both the former MRCS Task Force and the current MRAC to focus on advancing systems change with lived expertise centered throughout the effort.

The MRAC is not simply a committee tasked with carrying out recommendations. It is a statutorily mandated body with a clear charge: ensure California’s shift from mandated reporting to community supporting moves forward, and that it drives the measurable elimination of disparities in the child welfare system.

HIGHLIGHTS & PROGRESS: JANUARY - JUNE 2026

During this time period, the MRAC has both advanced and/or completed significant components of the recommendations, and grappled with—and established—important procedural aspects of implementation. The latter, grappling with process, has been a reminder of a mantra from the MRCS Task Force, that sometimes you have to slow down to speed up. It has also been confirmation of the MRAC's commitment to be fully transparent to all stakeholders and communities, as well as comprehensive of members' perspectives and voices. It takes time to build a structure and process to achieve these high expectations and level of accountability.

Highlights and progress during the January to June progress period are included below. And a full [Implementation Dashboard](#) is provided as an update on all fourteen recommendations.

Establishing Transparent & Productive Processes

- Roles & responsibilities: The MRAC Steering Committee and its full membership developed, discussed and aligned on a **RACI [RESPONSIBLE - ACCOUNTABLE - CONSULTED - INFORMED]** plan to keep the work moving forward in a transparent and timely manner.
- Approvals to advance the work: Implementation is a multi-step set of activities and deliverables as the MRAC laid out in its plan in the December 2025 semi-annual report (see the Appendix). The activities and deliverables are significant and additive, and therefore also require review and approval from the Workgroups and MRAC in order to advance the recommendations to fidelity. Drawing on the RACI, the MRAC set a “test” structure for approving the advancement of the work through stages of implementation. The Committee has just started using this process and may fine-tune it over time. The stages of advancing the recommendations are:
- **Implemented and Ongoing**: A recommendation has been delivered according to its intended goal or purpose, with activities that may be ongoing.
- **Approved by the MRAC to Advance**: A Workgroup has advanced an activity or deliverable to the point where they need the full MRAC review, discussion, and approval to continue or finalize the implementation process.
- **Significant Progress**: Important work has been completed, however there are not yet activities or deliverables that require MRAC input or approval.

- **Initiated:**

- **GREEN** - Started and moving forward
- **YELLOW** - Started and slowed due to a lack of key components and/or information
- **RED** - Started and delayed or blocked for various reasons

Advancing Recommendations

Data & Accountability Workgroup (DAAWG)

- **Recommendation 2 (Advanced to the MRAC for Approval):** Propose metrics to monitor MR reform efforts with a focus on disproportionality.
- **STATUS:** DAAWG developed five core metrics through discussions with the MRAC, and advanced the set for final discussion and approval to move forward. Revisions are being made based on feedback, and the Workgroup will move forward with the proposed set of metrics. These metrics may evolve as new information is available over time (e.g. CARES).

Training Workgroup

- **Recommendation 3 (Significant Progress): AB 2085 training developed,** implemented with support across the MRAC Workgroups, and incorporated into the Gold Standard Statewide training.
- **STATUS:** Statewide AB 2085 training has been piloted and revised for final review. The MRAC Training Workgroup is developing a statewide implementation plan for the stand-alone training, and the plan will also include incorporating it into the Statewide MR training when it is developed.
- **Recommendation 9 (Significant Progress):** Develop and launch a Gold Standard Statewide MR Training that includes specific content as stipulated by the recommendation.
- **STATUS:** The CDSS is partnering with the MRAC Training Workgroup and the CDSS content development group to finalize training transcripts and move to design and production.

Narrative Shift Workgroup

- **Recommendation 14 (Advanced to the MRAC for Approval):** Create a statewide narrative shift initiative to help shift beliefs related to mandated reporting.
- **STATUS:** The MRAC has reviewed all three deliverables: 1) Key messaging has been developed, reviewed, and approved for use; 2) a corresponding Elevator Speech has been developed and reviewed, and it will be advanced for use following agreed-to revisions by the MRAC; and 3) a Story Bank process has been developed and reviewed, and it will be advanced for use following agreed-to revisions by the MRAC.
- Multiple statewide and county MRAC presentations have been conducted since January—many to targeted top-reporter audiences—highlights include: 1) CalTrin Statewide MRAC Update (200+ attendees), 2) Child Abuse Prevention Month (200 + attendees), 3) Personnel Administrative Services Consortium (PASCo) with statewide human resource leaders in education, 4) End Abuse Long Beach board meeting, 5) Inyo County Annual Prevention Conference. And coming up: 1) National Citizen Review Panel Conference (June 2), and 2) Partnership for Well-Being Conference (June 11).

Community Pathway Connections to Mandated Reporting

- **Recommendation 12 (Initiated, Green):** Provide recommended information and education for mandated reporters for inclusion in Comprehensive Prevention Plans (CPPs) when the CDSS requires updates to the Plans.
- **STATUS:** The Community Pathway Workgroup will present recommended content at the June 2026 MRAC meeting for review and approval to advance to CDSS.

Related Work

Although not specifically stated in the set of Task Force recommendations, the statewide momentum of mandated reporting reform has yielded related work that will further advance the overall effort. Following are recent examples of significant work by counties that are leading the way in advancing mandated reporting reform.

- LA County Office of Education’s development of model regulations in alignment with standards and process set forth by the California Association of School Boards.
- Completion of an Issue Brief, [*Educators Lead the Way in Mandated Reporting Reform: A Roadmap Informed by AB 2085 Implementation in Los Angeles County*](#), that shares learnings and recommendations from the LA County Office of Education, in partnership with the LA Mandated Supporting Initiative, on how to advance AB 2085 with educators.
- The County of San Diego’s Child and Family Well-Being (CFWB Office), along with the Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) Community School sites, and the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE), have created a partnership to connect families to comprehensive primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention resources, and support the transformation of mandated reporting practices to community supporting. The work includes developing reporter awareness, education, training, and tools to reduce unnecessary and inappropriate reporting to child protection hotlines. Through this partnership, there is also the opportunity to build a new narrative and shift mindsets around mandated reporting through the use of messaging, and by acknowledging cultures, behaviors, and harms—all informed through lived experience, data, and research.

IMPLEMENTATION DASHBOARD

LEGEND

- GREEN** - Started and moving forward
- YELLOW** - Started and slowed due to a lack of key components and/or information
- RED** - Started and delayed or blocked for various reasons

Additional details can be found on [page 6](#).

Data & Accountability	Initiated	Significant Progress	Approved by the MRAC to Advance (or in process of)	Implemented and Ongoing
Rec 1 Establish MRAC; track data to monitor and support progress				
Rec 2 Recommend and apply data sets to advance MR reform				
Rec 13 Continue to advance MR reform through ongoing data analysis				

Training	Initiated	Significant Progress	Approved by the MRAC to Advance (or in process of)	Implemented and Ongoing
Rec 3 Ensure implementation of AB 2085 with fidelity to its legislative intent. [shared with Data & Accountability for tracking]				
Rec 8 Require standardized mandated reporter training				
Rec 9 Develop statewide “gold standard” curriculum with lived expertise				
Rec 10 Develop a statewide mandated reporter webpage				

IMPLEMENTATION DASHBOARD (CONT'D.)

Policy	Initiated	Significant Progress	Approved by the MRAC to Advance (or in process of)	Implemented and Ongoing
Rec 4 Support LAO analysis of narrowing MR categories				
Rec 5 Amend CANRA to eliminate General Neglect as a reporting requirement				
Rec 6 Update CANRA definition of Severe Neglect to align with SDM				
Rec 7 Implement 2-year liability immunity pilot using decision-making tools				

Community Pathways	Initiated	Significant Progress	Approved by the MRAC to Advance (or in process of)	Implemented and Ongoing
Rec 11 CDSS to assess capacity of community supports/services for MR and OCAP funding alignment				
Rec 12 CPPs must include MR-specific info/education on community pathways				

Narrative Shift	Initiated	Significant Progress	Approved by the MRAC to Advance (or in process of)	Implemented and Ongoing
Rec 14 Create a statewide narrative change initiative to shift beliefs and values from mandated reporting to community supporting				

WHERE SUPPORT IS NEEDED

The MRAC has been moving the work at a quick and thoughtful pace, and no significant roadblocks have been identified.

As shown in the Implementation Dashboard, the work of the Policy Workgroup is more complicated and extracted than the other recommendations. Specifically, amending or updating existing laws and policies takes time and legislative alignment. Although support is not needed at this time, the MRAC is lifting up this challenge as guidance may be requested in the future.

Looking to the near future, the 18-month term limits for the current Tri-Chairs and MRAC members will expire in December 2026. The MRAC hopes to have the continued support of the Child Welfare Council in encouraging active representation from essential and mandated partners such as the Health and Human Services Agency and the Department of Social Services.

WHAT'S NEXT

The MRAC will continue to advance the recommendations according to the implementation plan submitted to the Child Welfare Council in December 2025 (see the Appendix). Significant progress that we hope to report in December 2026 includes: 1) an agreed upon set of initial metrics to guide and measure the impact and outcomes of the Task Force recommendations over time, and a determination on where and how the data will be publicly shared; 2) completion and launch of the Statewide AB 2085 training; 3) completion and launch of the Gold Standard Statewide Mandated Reporting training; 4) a comprehensive narrative shift communications plan to further advance the robust communications work that is already underway; and 5) the inclusion of information and education on mandated reporting in Comprehensive Prevention Plans as those plans are updated per guidance from the Department of Social Services, along with significant advancement of multiple other recommendations.

Through shared leadership, sustained partnership, evidence-informed strategies, and deep commitments to lived expertise, the MRAC remains poised to transform bold recommendations into lasting systemic change. We look forward to continuing to share progress at the quarterly CWC meetings and providing detailed updates through each semi-annual report.

“We ask you to open your hearts and be bold, not only to the Recommendations, but by inviting more persons with lived expertise to join the tables where decisions are made.” ~ Lived Experience Group of the MRCS Task Force

APPENDIX

The Workgroups—Data & Accountability, Training, Policy, Community Pathways, and Narrative Shift—were formed to align with the “levers of implementation” identified by the Task Force and are composed of members of the MRAC. Although separate in design, the Workgroups interact to create a single implementation plan to advance the recommendations.

To organize development of the implementation plan, the MRAC established a shared framework that articulates the deliverables for each recommendation, guides the identification of key activities, and highlights productive intersections across Workgroups. This framework ensures coherence, efficiency, and aligned action as California works toward its vision of Child and Family Well-Being for all.

TRAINING	DELIVERABLES	ACTIVITIES	TIMING
Rec 3 — Use data to track AB 2085 implementation [shared with Data & Accountability]	Oversight of the AB 2085 training (CDSS lead)	Provide structured oversight of CDSS MR training (feedback loops, reviews, certificate process)	Oversight of the development of CDSS MR training: March 2025–April 2026
Rec 8 — Require standardized mandated reporter training	Recommendations for CANRA amendments tied to standardized training	Create crosswalk between training and legislation	Decision-making tool survey with the Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP): November 2025
Rec 9 — Develop statewide “gold standard” curriculum with lived expertise	Curriculum oversight to ensure alignment with core content and lived expertise	Explore review processes for non-state trainings	Webpage development & implementation: TBD
Rec 10 — Develop a statewide mandated reporter webpage	Survey decision-making tools from CA counties and other states	Develop and operationalize MR webpage content, monitoring, and dissemination	AB 2085 training development and oversight: January 2026
	Training approval standards and certification processes	Monitor AB 2085 training implementation data	
	Development and ongoing monitoring of statewide MR webpage	Develop communications and messaging for training awareness	

APPENDIX (CONT'D.)

DATA & ACCOUNTABILITY	DELIVERABLES	ACTIVITIES	TIMING
Rec 1 — Establish MRAC; track data to monitor and support progress	Semi-annual report to CWC on progress	Align with FFPS CQI workgroup; review plans, EBPs, county saturation	Metrics landscape analysis + socialization: February 2026
Rec 2 — Recommend and apply data sets to advance MR reform	Ongoing analysis of impacts of recommendations	Inventory statewide data sources and metrics (SDOH, ACES, EpiCenter, etc.)	Recommend five key metrics: March 2026
Rec 3 — Use data to track implementation and success of AB 2085 [shared with Training]	Recommendations for future data tools/processes for mandated reporting	Conduct landscape scan of available upstream/downstream metrics	Alignment with FFPS: Ongoing
Rec 13 — Continue to advance MR reform through ongoing data analysis	Oversight of implementation data	Develop and recommend five key metrics to track reform impact	Quarterly cross-workgroup coordination: Ongoing
	Regular monitoring of statewide data	Outreach to agencies and youth/parent advocacy groups for qualitative data	
	Annual publication of disparities and impact data with CDSS	Meet quarterly with all MRAC workgroups to identify shared measures	
	Data submissions to support Community Pathways capacity assessment (Rec 11)		

APPENDIX (CONT'D.)

COMMUNITY PATHWAYS	DELIVERABLES	ACTIVITIES	TIMING
Rec 11 — CDSS to assess capacity of community supports/services for MR and OCAP funding alignment Rec 12 — CPPs must include MR-specific info/education on community pathways	Review of CQI Outcomes	Coordinate timelines with MRAC Data and CP Advisory Committees	All Recommendation 11 Initial Deliverables: Within 0–12 months
	Develop Recommendations from CQI findings (in partnership with CP Advisory Committee)	Review statewide CQI reports and identify gaps	All Recommendation 12 Initial Deliverables: Within 0–12 months
	Align OCAP Funding (ensure funding is accessible to CBOs and linked to prevention needs)	Conduct EBP access and county CPP gap analysis	
	Define “information and education” for CPP amendments; develop statewide template	Stakeholder outreach and engagement (ILTs, providers, counties)	
	Draft All County Letter or Interagency Letter with requirements and timeline	Create dissemination plan for recommendations	
	Create process to ensure all amendments are completed	Collaborative meetings with CDSS, CP Advisory Committee, and workgroups	
	Monitor implementation of amendments through CDSS + CP Advisory Committee	Draft CPP amendment template	
	Support counties in building MR-focused websites and warm handoff practices	Establish ACL/Interagency Letter content & approval process	
		Develop tracking tool for county submissions	
		Coordinate with Data Workgroup on monitoring	

APPENDIX (CONT'D.)

POLICY	DELIVERABLES	ACTIVITIES	TIMING
Rec 4 — Support LAO analysis of narrowing MR categories	Collaboration with LAO to analyze MR categories and child safety impacts	Invite LAO to present findings; develop 1-page summary	LAO engagement + report alignment: Feb 2026
Rec 5 — Amend CANRA to eliminate General Neglect as a reporting requirement	Research on national MR category reforms	Review other states' MR categories and outcomes	SDM tool review (counties + definitions): Feb 2026–March 2026
Rec 6 — Update CANRA definition of Severe Neglect to align with SDM	Recommendations for legislation removing General Neglect from MR requirements	Gather data from mandated reporters beyond top categories	Liability pilot research + stakeholder coordination: March 2026
Rec 7 — Implement 2-year liability immunity pilot using decision-making tools	Recommendations for clarifying Severe Neglect definition	Review SDM tool use across CA counties (Humboldt, LA, Ventura)	
	Liability pilot design, tools, evaluation framework (leveraging LA County model)	Research other states' definitions of neglect and recent reforms	
		Review CA county MR decision-making tools to inform pilot design	

NARRATIVE SHIFT	DELIVERABLES	ACTIVITIES	TIMING
Rec 14 — Create a statewide narrative change initiative to shift beliefs and values from mandated reporting to community supporting	Establish campaign objectives and communications plan	Develop key messages (poverty = support, safety redefined, harm acknowledgment)	Key messaging + harm statement: Jan 2026
	Develop and implement statewide Narrative Shift Campaign	Gather stakeholder input through extensive listening sessions	Listening sessions + synthesis: End of Q2 2026
	Co-develop messaging with lived experts and community stakeholders	Review existing listening session data (Humboldt, LA, statewide FGIs)	Full communications plan: Draft by Sept 2026; Final by Nov 2026
	Build qualitative data library (case studies, lived expertise stories)	Draft full communications plan (purpose, audiences, strategies, tactics)	Qualitative Data (stories) Library: Q1 2026 and ongoing
	Merge dissemination and NS Workgroup efforts	Compile qualitative stories, bright spots, and case studies	
		Coordinate with CP, Data, Training, Policy Workgroups to support their implementation	