

## SUMMARY STATEMENT

*IDHW v. John Doe, Docket No. 50875*

This appeal arose out of a child protection case involving separated parents and their five children. The case proceeded to the legal system because of reports of physical abuse and neglect brought to the attention of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (“the Department”) that resulted in a court ordered investigation. The child protection case began in February 2023 as a protective supervision case. Nearly three months later, the magistrate court ordered that the children be removed from the home and placed in the legal custody of the Department. John Doe (Father) appealed from the magistrate court’s redispotion order, removing his five children from the custody of their parents, and temporarily placing the children in the legal custody of the Department. Father argued that the magistrate court’s order failed to contain detailed written findings as required by Idaho law, that the orders were not supported by substantial and competent evidence, and that the magistrate court’s actions violated Father’s fundamental rights to the care and custody of his children. The Idaho Supreme Court held that the magistrate court’s verbal findings of fact were sufficiently detailed and supported by substantial and competent evidence. However, the Court agreed that the redispotion order did not comply with the detailed written findings requirement of Idaho Code section 16-1623(4). Even so, the Supreme Court ultimately held that such error was harmless because the magistrate court explained its reasoning in detail on the record, so the Court could overlook the otherwise inadequate findings and conclusions in the redispotion order. Finally, the Court held that placing the children in the legal custody of the Department did not violate Father’s rights to the custody, care, and control of his children.

***\*\*\*This summary constitutes no part of the opinion of the Court, but has been prepared by court staff for the convenience of the public.\*\*\****