



2026 MRCAC Peer Review User Manual

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Program Overview

Online Peer Review is a national peer review program including Forensic Interview Peer Review, Spanish Speaking Forensic Interview Peer Review, Interviewing Individuals with Disabilities (DD) Forensic Interview, and Medical Peer Review, including a separate SANE Peer Review. The online peer review program is offered via a HIPAA-compliant platform.

Length: Medical Peer Review/SANE Peer Review each last for one hour with two cases presented/call; Spanish/DD/Forensic Interview Peer Review calls last for 1.5 hours each.

Cost: \$165.00 per site. The charge is per child advocacy center, not per individual. This means that once your site pays the \$165, all MDT members are able to participate in any or all of the peer review calls offered each month at no additional charge.

Program Highlights

Thank you for participating in 2025 Peer Review and for your patience in waiting for 2026 Peer Review registration information. Midwest Regional Children's Advocacy Center (MRCAC) has been honored to coordinate this program for the field for many years under a cooperative agreement between the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Children's Minnesota. Though the 2026 DOJ awards have been delayed, **we are committed to offering peer review for as long as we can and with as little disruption to you as possible.**

As we invite you to **register for the 2026 Peer Review program**, you'll note two differences from previous years. First, we're offering a "fast-track" registration process. Rather than selecting from the many available core communities, you'll have the option to continue in the same sessions you had during 2025. We hope this will make it easier for you to continue your participation. Second, we won't invoice your CAC until MRCAC is funded for 2026. *If funding is not awarded or is significantly delayed, MRCAC will be unable to offer peer review for the full calendar year. We won't charge you until we have more assurance that we can offer the full year of programming. We will offer a January session, at a minimum.* To better reflect the program's value and mitigate a decrease in federal funding, the invoice for the 2026 annual registration fee will rise from \$150 to \$165 per CAC, the first increase since 2017.

Thanks for your flexibility as we adjust the registration process to accommodate these unique circumstances. **Please select one of these options by [due date].**

- Stay in your current peer review call day/times.
- Select a new peer review day/time.
- Opt out of peer review for 2026.

We look forward to continuing to work with you in 2026! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me through the information below. Additional registration information can also be found here.



Community: You will participate with your core community, with whom you will meet on a consistent day and time throughout the year. Core communities create safe environments to share cases and feedback as well as engage in open discussion.

Quality: Your experience is secured and fostered through a HIPAA-compliant platform with experienced moderators.

Accreditation alignment: This program meets the NCA Accreditation standard for both forensic interview and medical peer review requirements.

Timeline

Timeline	Tasks
November 2025	Emails are sent inviting current 2025 participating sites to continue their participation into 2026. Emails include the core community(s) sites that were assigned for the 2025 peer review program year, the peer review manual, and the calendar for the 2026 Peer Review Session. Orientation sessions are held by request.
Day Before Peer Review Call	A reminder email will be sent out with links to join call (including electronic confidentiality form and HIPAA compliant platform link), updated agendas, interview protocol being used for shared interview for forensic interview/Spanish/DD peer review calls, disclosure forms for medical/SANE peer review calls and links for evaluation and certificate of attendance.
End of Call	An email is generated with a link for the online evaluation and certificate of attendance.
Ongoing	Practice calls are held to make sure the video for forensic interview/Spanish/DD peer review is in the correct format and audio/video quality is sufficient for peer review.
Quarterly & Annually	MRCAC staff review evaluations and the annual survey and adjust as necessary.



Equipment Requirements

It's easy to participate! All you will need is the following to participate in a peer review.

- A computer with high-speed internet access (ethernet preferred over wireless if possible)
- Microphone (built into your computer or plugged in)
- Speakers (built into your computer or plugged in)
- Webcam (built into your computer or plugged in; most webcams also have a microphone)

Preparing to Present Your Case

Choosing a Case

For Forensic Interview Peer Review/Spanish Speaking Forensic Interview Peer Review, or Interviewing Individuals with Disabilities Forensic Interview Peer Review:

- Choose a case that you want constructive feedback on.
- Choose a closed case if at all possible.
- Don't choose one of your best interviews as you already know you did well on that. Choose one where you would like feedback on how to do things differently or suggestions on how to handle a certain age group, etc.

Prepping a Case

Presenting can be stressful if you are not prepared. To be ready on your presentation day, please make sure that you:

- Medical/SANE Peer Review: save case history and images in a PowerPoint format so that all of your information is in one document.
- Forensic Interview/Spanish Speaking Forensic Interview/Individuals with Disabilities Forensic Interview: have the ability to play your interview on your computer that you will be using the day of peer review, and then share your screen.

Practice Calls

All sites presenting interviews are required to schedule a practice call prior to their scheduled presentation date. When it is your turn to present for the Forensic Interview Peer Reviews (including Spanish and Developmental Disabilities), you will need to schedule a test call with Maggie Larson (maggie.larson@childrensmn.org).

Practice calls help to ensure the video and audio quality are sufficient for the actual peer review. There are times when the audio is then distorted, so it is imperative that a practice call be completed to make sure the audio quality will be sufficient for the interview to be heard when it is shared.

These also serve as a trial run to make sure you feel comfortable loading and playing your



interview and to answer any questions.

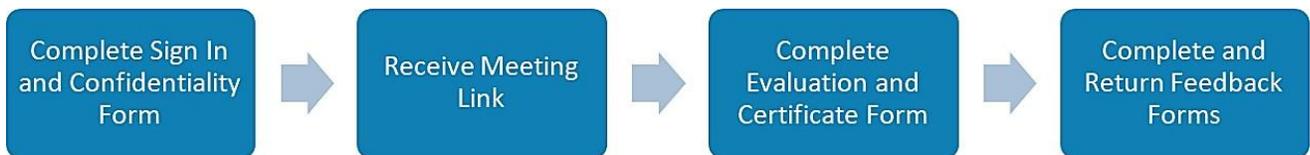
***Note: the preferred video file type is .wmv, .mp4, or .avi**

Participating in Peer Review via Teams

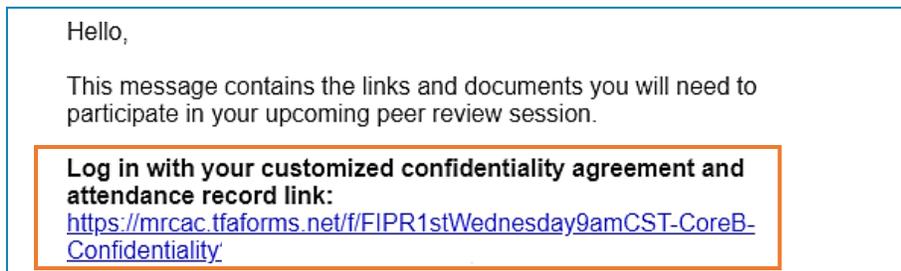
The Midwest Regional CAC Peer Review program is conducted via Children's Minnesota's Microsoft Teams account.

How to Join the Call

The pathway should be as follows:



Step 1: Each month, you will receive an email with your agenda and a link to join the call. **Click on this customized link** to open up the **Sign-in Confidentiality Form** for your call. Enter the information for yourself and anyone else who is watching with you.



**Forensic Interview Peer Review
Sign-In + Confidentiality Form**
2nd Tuesday 10-11:30 Central

This form serves as an attendance sheet and confidentiality agreement.

Please make sure to fill out all required information for all attendees. Once you click the **Submit** button, you will be directed to the scheduled Webex session.

I/We agree to keep confidential any and all case information presented during this peer review session. This information is to be used as a part of the professional consultation process and is not to be shared outside.

For HIPAA compliance, I/We agree to:

- View the peer review in a private room so that images/videos cannot be viewed by others.
- Use earbuds/headphones so that the audio is not broadcast to people not participating in the peer review.

Full Name of the Participating Organization/CAC: *

First Name: *

Last Name: *



Step 2: Submit the form and select **Click Here** at the end of the form submission confirmation to join the Microsoft Teams Meeting.

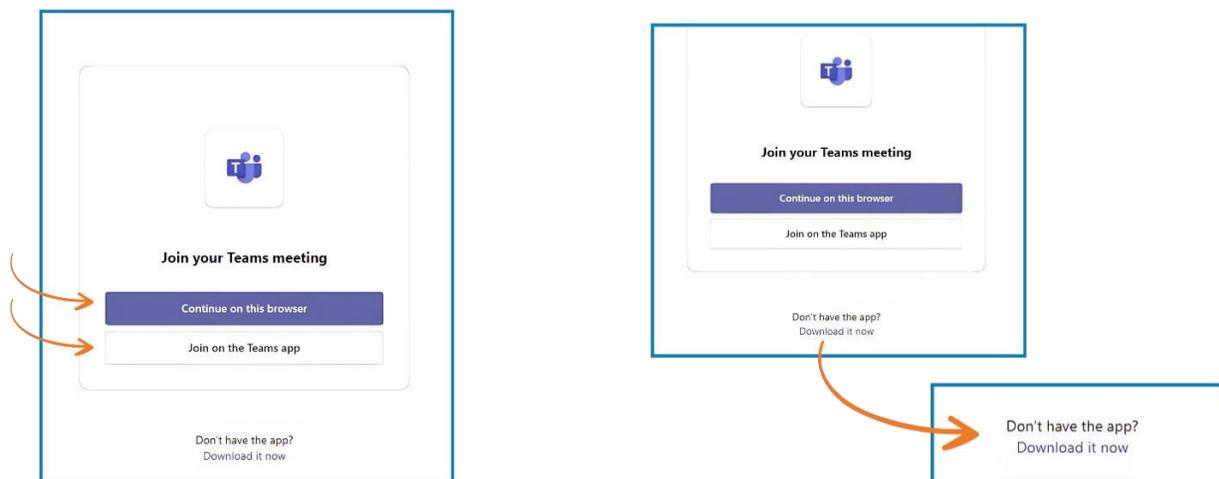
Thank you for completing this sign in form, which serves as your attendance and your confidentiality agreement.

Please note the instructions to access your call below:

Please click on the following link to access your peer review session: **CLICK HERE**

Step 3: When this page appears, please select how you want to connect to the meeting. You can choose:

1. Download the Windows app (If you don't have the app installed yet).
2. Continue on this browser (If you cannot download any apps to your computer).
3. Open your Teams app (If you already have the app installed).



Download the Microsoft Teams Meeting App

If you do not have the Microsoft Teams Windows App, click to download and install the app or visit: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/download-app>

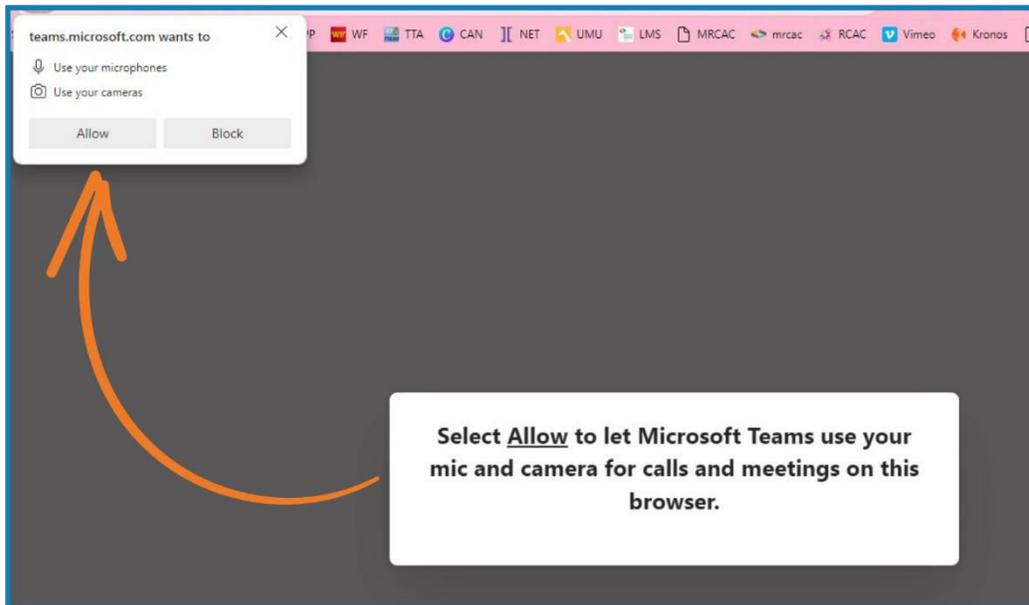
Once you have the app downloaded and your free account set up, follow the steps for **Microsoft Teams Meeting via the Teams App** on page 9.

Please remember to keep your microphone **muted when you are not speaking no matter which option you've selected to join the meeting.*

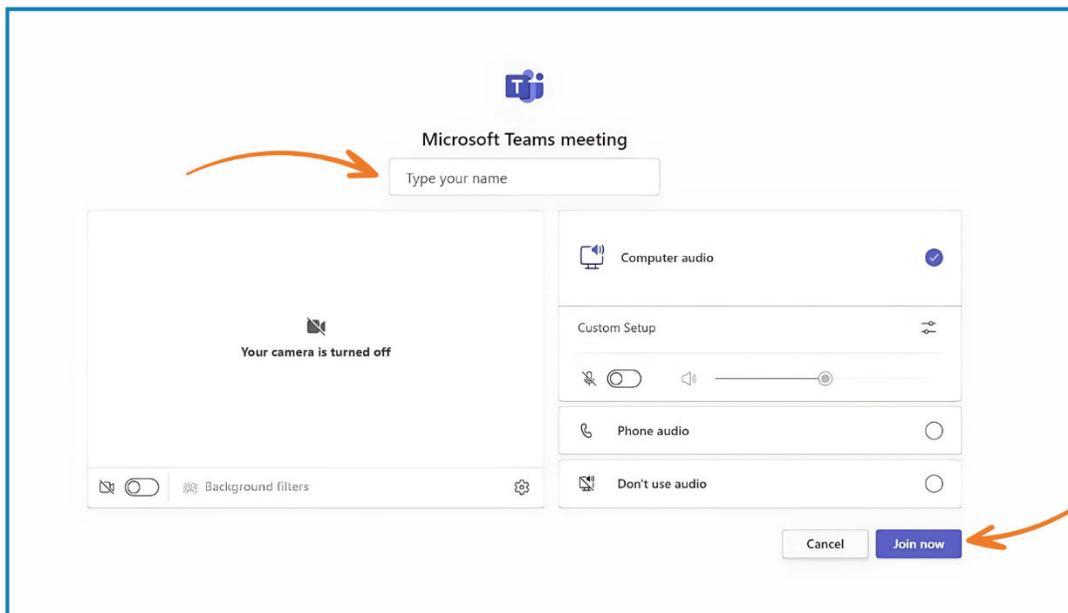


Microsoft Teams Meeting via the Browser

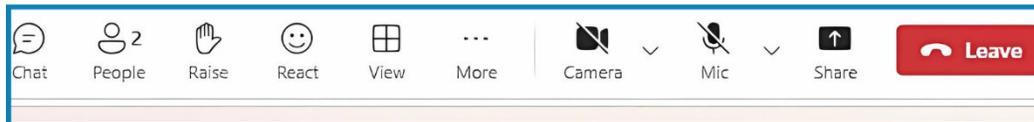
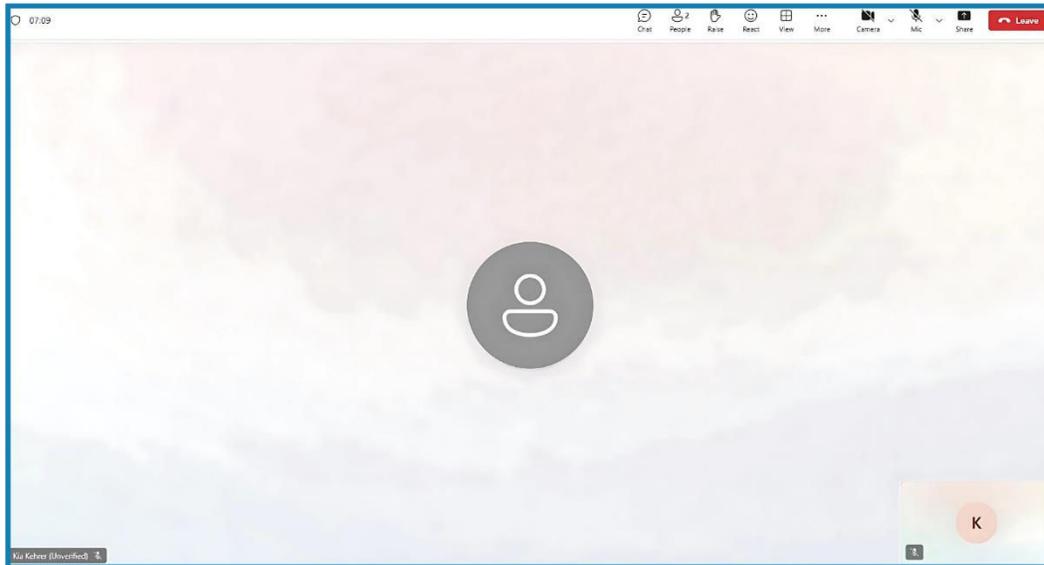
Step 1: If you are joining the call via the web browser, you might get this notification below. Please select **Allow**.



Step 2: Please **enter your name** and **turn on your camera** then select **join now**.



Step 3: You will see the following view with your Microsoft Teams Meeting tools located at the top right of your screen.



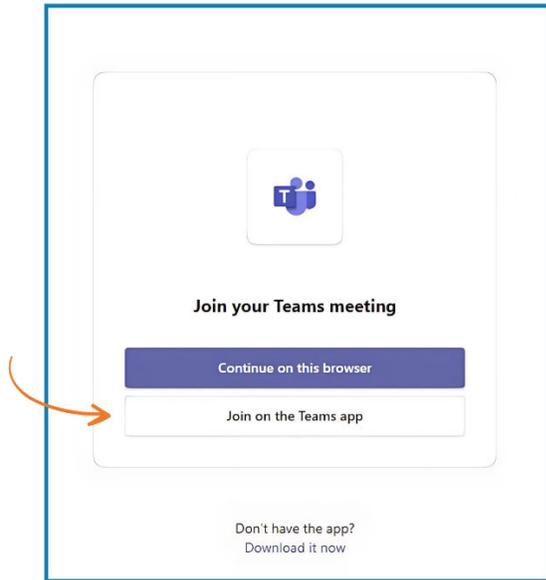
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1. **Chat:** Displays the text chat for meeting participants.
2. **People:** Shows a list of everyone currently in the meeting.
3. **Raise:** Lets others know you'd like to speak if someone else is talking.
4. **React:** Allows you to send an emoji.
5. **View:** Lets you choose how to view other participants or the meeting space.
6. **More:** Toggles additional tools.
7. **Camera:** Turns your video camera on or off.
8. **Mic:** Mutes or unmutes your microphone.
9. **Share:** Enables you to share your screen with other participants.
10. **Leave:** Allows you to exit the meeting.

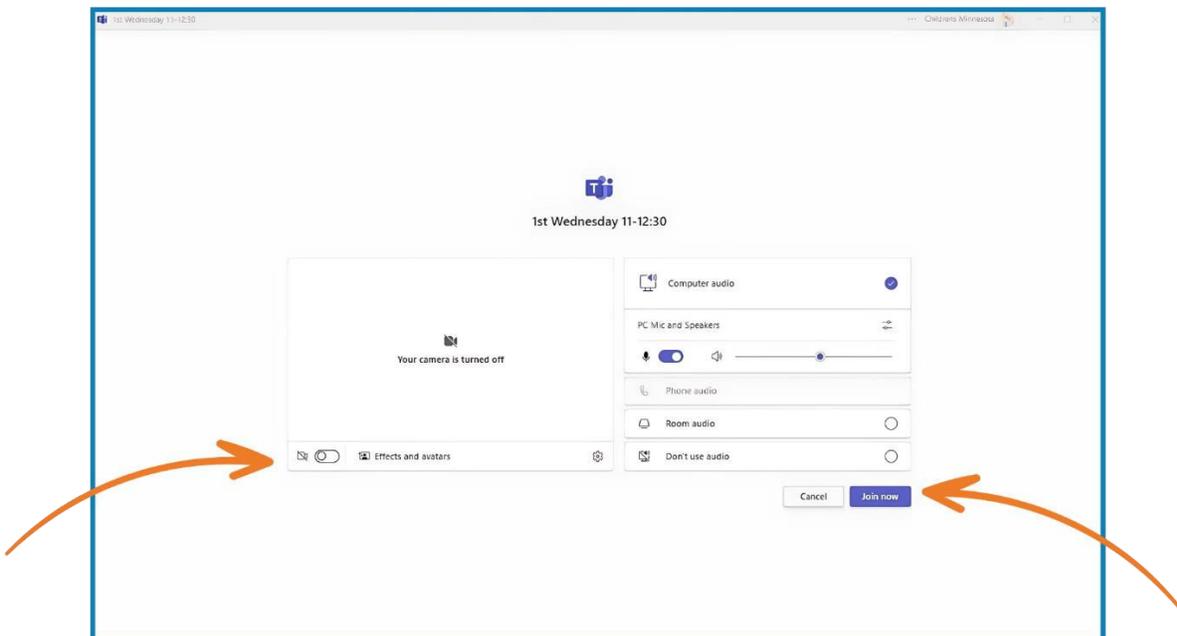


Microsoft Teams Meeting via the App

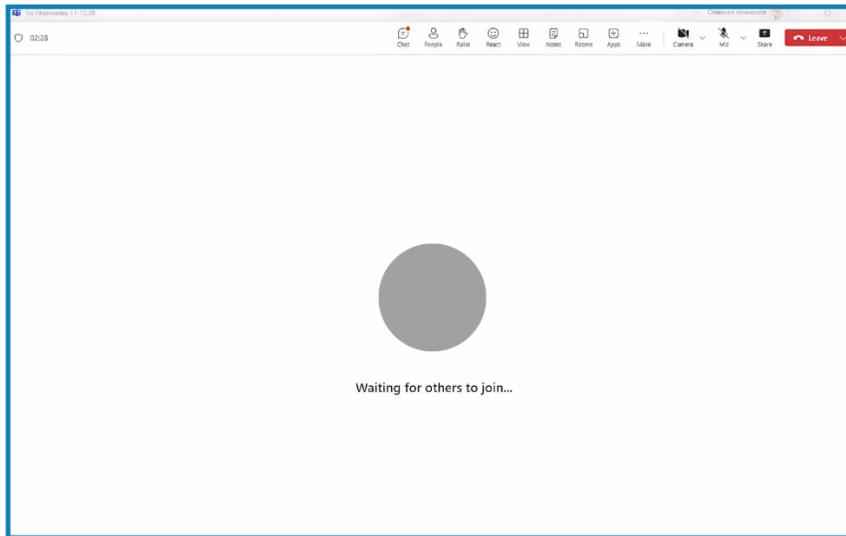
Step 1: If you are joining the call via the Microsoft Teams App, you will select the **Join on the Teams app** button.



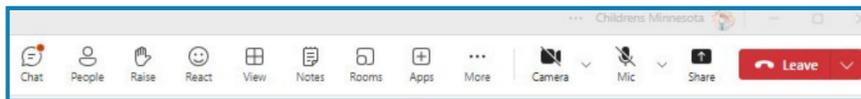
Step 2: Please **turn on your camera** then select **join now**.



Step 3: You will see the following view with your Microsoft Teams Meeting tools located at the top right of your screen.



10 12



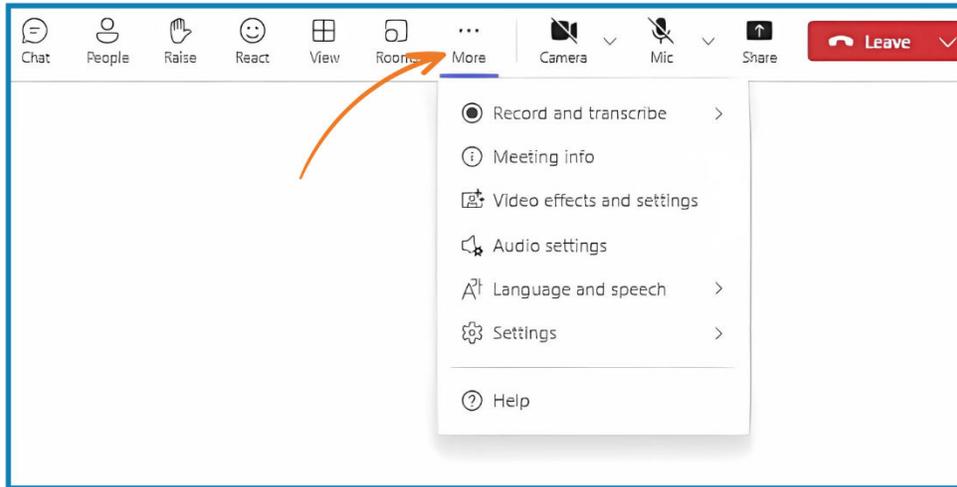
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 11 13

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3. **Raise:** Lets others know you'd like to speak if someone else is talking.
4. **React:** Allows you to send an emoji.
5. **View:** Lets you choose how to view other participants or the meeting space.
6. **Notes:** Allows you to take notes during the call.
7. **Rooms:** Shows breakout rooms.
8. **Apps:** Allows you to add on apps if you have a premium version.
9. **More:** Toggles additional tools.
10. **Camera:** Turns your video camera on or off.
11. **Mic:** Mutes or unmutes your microphone.
12. **Share:** Enables you to share your screen with other participants.
13. **Leave:** Allows you to exit the meeting.

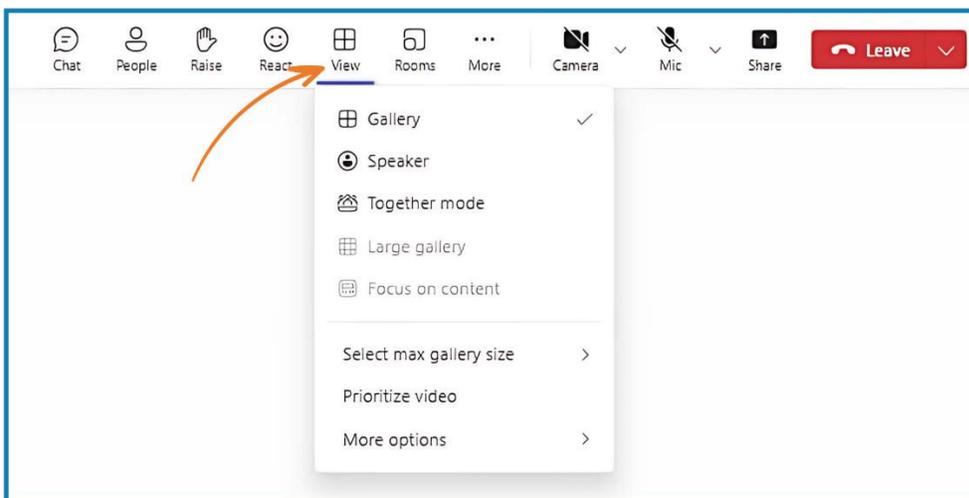
****Please note that some of these options may not be available to you.***



Additional Tools in Microsoft Teams (Same in App and Browser Views)



Selecting **More** will show other options you can select inside MS Teams.



Selecting **View** allows you to change how your view of the meeting room looks.



How to Present Cases During a Microsoft Teams Meeting Peer Review

Before the Meeting Starts

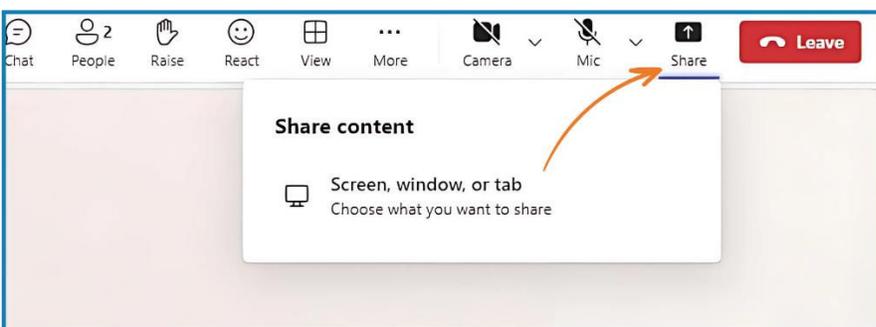
- Make sure your computer and network are working properly to avoid any unexpected problems during the meeting (i.e. speakers work, your video and images can be shared and viewed on the computer screen, audio works).
- Place all of the files that you intend to share into a single folder or desktop so that it can be quickly located.
- Log on to the meeting early so you can practice sharing the file prior to the meeting so you can troubleshoot if the need arises.

Sharing Video Files - Browser View

***For Forensic Interview calls, including Spanish Speaking and Individuals with Disabilities**

Step 1: Make sure your video file is open and ready to play on your desktop.

Step 2: Click on the **Share** Icon.



Step 3: If you joined via the web browser select **Entire Screen** and make sure to toggle on **Also Share System Audio** and then click on **Share**. Make sure to close out any documents or screens you do not want others to see.

Please note: When you share, all audio from your computer, including notifications, will be heard by participants in the meeting.

On a MAC: You'll need to install the latest Teams audio driver in order to include computer audio in a Teams meeting and avoid sound issues like echoing. Once the driver is installed on your Mac, you'll need to restart your computer. Download it here:

<https://aka.ms/macaudidriver>

IMPORTANT: Videos may play at slightly different speeds for attendees due to different internet connections and computer processing speeds.

Step 4: Please make sure to **Mute** your microphone while your video is playing.

***If you toggled on audio to be included and you mute your microphone, sometimes this causes other participants to not hear the audio. This means you will have to leave your microphone unmuted and remain quiet while the video is playing as your microphone is unmuted.*

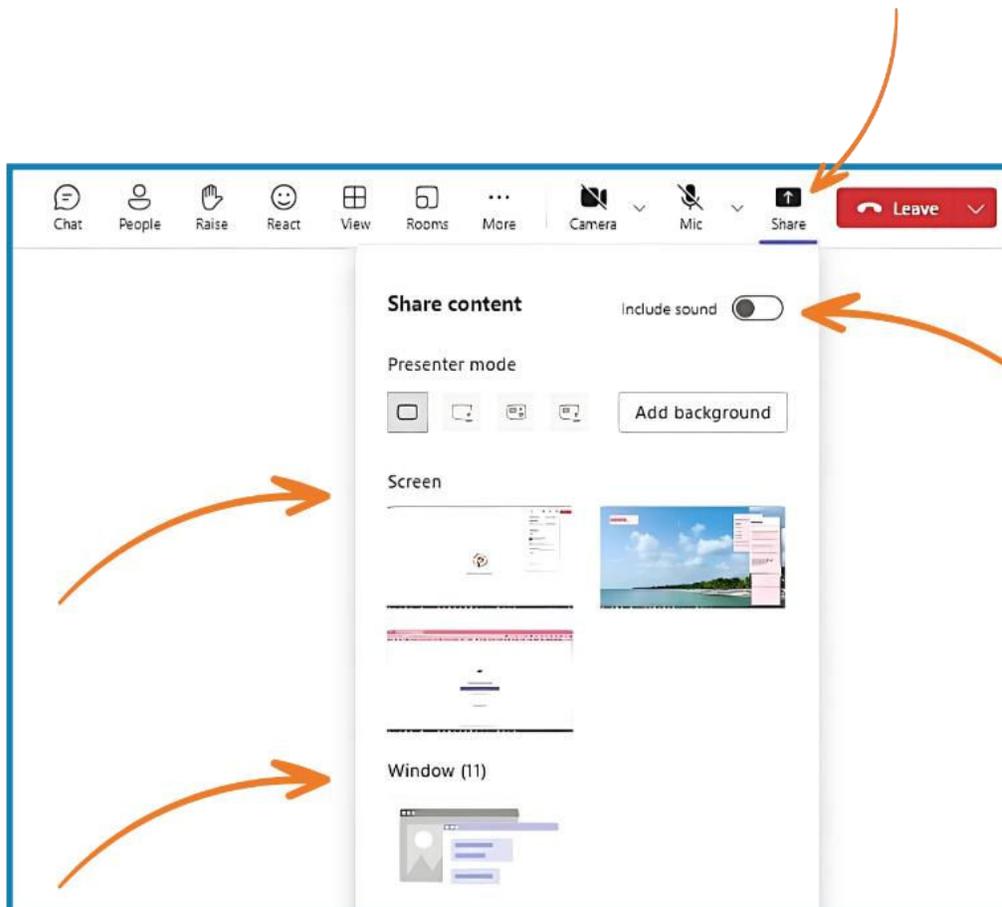


Sharing Video Files - App View

**For Forensic Interview calls, including Spanish Speaking and Individuals with Disabilities*

Step 1: Make sure your video file is open and ready to play on your desktop.

Step 2: Click on the **Share** Icon.



Step 3: Toggle on **Include Sound** and select either your **Screen** or **Window** and then click on **Share**. Make sure to close out any documents or screens you do not want others to see.

Please note: When you share, all audio from your computer, including notifications, will be heard by participants in the meeting.

Step 4: Please make sure to **Mute** your microphone while your video is playing.

***If you toggled on audio to be included and you mute your microphone, sometimes this causes other participants to not hear the audio. This means you will have to leave your microphone unmuted and remain quiet while the video is playing as your microphone is unmuted.*

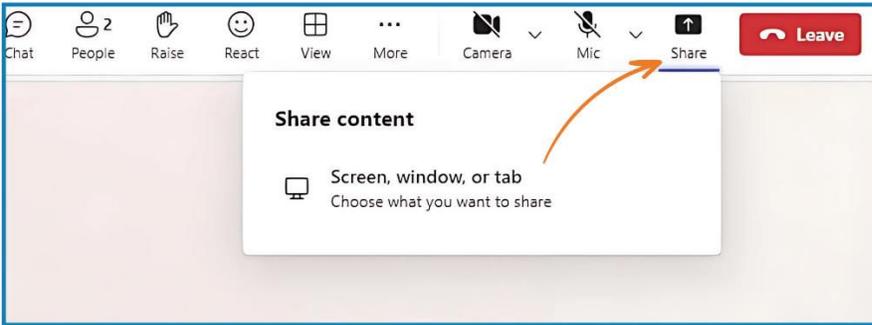


Sharing PowerPoint via Web Browser

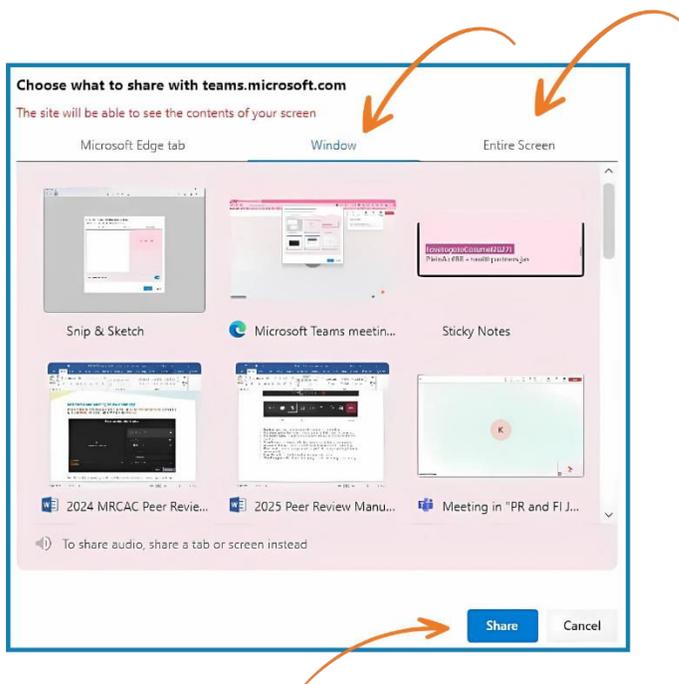
**For Medical and SANE calls*

Step 1: Make sure your PowerPoint file is open and ready to share on your desktop.

Step 2: Click on the **Share** Icon.



Step 3: Select **Entire Screen** or **Window** and then click on **Share**. If you share your entire screen, make sure to close out any documents or screens you do not want others to see.



***Note:** prior to each annual cycle, a presentation schedule is sent out to all participating sites along with a calendar listing all of the peer review calls for the year. In addition, you are provided with your Core Community group sheet that lists the other participants in your core community and their email address. Sites are responsible for being prepared to present a case on their scheduled date. If a site is not able to fulfill their presentation responsibility, it is the responsibility of the site to find another site to either trade with them or substitute for them.

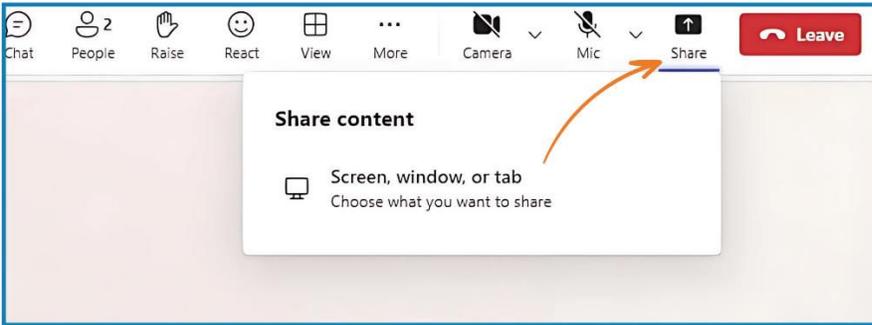


Sharing PowerPoint via App

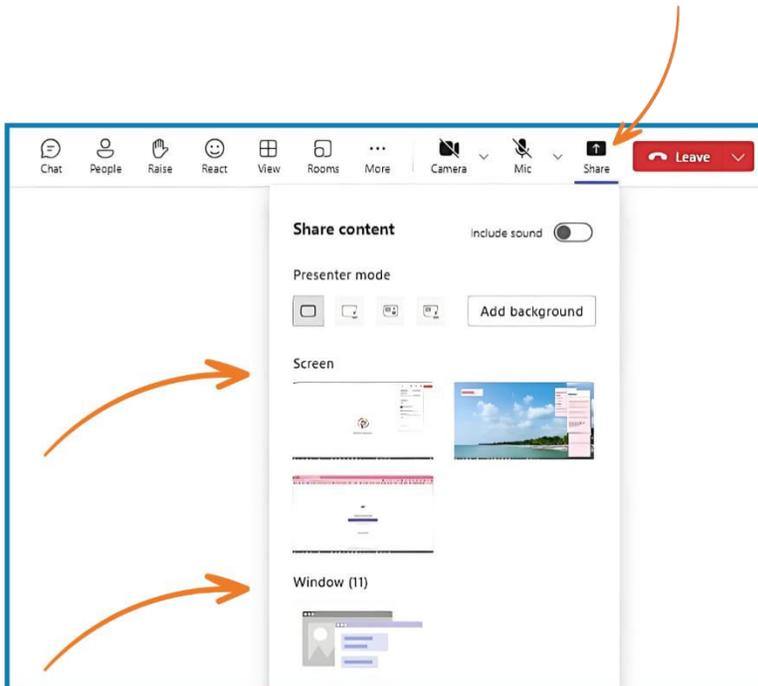
***For Medical and SANE calls**

Step 1: Make sure your PowerPoint file is open and ready to share on your desktop.

Step 2: Click on the **Share** Icon.



Step 3: Select **Entire Screen** or **Window** and then click on **Share**. If you share your entire screen, make sure to close out any documents or screens you do not want others to see.



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Providing Feedback

For each peer review call, you will be asked to provide both verbal and written feedback. It is important to remember that feedback is most useful when it is provided in a constructive manner. It can be stressful to have your work critiqued, and given that we are asking people to choose their difficult interviews, the presenters are looking for feedback that can help them build their skills as an interviewer without attacking them personally. Please review the information below as well as listen to the recording found at this link:

<https://vimeo.com/mrcac/review/482656895/da5b936614>

Providing Constructive Feedback During Peer Review

In order to maintain a productive peer review, it is important to use effective communication skills. Effective communication includes sharing, listening and - at times - even challenging shared information, but it should ALWAYS remain respectful. The intent is NOT to highlight failures, but to use experiences as teachable moments. All participants are expected to be proactive in discussions.

The goals of constructive feedback are to:

- Reinforce positive interviewing skills.
- Thank the presenting interviewer for sharing.
- Recognize the interviewer's efforts. This does not mean you have to agree.

Feedback provided in a constructive manner can:	Feedback NOT provided in a constructive manner can:
Advance relationships	Damage interactions
Foster trust	Cause defensiveness
Improve our ability to conduct sound forensic interviews	Impact willingness to share

We would like for peer review to utilize a *feedforward* approach.

Feedforward is a term used to focus on the next time. Feedforward is a forward-looking concept, focusing on what could be done differently in the future, rather than what went wrong in the past. We can't correct the past, but we can affect the future.



Before giving feedback, think about:

- The purpose of your feedback
- What you hope to have the person do differently
- Whether you are reacting emotionally
- How to articulate your perspective to ensure productive conversation

Guidelines for providing feedback:

- Be specific and discuss the behavior(s), not the person.
- Be sincere and honest.
- Avoid rambling; ensure the recipient of feedback is allowed time to respond to the person who offered their view.
- Discuss alternatives for addressing the question/response.
- Identify steps to ensure new behavior.
- End by reaffirming support for the presenter.

As you receive feedback:

Receiving feedback graciously is key to gathering feedforward, making it comfortable for other to provide constructive feedback and have a healthy conversation.

- Focus on the content of the message, not the person delivering the feedback.
- Focus on the future, not the past.
- Ask for what you could have done better or changed rather than what you did wrong.
- Listen calmly and attentively; take notes.
- Clarify the feedback.
- Avoid defending or over-explaining.
- Welcome suggestions.

As the presenter, give yourself grace and forgiveness. You're learning how to elevate a skill. When you catch yourself, for example, slipping into bad habits, recognizing missed opportunities to listen, or seeing mistakes made - forgive yourself. Recognize where it happened and what contributed to it. Learn from it, and commit to do better next time.



Course Paperwork

Written Feedback Tool for Forensic Interview Peer Review

Forensic peer review also has a written feedback form that is used to provide additional feedback beyond the verbal feedback. It is provided prior to each call as an online form (<https://mrcac.tfaforms.net/f/PRfeedback>) or a fillable PDF (<http://bit.ly/2L11lj1>). Participants can take notes during the peer review, and then:

1. Complete and submit the online form.

OR...

2. Send the written form to Maggie Larson, Midwest Regional CAC, via fax (952-992-6907) or email (maggie.larson@childrensmn.org).

Midwest Regional Peer Review

Forensic Interview Peer Review Feedback Form

Name of Interviewer: _____ Age of Child: _____

Date of Peer Review Call: _____ Site of Interview: _____

Interview Process	Yes	No	NA	Comments
Introduces self; explains role/equipment				
FI/child seated appropriately for camera recording				
Rapport: Establishes child's comfort, communication, competence				
Establishes child's developmental level				
Demonstrates cultural competency/cultural sensitivity				
Ground Rules: Establishes rules of interview (okay to say don't know, repeat, don't understand, if I				
Makes use of open-ended questions				
Allows for follow-up questions/clarifications to child's narrative				
Uses tools appropriately				
Timing: Uses appropriate silence, pace, and length; does not interrupt child				
Checks in with observers before closing interview				
Closure: Shows respect for child and empathy; thanks them for participating in interview				

Please remember that everyone on the call is a professional. Feedback should be provided in a constructive format. If you feel that someone is operating outside of their professional scope of practice, it is your responsibility to address the issue with them. Peer review is a forum to learn from others and to share your knowledge and we strive to make sure that all voices are heard.



Evaluation and Certificate of Attendance

Once the call has finished, participants who have provided their name on the electronic confidentiality form will receive a link to complete an online evaluation. In addition, there will be a link to download and print off a certificate of attendance, which will be autofilled.

Continuing medical education credits are available for medical professionals.

Please make sure you save your agendas and certificates in a file for later retrieval as your CAC will need these when they apply for accreditation/reaccreditation with the National Children's Alliance (NCA).

Program Contact Information

For questions related to the online peer review program, please contact Maggie Larson, maggie.larson@childrensmn.org, 612-730-2299 (cell).

Last updated November 2025

