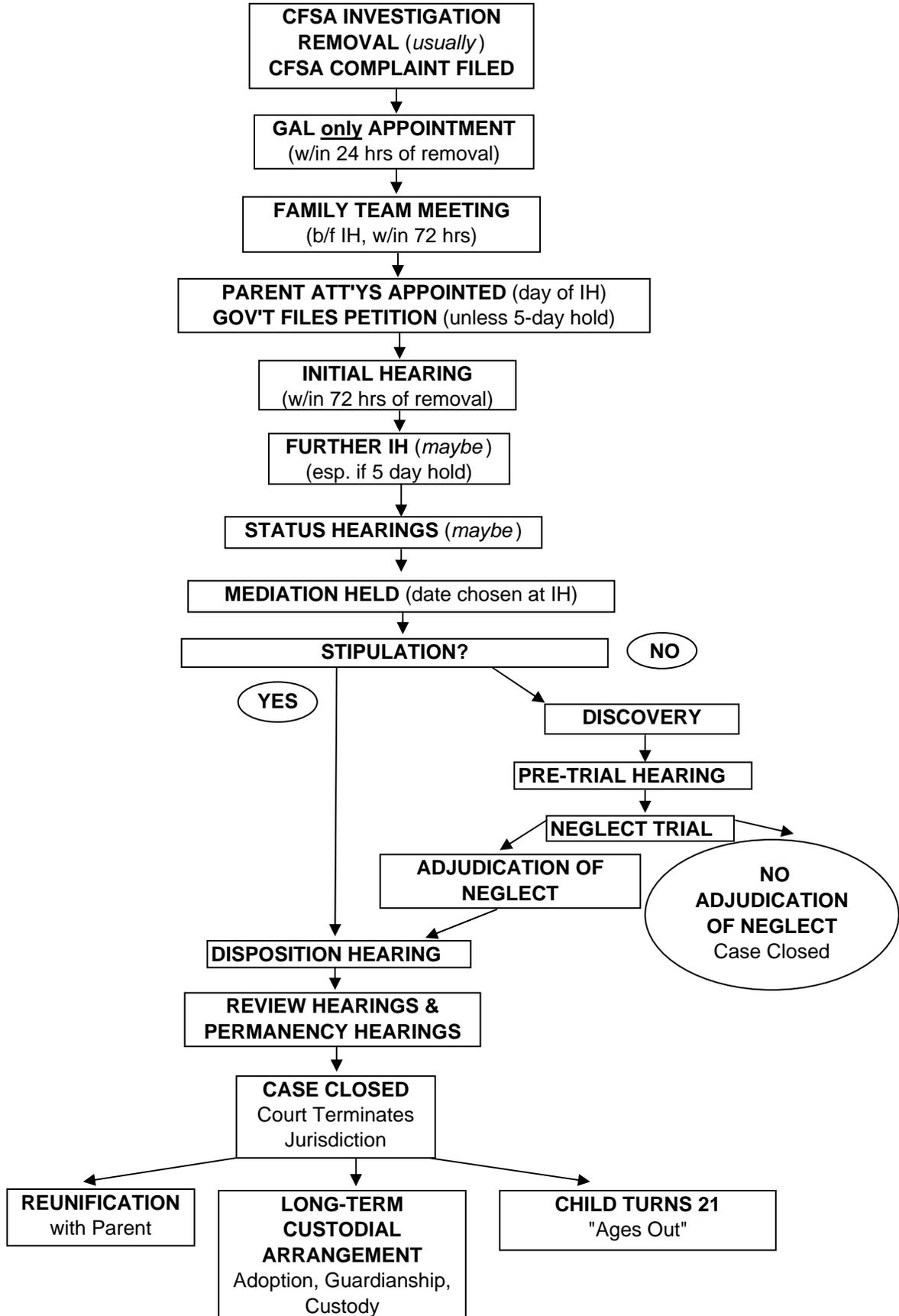


2. Beginning Steps and Overviews

- a. Abuse and Neglect Case Flowchart
- b. Permanency Standards and Burden of Proof Chart
- c. Permanency Hearing Order
- d. Basic Stages of an Adoption Case
- e. One Step vs. Two Step Adoption Process
- f. Custody Case Overview
- g. Researching Court Records
- h. Sample Praecipe of Appearance (Custody Case)
- i. Sample Praecipe of Appearance (Neglect Case)
- j. Sample Motion for Party Status (Neglect Case)
- k. 16-04 Children in Court Policy
- l. Resource (Kinship or Foster) Parent Fact Sheet

OVERVIEW OF AN ABUSE & NEGLECT CASE



**** TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS (can be filed at various points throughout the case)

Litigating Contested Cases
February 2013

	Adoption	Guardianship (pursuant to D.C. Code §16-2381 <i>et seq.</i>)	Custody	Competing Cases
What is the legal standard?	<p>"A petition for adoption may not be granted by the court unless there is filed with the petition a written statement of consent,' D.C. Code § 16-304 (a) (2001), given by the prospective adoptee's parent. D.C. Code § 16-304 (b)(2)(B). The parent's consent may be waived by the court, however, upon a finding that the consent is being 'withheld contrary to the best interest of the child.' D.C. Code § 16-304 (e).</p> <p>Best interest of child guided by the factors set forth in the termination of parental rights statute (D.C. Code § 16-2353(b)):</p> <p>(1) The child's need for continuity of care and caretakers and for timely integration into a stable and permanent home, taking into account the</p>	<p>The permanent guardianship is in the child's best interests; adoption, termination of parental rights, or return to parent is not appropriate for the child; and the proposed permanent guardian is suitable and able to provide a safe and permanent home for the child. See D.C. Code § 16-2383(c) (2001).</p> <p>“Best interest” guided by factors set forth in D.C. Code § 16-2383(d):</p> <p>(1) The child's need for continuity of care and caretakers, and for timely integration into a stable and permanent home, taking into account the differences in the development and the concept of time of children of different ages;</p> <p>(2) The physical, mental, and emotional health of all individuals involved to the degree that each affects the</p>	<p>Rebuttal of presumption in favor of parental custody and in the best interest of child, guided by the factors set forth in D.C. Code § 16-831.07 and .08 (2011).</p> <p>§ 16-831.07. Findings necessary to rebut the parental presumption by clear and convincing evidence:</p> <p>(a) To determine that the presumption favoring parental custody has been rebutted, the court must find, by clear and convincing evidence, one or more of the following factors:</p> <p>(1) That the parents have abandoned the child or are unwilling or unable to care for the child;</p> <p>(2) That custody with a parent is or would be detrimental to the physical or emotional well-being of the child; or</p>	<p>"Where the parents have unequivocally exercised their right to designate a custodian, the court can terminate the parents' right to choose only if the court finds by clear and convincing evidence that the placement selected by the parents is clearly not in the child's best interest[.]'" In re T.W.M., 964 A.2d 595, 604 (D.C. 2009) (quoting T.J., supra, 666 A.2d at 16); see also In re C.A.B., 4 A.3d 890, 900 (2010); In re A.T.A., 910 A.2d 293, 295 (D.C. 2006); D.C. Code § 16-304 (a), (b)(2)(A), (e) (2001).</p> <p>Best interest of child guided by the factors set forth in the termination of parental rights statute (D.C. Code § 16-2353(b)).</p>

Litigating Contested Cases
February 2013

	<p>differences in the development and the concept of time of children of different ages;</p> <p>(2) The physical, mental and emotional health of all individuals involved to the degree that such affects the welfare of the child, the decisive consideration being the physical, mental and emotional needs of the child;</p> <p>(3) The quality of the interaction and interrelationship of the child with his or her parent, siblings, relative, and/or caretakers, including the foster parent;</p> <p>(3A) Abandonment of child after birth despite medical determination that the child was ready for discharge;</p> <p>(4) To the extent feasible, the child's opinion of his or her own best interests in the matter; and</p>	<p>welfare of the child, the decisive consideration being the physical, mental, and emotional needs of the child;</p> <p>(3) The quality of the interaction and interrelationship of the child with his or her parent, siblings, relatives, and caretakers, including the proposed permanent guardian;</p> <p>(4) To the extent feasible, the child's opinion of his or her own best interests in the matter; and</p> <p>(5) Evidence that drug-related activity continues to exist in a child's home environment after intervention and services have been provided....</p>	<p>(3) That exceptional circumstances, detailed in writing by the court, support rebuttal of the presumption favoring parental custody.</p> <p>(b) The court shall not consider a parent's lack of financial means in determining whether the presumption favoring parental custody has been rebutted.</p> <p>(c) The court shall not use the fact that a parent has been the victim of an intrafamily offense against the parent in determining whether the presumption favoring parental custody has been rebutted.</p> <p>§ 16-831.08. Factors to consider in determining best interests of child:</p> <p>(a) In determining whether custody with a third party, pursuant to this chapter, is in the child's best interests, the court shall consider all</p>	
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Litigating Contested Cases
February 2013

	<p>(5) Evidence that drug-related activity continues to exist in a child's home environment after intervention and services have been provided In re W.D., 988 A.2d 456, 459 (D.C. 2010) (citing In re J.L., 884 A.2d 1072, 1076-77 (D.C. 2005)).</p> <p>See also D.C. Code § 16-309 (2001); Super. Ct. Adoption R. 43; In re D.R.M., 570 A.2d 796, 805 (D.C. 1990).</p>		<p>relevant factors, including:</p> <p>(1) The child's need for continuity of care and caretakers, and for timely integration into a stable and permanent home, taking into account the differences in the development and the concept of time of children of different ages;</p> <p>(2) The physical, mental, and emotional health of all individuals involved to the degree that each affects the welfare of the child, the decisive consideration being the physical, mental, and emotional needs of the child;</p> <p>(3) The quality of the interaction and interrelationship of the child with his or her parent, siblings, relatives, and caretakers, including the third-party complainant or movant; and</p> <p>(4) To the extent feasible, the child's opinion of his or her own best interests in the matter.</p>	
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Litigating Contested Cases
February 2013

Movant's Burden of Proof	Clear and convincing evidence	Preponderance of the evidence	Preponderance of the evidence but when rebutting parental presumption standard is clear and convincing	Between non-parents - preponderance of the evidence Between non-parents where one petitioner has consent –clear and convincing evidence
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**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FAMILY COURT**

In the Matter(s) of:

(Child's Name)

Case No. _____
Social File No. _____
X-Ref Number _____
Date of Birth _____

Next Hearing Type/Date: _____
Associate/Magistrate Judge _____

PERMANENCY HEARING ORDER

This matter came before the Court on _____, 20____. Mark individuals in attendance with check in box to the left of the name.

PARTIES AND COUNSEL

<input type="checkbox"/> _____, Mother	<input type="checkbox"/> _____, Mother's Counsel
<input type="checkbox"/> _____, Father _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____, Father's Counsel
<input type="checkbox"/> _____, Respondent	<input type="checkbox"/> _____, GAL
<input type="checkbox"/> _____, SW	<input type="checkbox"/> _____, AAG

OTHER PERSONS IN ATTENDANCE

<input type="checkbox"/> _____, _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____, _____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____, _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____, _____

NOTICE TO FOSTER/PRE-ADOPTIVE PARENT/KINSHIP CARETAKER

Did Foster/Pre-adoptive parent/Kinship caretaker receive written notice of the hearing from CFSA?

Yes No

FINDINGS OF FACT

- The child(ren) was/were removed from the home as follows:
_____ was removed on _____;
- The child(ren) was/were returned home as follows:
_____ returned on _____;
- The child(ren) _____ was/were not removed.
- The Agency report was not/was filed.
- The Agency case plan was not/was filed.

THE RESPONDENT'S STATUS

The child(ren) is/are currently placed as follows:

- Under Protective Supervision with a parent, _____.
- In Private Placement with a relative, _____.

- In Private Placement with a non-relative, _____.
- Under COMMITMENT _____.

(If there is more than one child in the family and the children are in different placements, please specify by writing the name of each child after the placement option.)

INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT NOTICE

The Court has inquired whether any party has reason to believe that _____ is/are subject to the ICWA and the following has been determined:

- The Court has insufficient information to find that ICWA does apply.
- ICWA does not apply based upon a full inquiry having been made.
- Information suggesting that ICWA may apply has been provided to the Court, therefore the Agency will provide notice to the appropriate parties and entities.
- Notice was provided by the Agency, and the child(ren) is/are not eligible for membership in a recognized Indian tribe or more information is required to make a determination
- _____ is/are documented as a member of a recognized Indian tribe or is/are eligible for membership in a recognized Indian tribe and is therefore subject to the ICWA.

FAMILY INFORMATION

Birth Mother (Name) _____
 Date of birth _____ Date of death _____
 Current/ Last known address _____

Birth Father (Name) _____ Child(ren)'s Name _____
 Date of birth _____ Date of death _____
 Current/ Last known address _____

The Government shall initiate a search for the birth mother birth father and file an affidavit(s) by _____, 20____, regarding efforts to locate her/him and/or effectuate service.

PATERNITY

- Parentage Attachment D was completed on _____, and no amendments are required; or
- Parentage Attachment D is appended hereto.

TPR STATUS

A Motion to Terminate Parental Rights for _____ **was filed** on _____, 20____, and

- Motion is set for a _____ hearing on _____, 20____.
- Motion was granted.
- Motion was denied.
- Motion was withdrawn.

A Motion to Terminate Parental Rights for _____, is **needed** because:

_____ has been in foster care for 15 months out of the most recent 22 months.

_____ has been subject to intentional and severe mental abuse.

The permanency goal for _____ has been changed to adoption.

_____ has been adjudicated abandoned.

Court of competent jurisdiction has determined that the parent(s) committed the crime of _____

A court of competent jurisdiction has determined that the parent is required to register with a sex offender registry

OR

A Motion to Terminate Parental Rights for _____, is **not required** because:

_____ is/are placed with a parent or other relative.

The relationship between _____ and the birth mother/father is strong and it would be contrary to his/her best interest to terminate the parental relationship. Furthermore, the parent(s) is/are making substantial steps toward reunification.

An Adoption Petition for _____ was filed on _____.

The responsible agency has not provided the child's family the services deemed necessary to return the child safely home (**specify in detail**):

Other Compelling Reasons:

REASONABLE EFFORTS OF THE AGENCY TO ACHIEVE PERMANENCY

The Court concludes that the Agency **Has** **Has Not** made Reasonable Efforts to achieve the goal of reunification or _____, as described by the following (**specify efforts in detail for each child**):

ORDERED, that the Agency shall make the following efforts/provide the following services no later than _____, 20____ at which time the Court will reconsider the issue of whether the Agency has made Reasonable Efforts to Achieve the Permanency Goal:

PERMANENCY GOALS

(Concurrent goals may be set until the first permanency hearing)

Progress **has** **has not** been made by respondents' Parent(s)/Guardian(s) _____ toward achievement of the permanency plan/goal of reunification as demonstrated by the following:

The following permanency goal(s) is/are **ORDERED**:

The current permanency goal(s) for _____ is/are _____.

The goal(s) shall continue in effect with an achievement date of _____

OR

The Permanency Goal (s) is/are changed to:

Reunification of _____ with _____

Date of Achievement _____

Adoption of _____ with _____

Date of Achievement _____

Guardianship of _____ with _____

Date of Achievement _____

Custody of _____ with _____

Date of Achievement _____

Reasons for change from reunification or adoption to guardianship or legal custody and reasons why that goal is in the child(ren)'s best interests (specify in detail for each child):

Exception to the four Permanency Goals above:

Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement for _____.

Compelling Reasons eliminating other goals and justification that Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement is in the child(ren)'s best interests (specify in detail for each child):

The date for achievement of the APPLA permanency goal is the child(ren)'s 21st birthday, unless otherwise noted.

ORDERS

There are ____ Attachment As appended hereto.

PLACEMENT/LEGAL STATUS

ORDERED that the current placement(s) and/or commitment(s) shall continue until Further Order of the Court.

It is hereby ORDERED that the child(ren)'s placement shall be changed as follows to:

PROTECTIVE SUPERVISION (See attachment B2)

The child(ren), _____ shall be placed under the **PROTECTIVE SUPERVISION** of _____, and the following conditions or restrictions shall apply:

Based upon the evidence presented and representations made, the Court finds that placement under protective supervision as stated above will provide safe and appropriate care for the child(ren).

PRIVATE PLACEMENT (not foster home)(See attachment C)

The child(ren), _____ shall be placed in the home of _____, as a **PRIVATE PLACEMENT** and the following conditions or restrictions shall apply:

Based upon the evidence presented and representations made, the Court finds that placement under private placement as stated above will provide safe and appropriate care for the child(ren).

COMMITMENT

The child(ren), _____, shall be **COMMITTED** to the care, custody and control of **The Child and Family Services Agency**, for a period not to exceed two (2) years.

Based upon the Agency's representations, the Court hereby finds that the Agency **made** **did not make** reasonable efforts to place the siblings together.

EDUCATION

Based upon the Educational Checklist for Judicial Officers, an inquiry has been made into the child(ren)'s educational placement and the child(ren)'s educational needs and strengths.

- Yes
- No

Has an educational decision-maker (other than the parent) been appointed?

- Yes _____ (name)
- No

The child is 18 years of age or over and is responsible for making his/her own educational decisions.

Attachment E - Order Authorizing Access to Educational Records – has been completed.

RELATIVE RESOURCES

It is hereby **ORDERED** that the parents shall provide detailed information concerning potential relative placements to the Agency no later than _____, 20____.

It is hereby **ORDERED** that after receipt of required documentation, the Agency shall conduct a home study, and a local records checks and child protection clearances on each adult resident in the home of:

1. _____
2. _____

ICPC application shall be initiated/completed by _____, 20____.

Agency shall provide progress report on status of ICPC process within 30 days after the application is initiated/completed and every 30 days thereafter until approval or denial is received.

The first progress report shall be filed by _____, 20____.

The current status of the **ICPC** application/process is as follows: _____

CASA APPOINTMENT

Is a request being made for the appointment of a Court Appointed Special Advocate at this hearing:

- Yes (a referral will be made to the Presiding Judge).
- No
- A CASA has been appointed.

VISITATION

Visitation between child(ren) and _____ shall be

- Unsupervised
- Supervised by CFSA or its designee
 - Visitation may become unsupervised at the discretion of the social worker and GAL
- Conditions: _____

Visitation between child(ren) and _____ shall be

- Unsupervised
- Supervised by CFSA or its designee

Visitation may become unsupervised at the discretion of the social worker and GAL
 Conditions: _____

Visitation between siblings, _____, shall be
 Unsupervised
 Supervised by CFSA or its designee

Visitation between _____ is **SUSPENDED** for the following reasons _____

PARTY STATUS

The Court hereby Orders that party status be conferred upon _____ in accordance with D.C. Code §16-2304.

JURISDICTION

Jurisdiction expires: _____
ORDERED, that jurisdiction in this matter is extended to _____.

NEXT HEARING DATE

The Next Scheduled Court Hearing Will be:

Permanency Hearing Other _____

Report Due: _____

Next Hearing Date: ____/____/____

Time: _____ a.m./p.m. **Hearing duration:** _____ hour

Judge: _____

Place: Courtroom _____ of the Main Courthouse at 500 Indiana Ave., NW,
Washington, DC 20001

ORDERED that this case be, and hereby is, **DISMISSED AFTER ADJUDICATION** because all services have been rendered and the child(ren) is/are safely and permanently placed. The conditions of neglect have been ameliorated.

DATE

ASSOCIATE JUDGE/MAGISTRATE JUDGE

Basic Stages of an Adoption Case

- ◆ The adoptive parent files a **petition**.
- ◆ The court issues an “**order of reference**” to the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) to prepare the required **adoption reports** (which include information about the birth parents, the adoptive parents and the child).
- ◆ The court issues notice of the adoption proceeding to the birth parents, which also sets a date for a “show cause” hearing (“**notice of adoption proceeding and order to show cause**”). The court also orders CFSA to effect service of the notice/show cause order on the birth parents.
- ◆ The **show cause hearing** is held. If the birth parents have not consented to the adoption, the show cause may be either a merits hearing (trial) (i.e., a hearing to determine whether the birth parent is withholding consent contrary to the best interests of the child) or more commonly a status hearing. If it is a status hearing, the court will schedule a trial date.

If the parents have consented, the court will require a brief presentation of evidence as to why adoption is in the child’s best interest.

- ◆ If the petitioner prevails at trial when the birth parents have not consented, the court will issue written findings of fact and an order that the **consent of the birth parent** is “**waived**.”
- ◆ After the parents’ consent is waived, if a completed adoption report has been filed (indicating that all other requirements have been met), the court will enter a **final decree of adoption**. Otherwise, the final decree will be entered at such time as CFSA files the completed report.

Adoptions: “One-Step” or “Two-Step” Process

One-Step Process

- ◆ Known as a “**direct**” or “**show cause**” adoption.
- ◆ Granting of the adoption both terminates the birth parent-child relationship and creates the new adoptive parent-child relationship.
- ◆ Parent can consent to the adoption, or court can grant adoption if it finds that the parent is withholding consent contrary to the best interests of the child or if the parent has abandoned and voluntarily failed to support the child for at least six months next preceding the date of the filing of the petition.

Two-Step Process

- ◆ The birth parent-child relationship is already severed prior to the granting of the adoption as a result of:
 - a motion to terminate parental rights in the neglect case (“TPR”) pursuant to D.C. Code § 16-2351 et seq. (through an evidentiary hearing)
 - voluntary relinquishment of parental rights (non-judicial process) pursuant to D.C. Code § 4-1406.
- ◆ The adoptive parent-child relationship is created through the granting of the adoption.
- ◆ A birth parent can relinquish parental rights prior to or during the pendency of an adoption case.
- ◆ A TPR can take place before an adoption is filed or while an adoption is pending. If both a TPR and an adoption have been filed, they are customarily consolidated and tried together.

Custody Case Overview

Case Initiation

File Motion and Affidavit to proceed *In Forma Pauperis* (IFP) with Judge-in-Chambers (with complaint attached) or pay \$80 filing fee.

File Custody Complaint (must be signed under penalty of perjury).

File Consent Answer(s) and Waiver of Service (signed by birth parent(s) if you have them) (file with complaint or whenever consents are secured).

The case will be assigned to a Domestic Relations (DR) judge by the clerk at the time of filing (one of five DR judges on calendar).



At the time of filing, the Central Intake Clerk will set an initial hearing date. If case is not by consent, Program for Agreement and Cooperation (“PAC” – consisting of parenting education seminar and mediation) dates will also be scheduled.



Service of Complaint - SCR-Dom. Rel 4(c)

Each defendant must be served with a **summons** (given to you by clerk at filing) and **complaint**. **The plaintiff is responsible for effecting service** (personal, substitute, or by registered mail/return receipt) **within 60 days** (upon request may be extended once without leave of court).

Proof of service (affidavit of service) must be filed with the Court.



What Happens After the Defendant Has Been Served?

Defendant(s) has 20 days from the date of service to file an answer (must be signed under penalty of perjury).

If no answer is filed, plaintiff files for the entry of a default (SCR- Dom.Rel.55); then a final default custody hearing will be held (brief evidentiary hearing).



What if the Defendant Cannot Be Found and Served?

Plaintiff files a motion for constructive service supported by an affidavit of diligent efforts to locate the defendants.

Once motion for constructive service is granted and notice is (posted or) published for the required time period and no responsive pleading is filed, plaintiff may file for default. (SCR-Dom.Rel.55).



Settlement OR Trial

- ◆ Court must accept a settlement and enter a consent order for custody (unless not in child’s best interest by clear and convincing evidence) (DC Code §§ 16-831.06(d)(1), -16-914(h)).
- ◆ Discovery (SCR-Dom. Rel. 26-37), home studies and forensic evaluations, pre-trial statements, trial (SCR-Dom. Rel. 38-53).
- ◆ Final order (in writing) (SCR-Dom. Rel. 52).
- ◆ Modification: “substantial and material change in circumstances” and “in the best interest of the child.” (DC Code §§ 16-831.11(a), -16-914(f)(1)).

Researching Court Records

Practice pointer: When possible, always review the entire court file.

There is often additional useful information in the file that is not included in the limited information available from an online or computer database search.

D.C. Court Records

D.C. Superior Court does not have an online database comparable to the federal PACER system. In other words, **pleadings and orders cannot be accessed through the internet**. Docket information for certain types of cases is posted on the court's website, which can be accessed by a name search function. Otherwise, court files must be reviewed and copied in person. Similarly, pleadings and orders are scanned into the court's database (Courtview) in many kinds of cases and the appropriate clerk's office can print out individual documents upon request.

In D.C., criminal, civil, civil protection order, and many family court case files (including custody and divorce) are open to the public. Some child support cases are open while others are not. Adoption, neglect/abuse and juvenile criminal case files are not open to the public.

D.C. Criminal Cases

D.C. criminal case dockets are available online at www.dccourts.gov/internet/CCO.jsf. There is a name search function. It is strongly recommended that the whole file be reviewed (which can only be done in person at D.C. Superior Court) because the docket entries online may be unclear or incomplete, and because there are often pleadings, reports, and other documents in the court file itself with additional information about the defendant.

Practice pointer: When doing a name search, in addition to searching the full name, search the name with as few letters as possible, since names often get misspelled. In addition, the idiosyncrasies of a particular system will sometimes yield no results if the full name is typed in, but results will come up if fewer letters are included. For example, to search for Frederick Whittington, try entering "Fre Whittington" or "Fre Whitting."

Court files can be reviewed in the Criminal Division Clerk's office (4th floor west). There are public computers on which you can do a name search to pull up a list of cases associated with the person. It is helpful—though not always necessary—to have the person's date of birth and middle name. You will be able get some basic information from the computer search, including criminal case numbers.

Practice pointer: Find out the person's PDID number, which is a master identification number for that person in the D.C. criminal justice system. That number will help confirm the person's identity across multiple court cases. The PDID number is usually listed at the top of most documents in the case file.

Practice pointer: You must use your own paper to print out criminal case information, so remember to bring a ream when you or your paralegal go to court!

You can check out the complete criminal file from the clerk to review and make copies. Both open and closed cases are available. There are no hard-copy files available for cases from 2006 to present – all documents have been scanned into the computer system. Some older hard-copy files may be in storage and can be ordered from the clerk.

Practice pointer: Again, it can be important to review the documents themselves in addition to the dockets. The information in the computer docket is often very limited so the only way to get a clear picture of the charges, convictions and sentences is to look at the file. There is often additional helpful information in the file as well, including references to other cases, substance abuse, mental health issues, failures of the defendant to appear, probation violations and revocation, etc.

Practice pointer: The easiest way to establish a criminal conviction at trial is with a certified copy of the conviction document. In D.C., that document is the sentencing document, called a **judgment and commitment** or **judgment and probation** order. Certified copies can be obtained from the clerk in the Criminal Clerk's office.

D.C. Civil Cases (including landlord-tenant cases)

D.C. civil case dockets from 2000 to present on are online at <http://www.dccourts.gov/internet/CCO.jsf>. There is a name search function.

Court files can be reviewed in the Civil Division Clerk's office file room, Room 5000. There are public computers on which you can do a name search with no time limit. Civil case files can be checked out and reviewed here and copies may be ordered (except for small claims and landlord-tenant cases, which have their own file rooms located at 510 4th Street, N.W.).

D.C. Domestic Relations Cases (custody, divorce)

No information is available online. To get dockets, orders, and other case information, go to the Family Court clerk's office (Room JM-300) or the Family Court Central Intake Center, (Room JM-520) and ask the clerk at the counter to do a name or case number search for you.

D.C. Domestic Violence Cases (Civil Protection Orders)

No information is available online. You can go to the Domestic Violence Unit clerk's office (Room 4510) and use the public computers to access Courtview. In Civil Protection Order (CPO) cases, a petitioner can get a restraining order against a respondent with whom s/he has an "intra-family relationship" as defined by the statute (for example, if they are related by blood, marriage, having a child in common, having a sexual or dating relationship, etc.) if the respondent committed or threatened to commit a crime upon the petitioner. Some older hard-copy files may be in storage and can be ordered from the clerk.

Practice pointer. CPO Petitions are typically filed along with an information sheet, which contains information like birth dates and current addresses. For most cases initiated in 2013 forward, the information sheets are filed under seal and are not publicly accessible.

Maryland Court Records

Docket information (including criminal, civil and non-confidential family) is available online at <http://casesearch.courts.state.md.us/inquiry/inquiry-index.jsp>

Virginia Court Records

Docket information is available online for some kinds of cases at <http://www.courts.state.va.us/caseinfo/home.html>. You can search by city/county but not statewide.

Federal Court Records

Dockets and most pleadings and orders are available online through the PACER system, www.pacer.gov.

Other States

Many other states have some docket information online. You can search on that state court's website to see whether records are available online, or how to order records.

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FAMILY COURT**

PRAECIPE

Domestic Relations Office
Paternity and Support Office
Juvenile and Neglect Office
Mental Health and Habilitation Office
Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect

Jacket No. : [XXXX]-DRB-[XXX] _____

Date: _____ [DATE] _____

[NAME of CLIENT - THIRD PARTY PLAINTFF OR PLAINTIFF-INTERVENOR]
(Plaintiff or Petitioner)

vs.

[NAME OF DEFENDANT MOTHER] and [NAME OF DEFENDANT FATHER]
(Defendant or Respondent)

The Clerk of the Court will please note the following: Please enter the appearance of [ATTORNEY NAME] of [FIRM NAME] as counsel for [THIRD PARTY PLAINTFF OR PLAINTIFF-INTERVENOR, NAME]			
Attorney's Name: (Please Print) <input type="checkbox"/> Plaintiff or Petitioner <input type="checkbox"/> Government		Attorney's Name: (Please Print) <input type="checkbox"/> Defendant <input type="checkbox"/> Respondent	
Mailing Address:			
E-Mail Address:		E-Mail Address	
Attorney's Signature:		Attorney's Signature:	
Registration No. (Bar No.)	Telephone No. Fax	Registration No.	Telephone No.

Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that true and correct copies of the foregoing Praecipe of Appearance were [e-served via Case FileXpress OR mailed by first-class mail, postage pre-paid, upon the following individuals on this ____ day of _____, 2013:

Commented [r1]: If the parties are unrepresented, then service should be by mail rather than case fileXpress. However, e-filing of pleadings with the court is still required.

[BIO MOM **OR** BIO MOM ATTY, IF REPRESENTED]
[FIRM]
[ADDRESS]
[CITY, STATE ZIP]
Birth Mother [or Counsel for Birth Mother]

[BIO DAD **OR** BIO DAD ATTY, IF REPRESENTED]
[FIRM]
[ADDRESS]
[CITY, STATE ZIP]
Birth Father [or Counsel for Birth Father]

[OTHER PARTY NAME OR COUNSEL NAME]
[FIRM]
[ADDRESS]
[CITY, STATE ZIP]
Counsel for [OTHER PARTY]

[ATTORNEY NAME]
Guardian ad litem

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FAMILY COURT**

Domestic Relations Office
 Paternity and Support Office
 Juvenile and Neglect Office
 Mental Health and Habilitation Office
 Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect

PRAECIPE

Jacket No. : N-_____, N-_____

Date: _____

Social File No.: ___JSF___, ___JSF___,

In the Matter of

[CHILD(REN)'S FULL NAME(S)]

(Respondents).

The Clerk of said Court will please note:

Please enter the appearance of [ATTORNEY NAME] of [FIRM] on behalf of [PETITIONER/PLAINTIFF].

Attorney's Name: (Please Print)
 Plaintiff or Petitioner

Attorney's Name: (Please Print)
 Defendant
 Respondent

Mailing Address:

Mailing Address:

E-Mail Address:

E-Mail Address

Attorney's Signature:

Attorney's Signature:

Registration No.

Telephone No.

Registration No.

Telephone No.

D.C. Bar No.

Fax:

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that true and correct copies of the foregoing Praecipe of Appearance was e-served via Case FileXpress upon the following individuals on this _____ day of [MONTH] [YEAR]:

[AAG NAME], Esq.
Assistant Attorney General
200 I Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

[SOCIAL WORKER NAME]
Ongoing Social Worker
Child and Family Services Agency
200 I Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

[GAL NAME], Esq.
[ADDRESS]
[PHONE/FAX]
[EMAIL]
Guardian ad Litem

[ATTY NAME], Esq.
[ADDRESS]
Counsel for Mother

[ATTY NAME], Esq.
[ADDRESS]
Counsel for Father

[ATTORNEY NAME] (D.C. Bar No. [#####])
[FIRM]
[ADDRESS]
[CITY, STATE ZIP]
[PHONE/FAX]
[EMAIL]
Counsel for [CLIENT'S INITIALS]

Disclaimer:

This sample pleading is for informational purposes only. It should be used only in conjunction with an attorney’s own primary research and independent reading of cited statutes, rules, regulations, cases, and other materials in order to ensure accuracy and completeness. This is especially important as the law as well as “common practices” may have changed since the pleading was initially written. In addition, arguments and strategies that were helpful or appropriate in the sample case may be inapplicable or detrimental in your situation, because every case has its own facts and circumstances. Please note that the names and facts in this pleading have been changed to maintain the anonymity of the parties.

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FAMILY COURT
JUVENILE AND NEGLECT BRANCH**

)	
In the Matter of	)	Case No. [YEAR] NEG [XXXXXXX]
)	
[CHILD],	)	Social File No. [YEAR] JSF [XXXXXXX]
)	
Respondent.	)	Next Date: [DATE]
)	
	)	Magistrate Judge [NAME]
)	

FOSTER PARENTS’ MOTION FOR PARTY STATUS

Foster parents and maternal uncle and aunt, [UNCLE] and [AUNT] (“Mr. and Mrs. [UNCLE] and [AUNT]”), through their counsel, [ATTORNEY] of [FIRM], hereby request that they be made a party to the above-captioned proceedings. [AAG], on behalf of the Office of the Attorney General, and [GAL], the Guardian *ad Litem*, have consented to the motion for party status. Birth mother and father, through their counsel [BIO MOM ATTORNEY] and [BIO DAD ATTORNEY] respectively, have taken no position. In support of the motion, [UNCLE] and [AUNT] respectfully refer the Court to the accompanying Memorandum of Points and Authorities.

Respectfully submitted,

[ATTORNEY]
D.C. Bar No. [_____]

[ADDRESS]
[PHONE]
[EMAIL]
Counsel for [UNCLE] and [AUNT]

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FAMILY COURT
JUVENILE AND NEGLECT BRANCH**

In the Matter of)	
	)	Case No. [YEAR] NEG [XXXXXXX]
[CHILD],)	
	)	Social File No. [YEAR] JSF [XXXXXXX]
Respondent.)	
	)	Next Date: [DATE]
)	
	)	Magistrate Judge [NAME]

**MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES IN
SUPPORT OF FOSTER PARENTS' MOTION FOR PARTY STATUS**

1. The respondent, [CHILD] (“[CHILD]”), is [AGE] and has resided with [HIS/HER] maternal uncle and aunt, [UNCLE] and [AUNT], since [MONTH YEAR].
2. Pursuant to D.C. Code § 16-2304 (b)(4)(B), a foster parent or other person with whom the child has been living for at least 12 months shall, upon request, be granted party status. A foster parent or other person with whom the child has been living for less than 12 months may be granted party status if the judicial officer finds that the interests of the child would be furthered by the participation of such person in the proceeding.
3. [CHILD] has lived with [UNCLE] and [AUNT] for [over 12 months *OR* amount of time]. They are [HIS/HER] caregivers and are seeking permanency with [HIM/HER]. It would further [CHILD]’s interests for [UNCLE] and [AUNT] to participate in permanency planning for [HIM/HER] and to have access to [HIS/HER] full medical and social history. Additionally, undersigned counsel requires access to the above-captioned proceedings in order to prepare for counseling clients about permanency options and to prepare for trial. All other parties have access to the file and it would be prejudicial to

[UNCLE] and [AUNT] to not have access while going forward with permanency planning. Therefore, [UNCLE] and [AUNT] ask the Court designate them as a party to the above-captioned proceedings.

WHEREFORE, [UNCLE] and [AUNT] respectfully request that the Court approve the relief sought herein by granting the motion for party status, and award such other and further relief as the Court finds just and proper.

Respectfully submitted,

[ATTORNEY]
D.C. Bar No. [_____]]
[ADDRESS]
[PHONE]
[EMAIL]
Counsel for [UNCLE] and [AUNT]

Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that true and correct copies of the foregoing Motion were e-served via Case FileXpress, upon the following individuals on this ____ day of [MONTH] [YEAR]:

[AAG NAME], Esq.
Assistant Attorney General
200 I Street S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003

[SOCIAL WORKER NAME], Ongoing Social Worker
Child and Family Services Agency
200 I Street S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003

[GAL NAME], Esq.
[ADDRESS]
[PHONE/FAX]
[EMAIL]
Guardian *ad Litem*

[ATTY NAME], Esq.
[ADDRESS]
Counsel for Birth Mother

[ATTY NAME], Esq.
[ADDRESS]
Counsel for Birth Father

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FAMILY COURT
JUVENILE AND NEGLECT BRANCH**

In the Matter of)	
	)	Case No. [YEAR] NEG [XXXXXXX]
[CHILD],)	
	)	Social File No. [YEAR] JSF [XXXXXXX]
Respondent.)	
	)	Next Date: [DATE]
)	
	)	Magistrate Judge [NAME]
)	

ORDER

UPON CONSIDERATION of foster parents and maternal aunt and uncle, [UNCLE] and [AUNT]’s motion for party status; and the entire record herein;

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THIS ___ DAY OF [MONTH] [YEAR] that [UNCLE] and [AUNT] are designated parties to the above-captioned neglect proceedings involving respondent [CHILD].

SO ORDERED.

Magistrate Judge [JUDGE]
Signed in Chambers

Copies to

[ATTY NAME], Esq.
[ADDRESS]
Counsel for [UNCLE] and [AUNT]

[AAG NAME], Esq.
Assistant Attorney General
200 I Street S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003

[SOCIAL WORKER NAME], Ongoing Social Worker
Child and Family Services Agency
200 I Street S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003

[GAL NAME], Esq.
[ADDRESS]
[PHONE/FAX]
[EMAIL]
Guardian ad Litem

[ATTY NAME], Esq.
[ADDRESS]
Counsel for Birth Mother

[ATTY NAME], Esq.
[ADDRESS]
Counsel for Birth Father

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 16-04**

**Children in Court Policy
in Abuse and Neglect Proceedings**

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia Family Court Act of 2001, Pub. L. 107-114 Stat. 2100 (2002) provides that a child alleged to be neglected shall be a party to the court proceeding; and

WHEREAS, the Children in Court Policy was created by the Children in Court Workgroup of the Child Abuse and Neglect Subcommittee; and

WHEREAS, the Children in Court Policy is intended to define the role a child may play during abuse and neglect proceedings depending on the child's age and developmental level, and is expected to improve the Court's responsibility to ensure children's participation in court proceedings when appropriate;

NOW, THEREFORE, it is by the Court,

ORDERED, that the Children in Court Policy shall take effect on the date of this order and shall provide the opportunity for children in the abuse and neglect system to meaningfully participate in their case proceedings; and it is further

ORDERED, that the Children in Court Policy is attached to this Administrative Order.

SO ORDERED.

BY THE COURT

Date: April 28, 2016

/s/
Lee F. Satterfield
Chief Judge

Copies to:

Judicial Officers
Executive Officer
Clerk of the Court
Division Directors
Library

Children in Court Policy



Objective/Mission Statement:

This purpose of this policy is to improve outcomes for children and youth in the abuse and neglect system by providing the opportunity for meaningful participation in their case proceedings.¹

Policy

All provisions of this policy are to be applied in light of the individual child's age and developmental level and based on the best interests of that child.

1. A child has the right to be present at all hearings.

A child is a party in interest in the case.² Children of all ages should be encouraged to attend and participate in all hearings. Even children who are too young or otherwise unable to communicate their wishes (i.e. children with disabilities affecting cognitive and/or communication skills) can provide valuable information to the Court through their behavior, appearance, and interactions with others.

Each child is recommended to attend a minimum of one hearing every twelve months,³ but a child also has the right to decline. No child will be forced or coerced into attending against his or her will.

¹ This policy does not supersede current statutory authority or case law. It is not intended to address the testimony of children as witnesses.

² See D.C. Code §§ 16-2304, 16-2356, and 16-2385(2013); D.C. SCR Neglect Rule 10(a) ("The parties to a neglect proceeding shall include ... the child alleged to be neglected").

³ In accordance with the federal Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, P.L. 113-183, children aged 16 or over with the APPLA goal should attend the two permanency hearings held each year, as required by D.C. Code

2. A child has the right to be fully informed about each hearing and its purpose.

Children should receive meaningful and age-appropriate notice of and preparation for each hearing. A child's Guardian *ad Litem* ("GAL") is responsible for ensuring that the child is fully informed and adequately prepared.⁴

The GAL should collaborate with the child's social worker and parent, foster parent, caretaker, or guardian to prepare the child for a hearing. Whenever possible, a child should be familiarized with the courtroom environment in advance of the hearing.

The GAL should provide age and developmentally appropriate information to the child, such as:

- Who will be present at the hearing and their respective roles
- The order of the proceedings and how long it may take
- The issues that will be discussed
- Questions the judge is likely to ask
- Available options for the child to participate
- Whether the child wants to speak with the judge
- The purpose of court reports and the kind of information they provide
- The rules participants are required to follow
- Possible outcomes

Foster parents attending hearings should be provided with the same information that is given to the child.⁵

The judge should explain the purpose and structure of each hearing and ruling to the child. A judge must be conscious of the child's age and development when explaining the proceeding. The judge should use plain language, define legal terms, and allow the child to ask questions.

The GAL should meet with the child after each hearing. The GAL should discuss the hearing, answer any questions the child has, and ensure that the child understands the outcome including any court order, what will happen next, and when the next hearing will be held. If, for any reason, a child is unable or unwilling to attend a hearing, the GAL shall ensure that the child is fully informed about what happened at the hearing.

Section 16-2323, at which their APPLA goal is reviewed. The federal statute requires judicial inquiry of the youth into the youth's satisfaction with the permanency plan and services, among other topics.

⁴ See Child Abuse and Neglect Attorney Practice Standards, D.C. SCR-Neglect Appx., Rule A-5 (2013).

⁵ Federal law also requires the Agency to provide written notice to foster parents for each hearing.

3. The Court's decision about a child's attendance at a hearing is based on the child's best interests.

The Court determines whether a child should attend a particular hearing based on the child's best interests and the wishes of the child, including considerations of safety and emotional wellbeing, and in consultation with the parties, social workers, therapists, and GALs).

At each hearing, the record and the court order should note whether or not the child was present. The GAL shall confirm that the child received notice and an explanation of the hearing and present the child's reasons for not attending. If the child did not attend, the Court should make additional findings as to why the child did not attend.



Factors to consider in determining a child's best interests include:

- The child's expressed wishes
- The child's age and developmental level
- The matters to be addressed at the hearing (e.g. procedural vs. substantive)
- The opinion of an expert, treating physician or therapist that attendance at a hearing would have a damaging or negative impact on the child
- Any actions that could be taken to lessen negative impact on the child
- If the child has any conflicting appointments (i.e. important school obligations, field trip, sporting event, or other important extracurricular activity).⁶

⁶ The Court should make an effort to schedule hearings that minimize the disruptions to a child's school and extracurricular activities.

4. Alternate means of participation should be available for a child who expresses concern about attending a hearing.

If the Court determines that it is not in the child's best interest to attend a hearing, the Court should explore alternate means of participation.

If, after receiving notice and an adequate explanation of the proceedings, a child does not wish to attend a hearing, the GAL should explain and encourage alternative options for participating. The GAL should notify the Court and parties of the child's decision.

Possible alternatives include, but are not limited to:

- Attendance for only a portion or portions of the hearing⁷
- Temporary exclusion of a parent or guardian from the courtroom while the child is present
- The judge can hold a bench conference with the child or the parties to avoid excluding the child from the courtroom
- The judge can meet with the child and his or her GAL in chambers or a jury room⁸
- Participation by telephone
- The Court may use video or webcam technology when available to minimize disruption to the child's schedule, and avoid negative associations associated with seeing parents or other parties the child may not wish to see
- The child can write a letter to the judge expressing his or her opinions about any relevant issues⁹

5. Transportation.

Transportation should never be a barrier to a child's participation in a hearing. Young children should be brought to court by their caretakers or social workers. Older youth can be brought to court by a foster parent, group home, or the Agency, or when appropriate, the Agency should provide funds for transportation by taxi, bus, train or other option. Foster parents should be notified in advance when they are expected to transport the child to a hearing.

⁷ The Court's daycare center is available to citizens of the District of Columbia who need care for children, ages 2 to 12 years, while they are conducting business in the court. The child must be toilet trained. There is no charge to persons using this service. The child's immunization record must be provided on the child's second visit to the center. Lunch is not provided.

⁸ Such a meeting must comply with relevant statutes, case law, Court rules, judges' and attorneys' rules of ethics and standards, and attorney practice standards.

⁹ The child must be advised that the letter would be distributed to all parties.

6. Training of judicial officers, Guardians *ad Litem*, Attorneys, Courtroom staff, and others.

Judges, GALs, attorneys, social workers, foster parents, courtroom staff and others should participate in ongoing training on relevant topics such as child development and age appropriate communication.

This training may occur through brown bag lunches, the Neglect and Delinquency Practice Institute, or periodic Family Court Training programs.

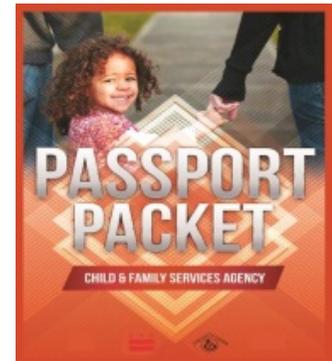


DC Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) **IMPORTANT FACTS FOR RESOURCE PARENTS**

As a new or seasoned resource parent, you've made an important choice to nurture a child who needs care and support. The District of Columbia's Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) thanks you and welcomes you to the world of caregiving for children who have been temporarily separated from their family and their homes. This *Important Facts* brochure is designed to provide information related to the most common questions asked by resource parents and to help you on your journey as a caregiver. Always feel free to contact your CFSA or private agency social worker or the support person at your agency.

Some of the information you'll receive in the child's *Placement Passport Packet*

- ◆ Letter to Resource Parents
- ◆ Stabilization Support Line Flyer
- ◆ Foster DC Kids App Flyer
- ◆ Important Contact Numbers
- ◆ Traveling with a Child in Your Care
- ◆ How to Select Back-Up Providers and Babysitters
- ◆ Child's Summary – Medications and Allergies
- ◆ Court Information and Documents
- ◆ Responsibilities of Social Workers (CPS and Ongoing)
- ◆ Responsibilities of Resource Parents



The private agency or CFSA social worker will bring the Placement Passport Packet when the child arrives. Additional information should be added during placement as the Passport is a "living document" that represents the services and supports provided while in your care. Note: the Placement worker will also provide you with a one-page Placement Transition Information Exchange flyer with specific details about the individual child coming to your home!

Within the first week of a child being placed in your home

- ◆ Expect a "Welcome Call" from a private agency or CFSA worker within 24 hours.
- ◆ A medical screening must occur prior to placement. You may be invited to come to the screening, and this may be the first opportunity for you to meet the child.
- ◆ Every child must arrive with a "cleared-for-placement" form unless they are arriving from a hospital with discharge papers.
- ◆ You may be invited to attend a Family Team Meeting (FTM) at which time you may meet the birth parents as well.
- ◆ You should be invited to an "ice breaker" with the birth parent to learn more about the likes and dislikes of the child. This meeting is an excellent opportunity for both sets of parents to discuss ways that work best for them to communicate and share information on behalf of the children. If you are not invited to an ice-breaker, please ask your assigned social worker about it.
- ◆ Visitation will occur between the child and his or her parents and siblings, unless it is determined not to be in the child's best interest. Initially, visitation is often supervised by the private agency or CFSA social worker.



Within the first 30 days and 90 days of placement

- ◆ The child's case plan must be finalized within the first 30 days. While the birth family, child, or youth should drive the case planning process, the resource parent is also a team member. You should be invited and make every effort to participate.
- ◆ A comprehensive medical evaluation must take place within 30 days of the child's initial entry into out-of-home care.
- ◆ After 90 days, a permanency hearing is held by the Family Court. You should receive automatic notification, but if you don't, please ask your assigned social worker about it. You should attend court hearings to fully participate in the child's path towards positive permanency (e.g., reunification with the family of origin, adoption, or legal guardianship). The permanency goal will be outlined in the initial case plan.

Consent Forms

- ◆ Resource parents should refer to CFSA's policy *Right to Sign a Consent or Waiver of Liability* for complete details (coming October 2016).
- ◆ In general, appropriate consents include the following activities:
 - School-sponsored field trips and community outings
 - Participation in school sports
 - Girl Scout and Boy Scout camping over the weekend
 - Faith-based activities that are for part of the day or overnight local (less than 100 miles) and school overnight trips (up to 2 nights)

Travel with Resource Parents

- ◆ Approval is required for trips outside of a 100-mile radius. Please see CFSA's policy on [Travel with Resource Parents](#).
- ◆ Resource parents are expected to utilize a *reasonable and prudent parenting standard* (i.e., careful but sensible decision-making) when determining travel for a child in foster care.

For more details on the reasonable and prudent parenting standard, please see page 7 of this booklet.

Temporary supervision of children

- ◆ Pursuant to District law, resource parents and social workers should discuss the substitute care of each child in the home when the resource parent is absent on a regular basis (29 DCMR § 6002.1k). Please refer to CFSA's online policy, [Supervision of Children](#).

Overnights

- ◆ An overnight stay at a friend's house is generally considered a normal extracurricular activity that is developmentally appropriate for most children based on their cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral capacities.
- ◆ Just as a biological parent gives approval for a child to participate in such an activity, a resource parent is empowered to give a child in foster care approval prior to participating in an overnight stay. For specific guidelines, please refer to CFSA's online policy, [Overnight Stays](#).

Need more information on all things fostering? Check out CFSA's website at www.cfsa.dc.gov and click on [For Partners](#)

Please contact your assigned social worker or the support person at your agency if...

- ◆ You have not received a Placement Passport Packet, there is insufficient information included, or you have any questions about the information that is included.
- ◆ The child arrives without proper clothing or necessary medications.
- ◆ There are questions regarding shared parenting, meetings, or visitation with the birth parent.
- ◆ More information is needed on court dates and attendance.
- ◆ There are concerns that the placement is not a good match for you or members of your household.
- ◆ You have questions regarding the child's trauma and behavior.
- ◆ You are interested in respite care.

What you should do if...

- ◆ The child's behavior is threatening to self or others.
For any behavioral crisis, contact the Children and Adolescent Mobile Crisis Services (ChAMPS) at 202-481-1440. For ongoing concerns, contact your social worker to refer for permanent services.
- ◆ You need assistance to talk through a tough situation after business hours (5 pm – 1 am) or on the weekend/holidays (9 am – 1 am).
Contact the Stabilization Support Line at 202-800-3040.
- ◆ You have questions on education or well-being for the child in your care.
Please contact CFSA's Office of Well Being at 202-727-2269.
- ◆ You have questions on medical, dental, or other health issues.
Please contact CFSA's Health Services Administration 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 202-498-8456.
- ◆ You want information on services for a teenager in your care.
Please contact the Office of Youth Empowerment at 202-727-7500.
- ◆ You need access to a supplemental nutrition program.
Mothers and fathers, legal guardians, and foster parents can enroll children ages 0-5 years into the District's Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program. Please contact your social worker or call the DC Department of Health at 202-442-9397.
- ◆ You are unable to reach the social worker.
CFSA and private staff are required to return phone calls within 24 hours or the next business day. If you have difficulty contacting your assigned social worker, please contact the social worker's supervisor. Information for the chain of command is left on each social worker's voice mail. If you are unable to reach the social worker, then contact the assigned private agency worker or CFSA support worker. The contact information for all of these parties will be provided when the social worker first meets with you.
- ◆ The child misses curfew or runs away.
During business hours, contact police and file a missing persons report, and then contact your social worker or the Hotline at 202-671-7233. After hours, contact police and file a missing persons report and then call the Hotline to provide the police report number and any details.
- ◆ You need assistance with day care.
It is best to anticipate day care needs with the placement worker prior to placement, but if needs arise after placement, please contact the Office of Well Being at 202-727-2269, the private agency worker, or CFSA support worker.
- ◆ The monthly subsidy check does not arrive.
Immediately contact the private agency or CFSA social worker.
- ◆ You have concerns about your involvement with the case planning process.
Speak with your social worker or the supervisor. You may also request a team meeting if the situation is not resolved.

As a resource parent, am I responsible for...

- ◆ Enrolling the child in school?
In general, the social worker supports the parent in completing the school enrollment packet. In some districts, the resource parent is required to enroll the student rather than the social worker. Contact the social worker or the Office of Well Being at 202-727-2269 if you have questions.
- ◆ Making and keeping medical, dental, or therapy appointments?
Ongoing appointments will initially be made by the social worker. After placement, resource parents are expected to make such appointments and provide transportation for the children living in their resource home.
- ◆ Ensuring visitation between the child and his or her parents and siblings?
Resource parents are expected to do what they can to ensure visitation occurs as best as practical.
- ◆ Informing the social worker about travel or vacation plans?
Please notify the social worker about any travel. Policy requires that travel outside of 100 miles be approved.

Resource Parent Mobile App

Resource parents often need to receive critical information quickly and efficiently. As a result, a “mobile application” was introduced in 2015 to make sure important information is as readily available as the touch of your phone. The "[Foster DC Kids](#)" app features the following identifying information on the child:

- ◆ Case information
- ◆ Visitation plans
- ◆ Medical information (with privacy settings)
- ◆ Alerts to court appointment dates
- ◆ Identification proving their foster parent status

Resource parents can download the application on either Android or iPhone devices.



Reasonable and Prudent Parenting (RPP)

RPP standards require resource parents and congregate care staff to exercise a careful but sensible decision-making process that incorporates the following considerations:

1. Adequate information about the child so that an informed decision can be made, e.g., the child’s case plan or court orders.
2. The child’s best interest (based on the child, resource parent, and biological parent’s mutual understanding of the child’s needs). *Note: To the extent appropriate and practicable, the child’s biological parent should be included in the decision-making process.*
3. The child’s age, maturity, and developmental level, including mental and physical health, and any developmental challenges.
4. The child’s behavioral history and any associated concerns that might impact the child or others while participating in the activity (e.g., risk of abscondence or challenges to behavioral management).
5. Any potential risk to the child when participating in the proposed activity (e.g., safety of the activity’s location, timing of the activity, and appropriate supervision).
6. Age-appropriateness of the activity, including whether the activity is extracurricular, enrichment-focused, or social.
7. Whether or not the activity promotes normalcy, i.e., the child should experience activities similar to those of his and her peers.
8. The resource parent’s capacity to provide a nurturing and family-like setting that fosters the child’s emotional and developmental growth.