



# PARENT HANDBOOK

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***TAKING THINGS  
ONE DAY AT A  
TIME***




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Place a picture  
of your children  
here to stay  
focused on what  
is important.

# INTRODUCTION

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If you are reading this, then you are probably involved with the child protection system. This is a difficult thing to go through. We created this guide to help you understand what you can do to empower yourself and reach a positive outcome for you and your family.

This guide will help you:

- understand how a case moves, step-by-step
- understand the work that you need to do to get your children back
- record important notes and information

You can share your notes in this handbook with your caseworker, if you want. This handbook will help keep you organized, understand the words used in court, and will help you focus during this journey.

- Your Parent Partners

**Note: This Parent Handbook has been created as a resource for parents. The Parent Handbook does not represent statements of law and does not constitute legal advice.**

## PARENT PARTNERS

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Parent Partners are moms and dads just like you whose children were removed from their care. These parents worked to get their children back home, and **they know how tough it can be.**

Parent Partners are not attorneys, but they know a lot about what happens in the child protection system. They can't give legal advice, but they can help you understand what's going on and share their own experiences.

The **Parents for Parents** class is put together by Parent Partners to help parents like you. It's all about teaching you what happens in these cases and what you need to do to get your children home.

In the Parents for Parents class you will meet with Parent Partners who will explain and the child protection process including the types of court hearings you will attend. You can ask questions and talk to other parents who are going through the same thing as you.

### **The Parents for Parents Class is being held:**

**Date:** The fourth Wednesday of every month

**Time:** 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

**Location:** Family Advocates 9777 W. Chinden Blvd, Garden City, ID

## A PARENT PARTNER'S PERSONAL STORY

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**Here is one Parent Partner's story:**

*The worst day of my life was when I found out I was a rotten parent. I had to be because Child Protective Services (CPS) took my children away. They said I had a drug problem and neglected and endangered my*

*children. Because I spent the next month in jail, I felt like I would never see my children again. This made me feel as though I had died inside. I was angry with myself and felt guilt and shame. I love my children more than life itself, but I did have a drug problem. It wasn't that I was a bad person; I just made bad choices.*

*I decided I was going to do whatever it took to get my children back. But because of my rocky start, it took me a little longer to get started on my reunification plan. My children were placed in foster care with non-relatives until my adult daughter – their older sister – got approved to be their foster parent. Getting my children back was a lot of work. Not only was I navigating the child protection system, but I also was on probation with all their requirements and doing intensive outpatient substance abuse treatment. I followed recommendations from my social worker and team to be successful. My children were returned 7 months after they were removed. My case was successfully closed 8 months later.*

*Since the day my children were taken away, I have made a lot of changes in my life. I no longer use drugs. I have a good plan to stay sober. I'm being the best parent I can be for my kids. You see, I've learned that what we do is not always what we are. And when we know better, we can do better.*

# THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

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## **Organize:**

- Keep important papers in this handbook or in a folder.
- Write down phone calls, important events, and how you feel in a journal.
- Bring these things when you talk to people helping you.

## **You and your child:**

- Always think about what's best for your child.
- It's okay if your child likes their foster family. Tell them it's okay.
- Stay active in your child's life and remind them that none of this is their fault.
- Keep track of everything about your child.

## **You and the foster family:**

- Ask to meet the foster family if you can.
- Tell the foster family what your child likes and needs.
- Talk about how you can be part of your child's life.
- If you have safety concerns about the foster family, tell your caseworker.

## **Visitation:**

- Call your caseworker to set up visits.
- Be on time for visits and write down what happens.
- If you can't go, tell your caseworker beforehand. Being late or not going could upset your child.
- If you need help getting to visits, ask your caseworker.
- Plan fun things to do during visits.
- Stay calm and positive during visits to best support your child.
- Tell your child you're working hard to bring them home.

## **Meetings:**

- Be polite and dress nicely for meetings.
- Know what the meeting is about and be ready.
- Write down what you want to say. It's OK to ask questions.
- Make sure you understand what happens in the meeting.
- Get names and numbers before you leave.



### Tips for Speaking Up:

- Be part of making a plan for you and your child.
- Answer calls from people in your case.
- Tell your caseworker if anything changes in your life.
- Ask about your child's health and school.
- Talk to your attorney if you don't agree with the plan or have any questions.
- Read reports before court and prepare for court with your attorney.
- Ask for help if you need it. Be persistent if you need help and are not receiving it.
- Let people know if you're waiting for help and it impacts your Case Plan.



# WORKING WITH YOUR FOSTER FAMILY

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When your child is placed in foster care, the foster parent is there to take care of them temporarily, keeping them safe and making sure they have what they need. This doesn't mean they're replacing you.

Foster parents provide meals, a place to stay, and emotional support, but they understand your child has a family—you. They want to work with you because the goal is to help your child feel loved and cared for while you work through what you need to.

Here's how you can work with the foster family:

1. **Stay Involved:** If you're allowed visits or calls, take those chances to connect with your child. It shows them you're still there for them.
2. **Talk with the Foster Parents:** Ask how your child is doing and share anything they might need to know, like favorite foods, bedtime routines, or things that comfort your child.
3. **Communicate Important Information:** Make sure you let the foster parents know about your schedule, upcoming visits, and any medical needs that your child may have.
4. **Be Patient and Positive:** Staying respectful and cooperative with the foster family shows you're focused on what's best for your child.

Foster parents are there to help, not to take over. The more you and the foster family can work together, the better it will be for your child.

# WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

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## **Take Care of Yourself:**

If you're feeling sad or having trouble with drugs or alcohol, ask your caseworker for help. They can help you find someone to talk to. They might also ask you to do a substance abuse/mental health test to see if you need more help.

## **Have a Way to Stay in Touch:**

Make sure you have a phone and email that work so your attorney and caseworker can contact you.

## **Make Your Home Clean & Safe:**

Make sure your home is safe for your child:

- They need a clean place to sleep.
- There should be healthy food to eat.
- Your home needs power, water, and working toilets.
- Regularly wash your dishes and take out the trash.
- Keep dangerous things like guns, alcohol, and medicine out of reach and locked up.
- Make sure there are working smoke alarms.
- If you have roommates, make sure they're not using drugs or have criminal records that make it unsafe for them to be around your child.

## **Practice How to Be a Healthy Parent:**

Take classes, read books, or blogs, or listen to podcasts about how to be a healthy parent.

## **Have a Stable Income:**

Make sure you have a legal source of money to support you and your child.

## **Tell the Caseworker About Your Child's Doctor:**

If your child has a doctor, tell your caseworker so they can keep going to the same one.

## **Get Around:**

Figure out how you'll get to court visits and your child's appointments. Your caseworker can help identify options for transportation if you need them.

## **Plan for Daycare:**

If your children don't have a daycare, start looking for one. Your caseworker can help.

# HELP & RESOURCES

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## Health and Welfare Application for Assistance

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To apply for food assistance, cash assistance, health coverage or child care assistance visit: [https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/sites/default/files/2020-08/HW2000\\_Application%20For%20Assistance.pdf](https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/sites/default/files/2020-08/HW2000_Application%20For%20Assistance.pdf)

or scan the QR code below



## Find a Food Bank

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To search your area for food banks and food pantries visit: <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/food-sites>

or scan the QR code below



## Find Help Idaho

**Looking for help?**  
**We make it easy to find.**  
**findhelpidaho.org**

get connected to free and reduced-cost:

- housing & utility assistance
- education services
- transportation
- healthcare and more

findhelpidaho.org is:

- ✓ **free:** no charge to you or anyone searching for services
- ✓ **confidential:** HIPAA and FERPA compliant and HITRUST Certified
- ✓ **easy to use:** designed with accessibility in mind

This resource is brought to you by: 



Search your area for free and low-cost services.

Visit: <https://www.findhelpidaho.org/> or scan the QR code below



## Hand in Hand Family Mentorship

Hand in Hand helps families who are having a tough time taking care of their children. They want to give these families some extra help and support.

A mentor from Hand in Hand will tell you about classes, fun things to do, and places where you can get help near where you live. They want to make sure you know about all the good things in your community.

Mentors are assigned for one year, but they hope to become good friends with families that last even longer.

Visit:  
<https://handinhandmentoring.org/> or scan the QR code below



# TIMELINE OF EVENTS

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This timeline is about what happens when someone reports abuse, abandonment, neglect, or an unstable home environment. **Note: every case is special and may differ from the timeline below.**

- Someone calls Health and Welfare because they're worried about a child.
- A worker from Health and Welfare is assigned to check on the child. They come within 24 hours to 5 days to make sure the child is safe, depending on how serious it is.
- After they check, if they have concerns, they may talk to you about working together to help fix the problems they see.
- If there is not time to fix the problems, if a child's parents are gone, or if the problems are very serious, then Health and Welfare may call the police for help.
- Police will review the situation and could ask a court for permission to take the child/ren into emergency shelter care. If the court agrees, it will give police an "Order of Removal", telling them to take the child/ren to a temporary safe place.
- A caseworker will be assigned to help your family. They will visit your child regularly. You can ask this person questions about your child or what you need to do.
- If it's safe the caseworker will plan visits between you and your child.
- The caseworker will write down a plan – called the Case Plan – for what you need to do to get your child back. They will meet with you every month to talk about how you're doing on the Case Plan.
- You will have hearings in court to see how things are going. If you're not sure what to do, ask your attorney.
- If your child has to remain in foster care for 15 months, the court might decide you can't be their parent anymore. That means they'll live with someone else forever.

# MONTH BY MONTH

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It is important to remember that your case will close when the judge determines that it is suitable and safe to do so. Below is a sample timeline of what may happen in your case, but remember, every case is very different.

## Month 1:

- Someone calls Health and Welfare to report suspected abuse, abandonment, neglect, or an unstable home environment. If it is serious, police or a court may remove your child from the home.
- Within 48 hours you will go to court to talk about what is happening. This is called the **Shelter Care Hearing**. In this hearing the judge will decide if a child needs to be placed in a safe place, like a foster home or shelter, for a short time.
- At this hearing children under 12 are assigned a guardian ad litem. This person speaks for the best interest of the child in court.
- Children over 12 may be assigned their own attorney. Sometimes, they may also be assigned a guardian ad litem.
- You may be asked if you have an attorney. If you cannot afford one, then the court may assign a public defender to represent you.
- Someone from Health and Welfare is assigned to your case to help you, this person is your caseworker. Your caseworker will start planning visits to meet with your child.
- You can start working on any safety issues at home and seek help for any mental health or drug problems.

## Month 2:

- You go to court again, about 30 days later, this is called the **Adjudicatory Hearing**. In this hearing, the judge decides if the child is within the jurisdiction of the court and whether to give full custody of your child to Health and Welfare, or back to you while the case is ongoing. This is more in-depth than the Shelter Care Hearing.
- In the second month your caseworker will talk to you and your child. They will have a family meeting and see what supports you need and what things need to be done to provide a safe home for your child. They will also develop a Case Plan; this is a list of things that need to be done before your case can be closed.
- If there are no legal restrictions on parent/child visitation, you may get to see your child, this is called “visitation”.
- The guardian ad litem will visit with your child to see how they are doing.

### Month 3:

- You go to court again to talk about your Case Plan. This is a list made by you and your caseworker that says what needs to be done before your case will be closed. This is called the **Case Plan Hearing**.
- Your caseworker talks to you and your child.
- If there are no legal restrictions on parent/child visitation, you may get to see your child.
- The guardian ad litem will visit with your child to see how they are doing.
- You start working on the things you need to do in your plan.

### Month 4-5:

- You may go to court again so the judge can check in and see how you are doing; this is called a **Status Hearing**.
- Your caseworker talks to you and your child.
- If there are no legal restrictions on parent/child visitation, you may get to see your child.
- The guardian ad litem will visit with your child to see how they are doing.
- You keep working on your plan.

### Month 6:

- You go to court again to talk about your plan. This is called the **6-Month Review Hearing**.
- Your caseworker talks to you and your child.
- If there are no legal restrictions on parent/child visitation, you may get to see your child.
- The guardian ad litem will visit with your child to see how they are doing.
- You keep working on your plan.

### Month 7-11:

- You may go to court so the judge can check in and see how you are doing; this is called a **Status Hearing**.
- Your caseworker talks to you and your child.
- If there are no legal restrictions on parent/child visitation, you may get to see your child.
- The guardian ad litem will visit with your child to see how they are doing.
- You keep working on your plan.



## Month 12:

- You go to court again. This time, everyone talks about how close you are to finishing your Case Plan. This is called the **Permanency Hearing**.
- If you are close to finishing your Case Plan, the court will give you a little more time.
- If you are not close to finishing your Case Plan, then the court will order your caseworker to look for another place for your child/ren to live permanently.
- It is important to know that the court does not take your child/ren away at this hearing. The judge will just change the goal of the case to something besides returning to your care.
- If there are no legal restrictions on parent/child visitation, you may get to see your child.
- Your caseworker talks to you and your child.
- The guardian ad litem will visit with your child to see how they are doing.
- You keep working on your plan.

## Month 13-15:

- If there are no legal restrictions on parent/child visitation, you may get to see your child.
- Your caseworker talks to you and your child.
- The guardian ad litem will visit with your child to see how they are doing.
- You keep working on your plan.

## Month 15+:

- If the child has remained out of your home for the last 15 of the most recent 22 months you may lose your ability to be your child/ren's "legal parent". You will return to court for a **Termination of Parental Rights Hearing** and your legal rights as a parent may be severed.

Note: At any point, when the safety concern is gone and the judge determines it is all right, the child may be able to return home.

# PEOPLE YOU MAY SEE IN COURT

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## JUDGE



I am the Judge. The job of the judge is to oversee the Child Protection case, keep the focus on keeping children safe, and to make sure that we protect your rights as parents. If people don't agree at hearings, the court will listen to evidence and testimony from all the parties and make decisions based on the law. At different times throughout the case, the court will issue orders that require you, the parents, to complete certain tasks.

The judge will set regular court hearings every few months to make sure that you are following court orders. The judge will check on your children's needs and make sure the caseworker is helping your family. At those hearings, the judge reviews reports from Health and Welfare, the Guardian ad Litem and hopefully you, the parents. At the hearings, the judge will listen to everyone in the case including you and your child if they're old enough. The judge wants to hear about how you are doing, the progress you're making in following the court's orders, any updates about your kids, and what more can be done to help you and your children. At certain times, the judge has to make important decisions that guide and shape your case so it's important to attend court and have your voice heard.

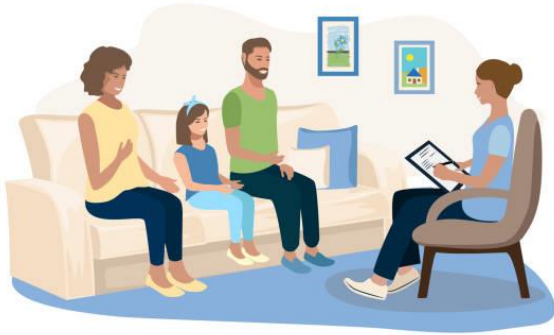
## COURT CLERK



I am the Court Clerk.

I sit next to the judge in the courtroom and take notes about what is happening in each hearing. I also help the judge with paperwork and set up meetings for them.

## **FAMILY SERVICES WORKER (CASE MANAGER)**



I am the Case Manager. I am a Family Services Worker who works for the Child and Family Services division of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. The job of the Case Manager is to ensure that your child is safe during their time in foster care and to help you reunify with your child.

Your Case Manager will work with you to develop a Case Plan. A Case Plan is a roadmap of tasks you must work on before your child to return home. Finishing the Case Plan allows the Child Protection case to close. The Case Manager helps you with your Case Plan by providing referrals to services, connecting you with resources, and following up with your providers. The Case Manager also arranges for visits between you and your child and gives you information about your child's medical, educational and therapy appointments. Your Case Manager is your main point of contact throughout the case.

## **CLIENT SERVICES TECHNICIAN**



I am the Client Services Technician. I don't go to court, but you may work with one of us, so we wanted to make sure you know what we do. A Client Services Technician, or CST, is another Family Services Worker who works for Health and Welfare. The job of the CST is to facilitate visits with your children. The CST works with you to schedule visits, helps with getting your child to the visit, supervises visits when it is necessary and sometimes helps with parenting tips and strategies.

## STATE'S ATTORNEY (PROSECUTOR)



I am the state's attorney (prosecutor). The job of the state's attorney is to make sure the children are safe, and their needs are met. If the state's attorney learns from police or workers from Health and Welfare that a child is not safe at home, the state's attorney will file a Child Protection case.

Once a case is opened, my job is to prove to the judge that the Child Protection case should stay open and if the child/ren should stay in foster care.

If a case stays open, the state's attorney works with Health and Welfare and the parties to monitor the case, the children, and parents' Case Plan progress. The goal of the state's attorney is to reunify parents and children as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Generally, parents have 12 months to finish a Case Plan. If that does not happen, the state's attorney may ask the judge to approve another plan for the child that does not include reunifying with parents, such as termination of parental rights or guardianship.

## Deputy Attorney General

I am the Deputy Attorney General (DAG). I am an attorney who helps the Department of Health and Welfare in court.



## PARENT'S ATTORNEY



I am the parent's attorney. Either the court appointed me to represent you, or you hired me privately. You are entitled to competent legal counsel in a child protection case and if you cannot afford one then the court will assign a public defender (attorney) to represent you.

The job of your attorney is to ensure that your rights as a parent are protected, identify key legal issues, and present your case to the court. Your attorney works for you and will represent and speak on your behalf in the court hearings. If you have any questions or concerns about how your case is going, talking to your attorney can help you get answers to questions and relieve concerns.

## CHILD'S ATTORNEY



I am the attorney for any child twelve years or older. Children twelve years or older are entitled to their own attorney. The child's attorney will help the child get ready for court, explain things that are happening, and share what the child wants with the court. The child's attorney ensures that children's voices are heard in the process. I am different than a Guardian ad Litem, because I advocate for what the child tells me they want, instead of what someone thinks might be best for them.

## GUARIAN AD LITEM



I am the Guardian ad Litem for the child. A Guardian ad Litem, or GAL for short, is a trained Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) who looks out for the best interest of children eleven years or younger in a child protection case. GALs are unpaid community volunteers, appointed by the judge to monitor the child protection case and make recommendations to the judge about what is in the children's best interest.

How do they decide what recommendations to make? They visit with the children every month, watch visitation between children and their parents, visit the children's schools or day care facilities, and contact individuals like doctors, social workers, probation officers, counselors, and therapists to gather and verify information. The GAL shares this information with the judge in the GAL's reports to the court. The GAL regularly tries to communicate and visit with parents to see how they're doing, ask about their progress of Case Plan tasks, and ask parents if there are other updates they wish to share with the GAL to be included in the GAL's report. A child's attorney and I have different roles to play. I look at a child's whole situation and try to find what I believe to be in the child's best interest, not just what they want.

## GUARDIAN AD LITEM ATTORNEY



I am the attorney for the Guardian ad Litem. The job of the attorney for the Guardian ad litem is to provide legal counsel to the court-appointed Guardian ad Litem who represents the "best interests" of the children.

The attorney for the Guardian ad Litem explains child protection procedures to the GAL, helps the GAL in filing their reports to the court, and gives updates from the GAL to the court during hearings.

# TERMS YOU MAY HEAR IN COURT

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## **Adjudicatory Hearing:**

About a month after a child goes to foster care, the judge decides if the child protection case should continue. If the judge decides that case should continue, the judge then decides whether the child should stay in foster care or go home while the family works on a Case Plan.

## **Adoption:**

Sometimes, children can't go back to live with their parents. When this happens, they might become part of a new forever family. In Idaho, children who are 12 or older must agree to be adopted. If they don't, then they may stay in care, or choose another permanency option, like a Guardianship.

## **Case Plan Hearing:**

This is when the judge approves your Case Plan of what needs to be done for your child to return home and to close the case.

## **Case Plan:**

This is a list of tasks made by you and your caseworker. When you make enough progress on your tasks, your children may return home. When you complete your Case Plan, your case will be closed. The Case Plan lists who does what, when, how, and why. You have tasks, but your caseworker will too. It should be made within 60 days of the case starting and checked every three months.

## **Caseworker:**

This is a person from Health and Welfare who helps your family. They might also be called a "case manager" or "social worker."

## **Children at Risk Evaluation Services (CARES):**

This is a team of specialized doctors who provide expert medical examinations and care to children when there are concerns that they were abused or neglected.

## **CodeX:**

A National Crime Information Center (NCIC) check that law enforcement can do through their internal system. This allows for a quicker background check.

**Community Based Rehabilitation Services (CBRS):**

This is a program for children and adults to learn new skills.

**Concurrent Planning:**

This is the backup plan for where a child will live forever if they can't return home to their parents.

**Congregate Care or Residential Care Facility:**

Group homes for children who need extra care for their behaviors or disabilities.

**Diagnosis:**

This is when a doctor figures out what's making someone sick. Doctors can also diagnose abuse and neglect that has previously happened to a child.

**Driving Under the Influence (DUI):**

This is when someone is caught driving after drinking alcohol or using drugs.

**Expedited Foster Placement:**

This means quickly finding a new home for a child, usually with family or close friends.

**Extended Home Visit:**

This is when children get to live with their family, even though they're still legally under the care of Health and Welfare.

**Family Assessment:**

Meetings with your family to see what help you need.

**Family Group Decision Making (FGDM):**

A talk with family and important people to make a plan that works best.

**Foster Care:**

This is when children who can't live with their own family stay with another family who takes care of them.

**Foster Child:**

A child who is living with another family because they can't live with their own.

**Global Appraisal of Individual Needs (GAIN):**

This is a test to see if someone is struggling with alcohol or drugs.



**Guardian ad Litem (GAL):**

This is a volunteer appointed by the court to speak on behalf of the child's best interest in court.

**Guardianship:**

Someone else becomes responsible for your child, like a family member or friend. This is different than a "power of attorney" agreement.

**Hair Follicle Test**

This is a test of a person's hair to see if they have used drugs in the last few months.

**Health and Welfare:**

This is the state government agency that helps families and children with important things like healthcare and safety. Can be known as "DHW", "the Department", or "IDHW".

**Idaho Child Protective Act (CPA):**

This is a whole section of Idaho law designed to protect children and support families.

**Idaho Court of Appeals:**

This is a court that can review the decisions made by the judge in the child protection case.

**Idaho Juvenile Rule (IJR):**

These are rules for the judge to follow in a child protection case.

**Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA):**

This is a federal law designed to identify and protect Indian children.

**Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC):**

A set of federal and state laws that the judge in a child protection case has to follow before allowing a child to live in another state.

**Long Term Foster Care:**

Children stay in foster care until they're 18.

**Minimum Sufficient Level of Care:**

This is the least amount of care needed to keep a child safe and healthy.

**Non-Relative Foster Placement:**

This is when a child is placed in a foster home with someone who isn't their family.

**Out-of-State Placement:**

This is when a child is placed with family in another state, or in a congregate care facility in another state. A judge must approve an out-of-state placement before it is allowed.

**Permanency Hearing:**

A court hearing where the judge decides what the best plan is for a child moving forward. The court can choose to keep working with parents to get their child home or another plan like termination of parental rights or guardianship.

**Permanency Plan:**

A plan for where a child will live forever. They might live with you, family, another family, or in a special home.

**Pre-Trial Conference:**

This is when people talk about a case before it goes to court.

**Probation Violation:**

This is when someone breaks the rules while on probation.

**Protective Supervision:**

This is when a child remains with their family, but family still goes to court and has a Case Plan. Under Protective Supervision, parent(s) keep custody of their child/ren.

**Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP):**

A group home that provides specialized care to help children with significant behavior or disability needs.

**Relative Foster Placement:**

This is when a child is placed in a foster home with someone who is family such as their grandparents, aunts, uncles, or cousins.

**Reunification:**

When you and your child come back together and they go home.

**Review Hearing:**

These are talks in court during the case to check how things are going and if anything needs to change.

**Safety Assessment:**

This is a tool used by Health and Welfare to see if there are safety threats or immediate needs that they can help with.

**Safety Plan:**

A plan to make sure a child is safe right away.

**Shelter Care Hearing:**

The first hearing in a child protection case. If your child is taken from you, you will have this first hearing within two days, not counting weekends or holidays. The judge decides if the child will stay in foster care or if the case is dismissed.

**Shelter Care/Foster Care:**

A temporary home for children who can't stay with their family.

**Substance Use Disorder:**

This is when someone has trouble with drugs or alcohol.

**Supervised Visitation:**

When the visits between parents and their children are watched by the Health and Welfare caseworker. This is done to make sure the children are safe during the visit and to offer advice and support. Visits can end early if the rules are not followed.

**Termination of Parental Rights Trial:**

A trial where the judge may decide it's not safe for the child to ever go back home and that it is in the child's best interest to be adopted by another family.

**Termination of Parental Rights:**

When a judge rules after a trial that a parent is no longer a parent to their child. The child will then be adopted by another family.

**Urinalysis**

This is a test of a person's urine to see if someone has been using drugs.

**Visitation:**

Planned visits between you and your child, and maybe other family too.

# CONTACTS

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## **Courthouse**

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## **My Attorney** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Caseworker** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Caseworker** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Caseworker Supervisor** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Permanency Worker** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Guardian ad Litem** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Qualified Expert Witness (tribal only)** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Contact** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Contact** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Other Contact** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Other Contact** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Other Contact** \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Other Contact** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

# HEARING DATES

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## Adjudicatory Hearing

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Things to do before hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tasks assigned at hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Case Plan Hearing

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Things to do before hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tasks assigned at hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Status Hearing

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Things to do before hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tasks assigned at hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Status Hearing

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Things to do before hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tasks assigned at hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Status Hearing

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Things to do before hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tasks assigned at hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 6 Month Review Hearing

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Things to do before hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tasks assigned at hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Permanency Hearing

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Things to do before hearing: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Tasks assigned at hearing: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Termination of Parental Rights Hearing (if applicable)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Things to do before hearing: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Tasks assigned at hearing: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# OTHER MEETING DATES

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**Meeting With:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes from Meeting:**

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**Meeting With:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes from Meeting:**

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**Meeting With:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes from Meeting:**

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**Meeting With:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Meeting With:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Meeting With:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes from Meeting:**

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A series of horizontal lines for writing, consisting of 28 evenly spaced lines.



## EXTENDED FAMILY

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If your child is removed from your home, the caseworker will talk to you about finding family members who can take care of them while you work to address the safety issues. Leaving home can be scary and upsetting for children. Staying with family, like grandparents or aunts and uncles, can make it a bit less scary because they know and love them already.

Here's a guide to help the caseworker find family who can look after your child. Sometimes, there might be more than one mom or dad in a family, so this guide helps keep everything clear. If there's not enough room on the guide, you can add extra pages.

### Your Mom:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

### Your Dad:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Brother or Sister:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Brother or Sister:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Brother or Sister:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Brother or Sister:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Brother or Sister:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Aunt or Uncle:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Aunt or Uncle:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Aunt or Uncle:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Aunt or Uncle:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Aunt or Uncle:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Aunt or Uncle:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Aunt or Uncle:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Cousin:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Cousin:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Cousin:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Your Cousin:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Close Family Friend:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Close Family Friend:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Other Relatives or Friends:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

**Other Relatives or Friends:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend this person as a placement option?  Yes  No

(Repeat for each other person who can help)



# TRIBAL MEMBERSHIP (CHILDREN)

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Children who are a part of an Indian tribe have different laws that apply to them through the Indian Child Welfare Act. These laws are to protect Indian children so that they are kept in contact with their tribe and culture throughout the court process. If you know or think that you may have Indian heritage (that a member of your immediate family is connected with a tribe) please let your caseworker know right away! Only a tribe can decide whether to consider your child an “Indian child”, so it is important to gather as much information as possible as early as possible in the case.

## IMPORTANT

If any of your children are, or you think that they may be:

- 1) a member of a federally recognized Indian tribe, or
- 2) eligible for membership (tribes have different requirements for membership, but if you think your child may be eligible, list them below)
- 3) the child of someone who is a member of a federally recognized Indian tribe,

list as much information as you can below to help the caseworker contact the tribe. If your child is, or may be, a member of multiple tribes, fill out as much information below as you can for each tribe.

**Child Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

**Child Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

**Child Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

**Child Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

**Child Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribal enrollment number (if known)

## TRIBAL MEMBERSHIP (PARENTS)

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If your child/ren is a part of a tribe, they may have a special person in court to talk about the tribe's traditions and culture. To help Health and Welfare find the right person for court, tell them which tribes you or the other parent belong to.

**Parent Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Indian Tribe(s): \_\_\_\_\_

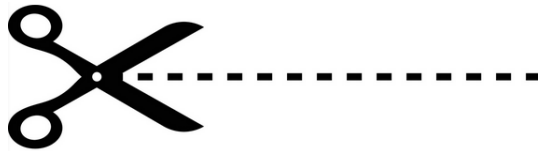
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# MY LANGUAGE ACCESS CARDS

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If English is not your first (native) language, you can have an interpreter with you at important meetings and court dates. Use the cards below to help staff find an interpreter. The interpreter will repeat everything said to you in your native language so you can understand.

**Cut these cards out and give them to the court clerk, caseworker, or anyone else that you need to talk to in your native language.**



I am Limited English Proficient and speak only:

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(language)

According to Title IV, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Service for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," I am entitled to meaningful access to your services. Please provide me with appropriate language assistance.

Thank you,  
Name \_\_\_\_\_

For any questions or concerns, contact the Statewide Language Access Office at (208) 947-7554, or [languageaccess@idcourts.net](mailto:languageaccess@idcourts.net).

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I am Limited English Proficient and speak only:

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(language)

According to Title IV, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Service for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," I am entitled to meaningful access to your services. Please provide me with appropriate language assistance.

Thank you,

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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I am Limited English Proficient and speak only:

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(language)

According to Title IV, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Service for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," I am entitled to meaningful access to your services. Please provide me with appropriate language assistance.

Thank you,

Name \_\_\_\_\_

For any questions or concerns, contact the Statewide Language Access Office at (208) 947-7554, or [languageaccess@idcourts.net](mailto:languageaccess@idcourts.net).

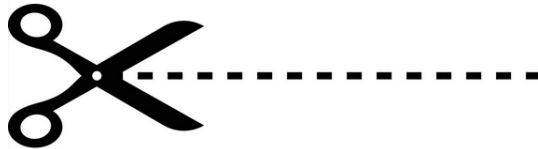
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## My Language Access Cards (Español)

Si inglés no es su idioma nativo, usted puede solicitar que un intérprete le asista cuando tenga audiencias o reuniones importantes. Use las tarjetas que ve a continuación para que nuestro personal pueda conseguirle un intérprete. El intérprete repetirá todo lo que se diga en su idioma nativo para que usted pueda comprender en su totalidad.

**Recorte estas tarjetas y entréguelas al secretario del tribunal, asistente social, o a cualquier otra persona con quien usted desee comunicarse en su idioma nativo.**



Mis conocimientos de inglés son limitados y necesito asistencia en:

\_\_\_\_\_

(escriba el idioma)

Según el Título IV de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964, el Decreto Ejecutivo 13166, “Mejorando el Acceso a Servicios para Personas con Dominio Limitado del Inglés,” tengo el derecho a obtener acceso a sus servicios de manera significativa. Por favor, tenga a bien proporcionar la asistencia de un intérprete.

Muchas gracias,

Nombre y apellido \_\_\_\_\_

Si tiene alguna pregunta, contacte a la Oficina Estatal de Acceso Lingüístico enviando un correo electrónico a: [languageaccess@idcourts.net](mailto:languageaccess@idcourts.net) o llamando al (208) 947-7554.

Esta página está en blanco intencionalmente.

Mis conocimientos de inglés son limitados y necesito asistencia en:

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(escriba el idioma)

Según el Título IV de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964, el Decreto Ejecutivo 13166, “Mejorando el Acceso a Servicios para Personas con Dominio Limitado del Inglés,” tengo el derecho a obtener acceso a sus servicios de manera significativa. Por favor, tenga a bien proporcionar la asistencia de un intérprete.

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Nombre y apellido \_\_\_\_\_

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Mis conocimientos de inglés son limitados y necesito asistencia en:

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(escriba el idioma)

Según el Título IV de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964, el Decreto Ejecutivo 13166, “Mejorando el Acceso a Servicios para Personas con Dominio Limitado del Inglés,” tengo el derecho a obtener acceso a sus servicios de manera significativa. Por favor, tenga a bien proporcionar la asistencia de un intérprete.

Muchas gracias,

Nombre y apellido \_\_\_\_\_

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Esta página está en blanco intencionalmente.

## LETTERS TO COURT

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It's really important for both parents to go to court hearings. The judge will ask about how things are going with the plans made for the family. They'll also get updates from case worker and the Guardian ad litem.

A study looked at court hearings for children in Idaho. Here's what they found:

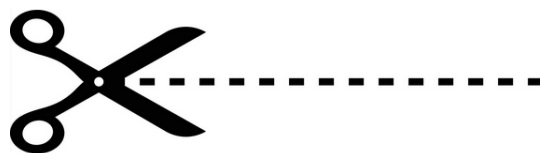
- If the parent went to more hearings, it was more likely for the child to go back home.
- Things moved faster if the parent went to the Permanency Hearing to determine where the child will live forever.
- If a parent missed the Permanency Hearing, it was harder for the child to go back home.

From: Idaho Child Abuse and Neglect Court Proceedings Baseline Assessment, March 2021.

If you can't go to court, there are letters you can use to tell the judge how you're doing, what you've achieved, and if you need any help. You can also share any other important info about you, your family, and what's happening.

You can also use these to let the judge know your thoughts when you are in court (even if it is not in person). It can be scary to speak in court, but you can always write a letter to the judge. Give this letter to your attorney, and they will get it to the judge. If your hearing is online, you can mail this letter to your attorney ahead of time or take a photo of it and email it to them so they can discuss it with you. **Note: a copy of this letter will be given to everyone in your case, including the judge.**

**Cut these pages out and give them to your attorney after you have filled them out.**



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Subject: Parent Statement for Child Protection Hearing

Dear Judge,

I am writing to talk about my child's safety. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am the parent of \_\_\_\_\_.

I know this hearing is to decide what is best for my child/ren.

As a parent, I have a right to be heard and to have my voice and opinions taken into consideration in this process. I hope this letter helps you understand how I feel.

I want to tell you about how things are going *[talk about your current living situation, any worries you may have about the child's welfare, or any other important information.]*

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I also want you to know *[Share any other important information you think the judge should know.]*

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I have some ideas about what should happen next for my child. *[Share any requests or ideas you have for your child/ren's future.]*

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I think this is a good idea because *[Explain why you think your ideas are good for your child/ren.]*

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I am thankful I could write this letter. I hope it helps you make the right choice for my child's safety and happiness.

Thank you for reading this.

Sincerely,

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Subject: Parent Statement for Child Protection Hearing

Dear Judge,

I am writing to talk about my child's safety. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am the parent of \_\_\_\_\_.

I know this hearing is to decide what is best for my child/ren.

As a parent, I have a right to be heard and to have my voice and opinions taken into consideration in this process. I hope this letter helps you understand how I feel.

I want to tell you about how things are going *[talk about your current living situation, any worries you may have about the child's welfare, or any other important information.]*

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I also want you to know *[Share any other important information you think the judge should know.]*

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I have some ideas about what should happen next for my child. [Share any requests or ideas you have for your child/ren's future.]

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I think this is a good idea because [Explain why you think your ideas are good for your child/ren.]

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I also want you to know *[Share any other important information you think the judge should know.]*

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I have some ideas about what should happen next for my child. [Share any requests or ideas you have for your child/ren's future.]

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I think this is a good idea because [Explain why you think your ideas are good for your child/ren.]

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Sincerely,

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Dear Judge,

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I want to tell you about how things are going *[talk about your current living situation, any worries you may have about the child's welfare, or any other important information.]*

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I also want you to know *[Share any other important information you think the judge should know.]*

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I have some ideas about what should happen next for my child. [Share any requests or ideas you have for your child/ren's future.]

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I think this is a good idea because [Explain why you think your ideas are good for your child/ren.]

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I am thankful I could write this letter. I hope it helps you make the right choice for my child's safety and happiness.

Thank you for reading this.

Sincerely,

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: Parent Statement for Child Protection Hearing

Dear Judge,

I am writing to talk about my child's safety. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am the parent of \_\_\_\_\_.

I know this hearing is to decide what is best for my child/ren.

As a parent, I have a right to be heard and to have my voice and opinions taken into consideration in this process. I hope this letter helps you understand how I feel.

I want to tell you about how things are going *[talk about your current living situation, any worries you may have about the child's welfare, or any other important information.]*

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I also want you to know *[Share any other important information you think the judge should know.]*

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I have some ideas about what should happen next for my child. [Share any requests or ideas you have for your child/ren's future.]

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I think this is a good idea because [Explain why you think your ideas are good for your child/ren.]

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Sincerely,

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# JOURNAL

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DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

This is where I am today....

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**JOURNAL**

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**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**This is where I am today....**

A series of horizontal lines for journaling.













# JOURNAL

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

This is where I am today....

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# JOURNAL

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DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

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This handbook was written *by* parents *for* parents.