



Child Welfare Services Parent Guide

Your Family and Child Protective Services When Children are Removed from Home

Having your children removed from your home is frightening. You are now involved with Child Protective Services (CPS). You may feel scared, anxious, frustrated, guilty, ashamed and angry at CPS. It may seem like there is nothing you can do – everyone is against you. What most of you don't realize is that this is not a criminal case. It is all about what is best for your children. CPS wants your family to be together, but until your children can be returned to a safe home, that cannot happen.

So it's up to you to make it happen.

What you can do

Understanding how CPS works and what is going to happen next can help. There are some things you can do right away that can help your family have a better chance of getting back together sooner. As soon as possible talk with your social worker. Keep in touch with them, keeping them updated on what you are doing. Let them know about any relatives or close family friends that the children could stay with if they can't be with you. Ask them to set up visits right away and tell them what times are best for you. As soon as you are assigned or hire an attorney, make an appointment and talk with them about your rights and what you can do. Tell them what you want to happen and keep in touch with them so they know what you are doing. If there is any chance you might be a member or your children might be a member of an Indian Tribe let your social worker and attorney know right away.

Team Decision Making

A Team Decision Making Meeting (TDM) will be set up right away to try and work out a placement that is most familiar for your children. It is really important that you attend the TDM and bring family or friends who may be interested in having your children placed with them if they qualify. Even if the children can't be placed with them, they may be able to help in other ways. It is also a good time to discuss visits with the children and get to know the people who are taking care of them.

Helping your children

There are many things you can do for your children to help them feel better about being in someone else's home, especially if they are not related. Even though it may be hard to accept that a stranger is caring for your children, if you can get to know the foster parents and help them to understand your children, it will be easier for the children to adjust to the change. If that isn't possible, just writing up a list of things your children like or dislike, routines that work for them, favorite foods, books, TV shows, and special things about them can help the foster parent. Providing a special toy, a favorite blanket, pictures, or something that reminds them of you can help your children feel more relaxed. If your child has allergies or medical problems, trouble with school, disabilities, or anything else, let your social worker know right away.

Visiting your children

One of the most important things you can do is to visit with your children. The first visit may be difficult for you and the children. When you visit it is important to focus on the children and not your own feelings. You will be instructed not to talk about the

case with them. They may be glad to see you or they may be angry at you or just ignore you. You may just need to let them vent or sulk, it is okay, and it will get better. You can bring a favorite game or G-rated video to play. Ask the person who is supervising the visit if you can bring a snack. Usually if it is healthy that is okay but you still need permission. Don't bring gifts or money unless you have arranged it before hand with the social worker. The best gift you can give your children is your time and attention. It may take a lot of inner strength to get through those first few visits. The people supervising will offer ideas if your child has emotional outbursts or acts out. Ask for help if you need it. Hold, reassure, and comfort you children when you are visiting them.

Social Worker Aides

You may be ordered by the court to participate in services such as anger management, drug and alcohol, counseling, parenting, or other services offered in the community. It is important to get involved as quickly as possible. If you have trouble getting there or need help in other ways, contact your social worker. Sometimes a social worker aide will be assigned to help you. They can help you find better housing, assist you in making a resume, looking for work, getting you bus tickets, helping you get to appointments, organizing your home, teaching you how to shop or cook nutritious meals, or reading your assignments from your classes. It all depends on what you need help with. Talk to your social worker or aide about what you need help with.

Parent Partners

If part of the reason you are involved in CPS is because of drugs or alcohol abuse, a parent partner may be assigned. A parent partner is someone who had a case with CPS in the past. They know first hand what it feels like to have your children removed from the home. The parent partner can tell you about the recovery community and go with you to a couple of 12-step meetings. They can help you figure out how to get a sponsor. If you need help reading your lessons, they can help with that too. If you need to go to a rehab they can help you with planning for when you return to the community. The parent partner will sometimes transport you to court or drug and alcohol for meetings and assessment.

Assessments

You can have an assessment for drug and alcohol services right at Tehama County Department of Social Services. A Drug and Alcohol counselor can do an assessment and get you into pre-services or services much quicker. This is really important if you have very small children because the court doesn't allow as much time for reunification.

Your social worker may refer you for parenting classes. A parenting facilitator will contact you and set up an assessment. The assessment will take place at the Department.

Sometimes an appointment can be made for you at the Department for a Mental Health assessment. Your social worker will set that up for you or if you are a Cal Works participant they may be able to help you set up an appointment as well.

If you are referred for anger management or domestic violence classes, you may call Alternatives to Violence at 528-0226 and make an appointment. If you are a Cal Works participant, you may be able to do an assessment at the Department. Contact your Employment Services Social Worker to discuss setting up an appointment at the Department.

If you were involved with Cal Works Employment Services before your children were removed, they may have additional services to help you. Your Employment

Services Social Worker and CPS Social Worker will create a plan together so that both plans are similar.

There may be other services that the court orders you participate in. These services are outlined in your court-ordered case plan. Your social worker will discuss these with you and help you get started.

Going to Court

Any time there is a court hearing, you will be noticed. That means you will receive a certified letter in the mail or someone from the Department will contact you by phone or in person to let you know the time and place of the hearing. It is important that you keep your social worker and attorney advised of any address changes, otherwise you may not hear about the hearing.

When you come to court, you may have to wait for awhile to be called into the court room. When you come into the court room, you will sit near your attorney. Sometimes your close family, like a parent or spouse, can come into the courtroom with you. The judge will ask their names and relationship to you. They may be asked to leave if someone objects to them being in the court room. They will sit behind the bar and cannot talk unless the judge asks them a question. Be sure and turn off cell phones or pagers.

If there is something you need the judge to know, usually you will talk to your attorney and they will tell the judge. Sometimes the judge will ask you a question directly and then you can answer yourself.

It is really important to talk to your attorney and let them know what you want to happen in court and what you are doing to get your children back. They are there to represent you and explain how court works. If your attorney doesn't call you back within 24 hours of when you left a message, try calling again. Be sure and leave messages otherwise they won't know you called.

Your children over 10 years old might be in court. It is important that you not approach your child or their foster parents without permission from your social worker. If you have permission to talk to your children, be sure not to mention anything about the case or the court.

If you are incarcerated and have come to court you will be in a room adjacent to the courtroom until it is time for your case. Sometimes your social worker or attorney will talk to you before court. You will come into the courtroom for the hearing and then be taken back into the room. Until everyone who is incarcerated has their turn, you will have to wait there. Don't try to talk to anyone except your attorney or the judge if you are asked a direct question. If someone, like your child's other parent, tries to talk to you they can be arrested.

When your turn in court is over, the bailiff wants you to leave right away. Don't keep talking to your attorney or anyone else in the court room. You can call or talk to them later. There are other people waiting to come in so it is important to get up and leave as soon as your turn is finished.

Conclusion

Being involved with dependency court can be confusing. The court will order you to complete certain things in a certain period of time in order to have your children returned to your home. It may not be so easy.

Remember, the goal is to get your children back and make changes in your life so that they will never have to leave again. There are people to help you and encourage you. Don't be afraid to ask for help and reach out for support. Many people find that they have true friends and family who will really support them at this time. Your Attorney, Social Worker, Parent Partner, and Social Worker Aide will all help you understand what is going on and what is expected of you. Be sure and communicate frequently with them. There are a lot of things that they can help you with. When you do have contact with your children, be sure and keep a positive outlook and be there for them. Even though this may be the hardest thing you have ever done, you can succeed, and have your children returned.

Tehama County Department of Social Services Team Decision Making (TDM)

Team Decision Making is a placement decision process that involves the parents and their support persons, representatives from the community, and Department staff who are involved in your case. The social worker on your case will request a "TDM" meeting to discuss placement of your child any time a possible placement change is being considered. You and your support persons have the most information about your child. Your input is vital so that the group can make the best decision for keeping your child safe and in the most familiar situation possible.

The goal of the TDM is to reach consensus. Ultimately if there is not agreement at the TDM, social services will make the final decision for the child. That decision is determined for their safety and considers other factors discussed at the TDM.

Following is information on the main types of Team Decision Making meetings

Imminent Risk of Removal

Sometimes a child is living at home and the social worker has concerns that they may be unsafe, and if things keep going as they have been the child could be removed. The social worker will request a TDM to discuss what needs to happen so the child can stay safe at home and other possible options.

During this type of TDM the parents will be able to tell everyone what they are doing to keep the child safe at home. The social worker will also tell everyone what the parents need to do to keep the child safe. The parents will also suggest what they would like to happen if the child needs to be removed from the parents in the near future. The parents might have family members or friends the child can stay with or perhaps they would rather they be in foster care. This is a time that all that can be discussed openly and the group can make a decision about what the best possible placement for the child is.

Emergency Placement

An emergency placement is a placement change that is not expected. When a child is placed in protective custody they are then placed in out of home care. Often times they are in foster care. An emergency TDM should be requested immediately and held by the end of the next business day and prior to filing in Court. If you have not been contacted about a TDM within the first couple of business days from when your child was removed, you can call your social worker and ask them to set up a TDM.

During an emergency TDM, you will be able to discuss whether or not your home is now safe for the child to be there, possible relatives or close friends they can stay with temporarily, and what the Department believes will be the safest place for the child. During the TDM several decisions can be made. Under certain conditions the child might go home. If there is a relative or close family friend who has a home that can be approved, they child may be sent to live there. If the child is unable go home or to a relative or friend, they may need to remain in foster care.

Placement disruption/preservation

There are a lot of reasons why someone may want a child to move when they are in out-of-home care. Sometimes the child is having a hard time fitting into that home or the relative or foster parent has a hard time with their behavior. There are other reasons a child may have to move.

In a placement disruption/preservation TDM the team will discuss the concerns about the child remaining in the foster or relative home. If possible they will try to figure out a way the child can remain in the current placement. If it isn't possible for the child to remain, then the team wants to make the move as smooth as possible. There may be discussion on how the child can be supported in the new placement, whether they can go home, and what services they have or need. Provided you still have your parental rights, you as the parent may be included because you know more about your child than anyone else. Even if you have failed reunification you may still be invited as long as your child is okay with it.

Exiting Placement

The most common reason for an exiting placement TDM is because the child is going to go home. Even though that is a good thing, sometimes it is hard on the family and they can use some extra support. Sometimes an exiting placement TDM will be held because a teen is aging out and will be emancipated. They need to have a plan to know what supports they have available for them when they are on their own.

During the exit TDM for a child going home, the team will discuss the change and any concerns. There may be a transition plan or a date may be set for the return of the child to the parent. The team may discuss the services the child has and what the parent will need to do to keep them going. When a teen is leaving placement for good, the team will discuss the child's needs and how they expect to meet them, give them information about programs for emancipated foster care youth, and help them with their plan.

Who attends a TDM?

- Parents/Guardians/Family Members
- Child/Youth as appropriate
- Resource/Foster Parents
- People who support the family
- Social Workers and Supervisors
- Community Representatives
- Service Providers
- TDM Facilitator
- Others identified by the family or social worker
- Note: Sometimes attorneys ask to attend, however, since these are planning meetings and not necessarily discussions about legal issues, attorneys are not allowed to attend.

What happens at a TDM?

- Introductions
- Establishment of meeting guidelines

- Identification of:
 - The child's strengths and needs
 - The family's strengths and needs
 - Available community resources
 - A plan for the child's immediate safety
 - Placement options

The meetings usually are between one to two hours and are facilitated by a trained facilitator who is also a social worker.

What are some of the benefits of participating in a TDM?

- Because so many people are working together there is a lot more creativity and support for the family.
- The people attending are acknowledged for the support that they give the family.
- Parents/Guardians are more involved and aware in the decision making.
- More information about the child is shared.
- The child is more likely to remain with family, at the same school, and in their community.
- Parents and foster parents will often work together better for the interest of the child.

Why does Tehama County Department of Social Services offer TDM meetings?

- To assure that the child has a safe home.
- Whenever possible the Department wants the child to stay in his/her same school and community, even if placed in out-of-home care.
- When possible, the child is placed more frequently with relatives or extended family (close friends) if the birth family is not an option.
- Siblings are placed together whenever possible and appropriate.
- The child experiences the least number of placement moves.

US Constitution-Fourth Amendment

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probably cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

US Constitution-Fourteenth Amendment

Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Protective Custody and time until Detention Hearing

When a child is placed in protective custody the Department of Social Services will file a petition and a court hearing will be set as directed by the law. Add one day for each Court holiday between protective custody and the hearing.

Protective Custody

Weekend

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Monday

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Tuesday

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Wednesday

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Thursday

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Friday

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Detention Hearing

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Monday

Tuesday

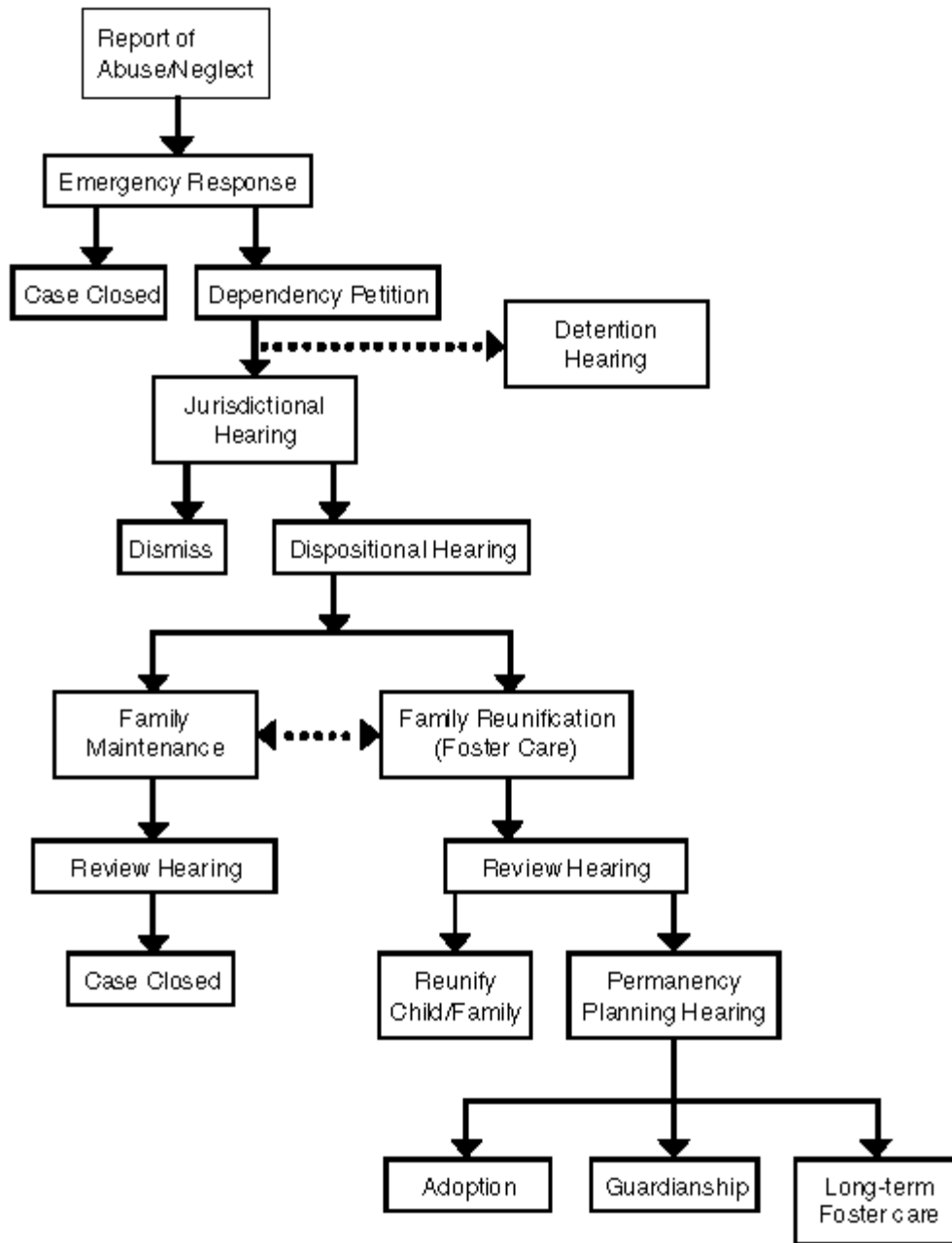
Wednesday

Presumed Fathers

It is important to get presumed father status as soon as possible. There can be only one presumed father and only a presumed father can get services. A man is presumed to be the father of a child if he meets the conditions provided in any of the following subdivisions:

- He is married and living with the mother. Family Code Section 7540. *Cohabitation at time of conception is needed. Can be rebutted no later than child's 2nd birthday by motion for blood tests made by another man claiming to be bio-father, the mother, or the child.*
- The child was born during the marriage or within 300 days after the marriage was terminated. Family code Section 7611 (a)
- Before the child's birth, he and the child's mother tried to marry each other but the attempted marriage is or could be declared invalid and the child is born during the attempted marriage or within 300 days after the termination of the attempted marriage or cohabitation. Family Code Section 7611(b).
- After the child was born, he and the mother were married, and he is named as the father on the birth certificate, with his consent, or he is obligated to pay support under a written voluntary promise to pay or by court order. Family code Section 7611 (c) (1)
- He has received the child into his home and openly holds the child out as his own. Family Code Section 7611 (d). *Must be physically in the home.*
- The child has substantially relied on the father-child relationship with the man and they have a long term relationship. Family Code 7611(d).
- The man's genetic material is used for the posthumous conception of a child. Family Code Section 7611 (f)
- The man has executed a voluntary declaration of paternity. Family Code Section 7571. *Can be signed at the hospital or later with the social worker.*
- He is the biological father who promptly attempted to assume parental responsibilities at the child's conception or birth, but was unable to establish presumed father status by circumstances beyond his control. In re Kelsey S. 1 Cal. 4th 816 (1992). *It is the right of the bio-father to establish a parental relationship with his child. He must make diligent efforts from the time he learns of parentage to establish and emotional and financial commitment to the child. If he didn't com forward right away, he bears the burden to establish presumed status.*

Juvenile Dependency Chart



There are review hearings every six months. For children under three at the time of detention the parent only has six months to make significant progress. If they have made significant progress they may get another six month's of reunification. For children over three at the time of detention, the parent can get an additional six months for a total of 18-months of reunification. At that time the children must go home or a Permanent Planning Hearing will be set.

Juvenile Court, What is it all about anyway?

The court process can be confusing. If you have questions that are not answered here, you can ask your social worker or attorney.

What happens at the Detention Hearing?

The first hearing is called the Detention hearing. It takes place within two or three court days from the time the children are removed from their home.

At the detention hearing:

- The court appoints an attorney for each party based on their financial ability to pay.
- The court gives the parents a notice about what is going on (the “proceedings”)
- The parents get a copy of the petition and any other papers for the case.
- The court tells the parents what can happen in a dependency case.
- If possible, the court writes down the names of the child’s relatives.
- If possible, the court confirms who the parents of the child are.
- The court makes an inquiry about the children’s Indian Ancestry.

The court decides if the child should stay with a parent or live somewhere else for now. If the court decides the child should remain out of the home of the parents, it can make visitation orders so the parent can see the child. The court will also tell the parents where they can get help so the child can come back to them. The court also decides if the Department of Social Services made a “reasonable effort” to keep the child with the parents.

What happens at the Jurisdiction Hearing?

At the jurisdiction hearing the court decides if what the petition says is true. The court has three ways to do this

- The parents or guardians admit the petition is true.
- The parents or guardians don’t disagree with the petition (called “submission”)
- The parents or guardians dispute, or contest the petition. Both sides give the court evidence at a hearing. Then, the court finds the petition to be true or not.

Before the judge accepts an admission or submission, the court has to be sure the parents want to give up (waive) their right to a trial. This means they give up the right to: see, hear and question witnesses, bring their own witnesses, testify or stay silent.

What happens at the Disposition Hearing?

If the court decides the petition is true, it will say what should happen with the child. The judge can:

- Dismiss the case.
- Let the child live with a parent with “Family Maintenance Services”. This means that a social worker from the Department and the court supervise the care of the child.
- Take the child away from the parents and send them to live with a relative, a non-related extended family member, foster parents or a group home, and offer the parents “Family Reunification Services.”
- Take the child away from the parents and not offer family reunification services to get their child back. There will be a hearing in 120 days to decide where the child will live permanently.

The court may not let the parents participate in family reunification services if:

- The child or a brother or sister have been seriously abuse or died due to parent’s negligence or abuse.
- The parent had another child taken away by the court.
- The parents previously tried family reunification services and they failed to complete them or they were terminated and the children did not go home.
- The parents have serious drug issues and/or they haven’t responded to treatment in the past.

There are other reasons the court can not offer Family Reunification Services and order a permanent plan for the child. Your attorney will discuss these with you if needed.

What is a Six-Month Status Review Hearing?

This hearing lets the court know:

- How the child is doing.
- How the parents are doing with the services the court ordered.
- The Department makes a recommendation about whether the court should send the child home or continue family reunification services.

If the child lives with a parent, the court can:

- Dismiss the case
- Keep supervising the child with family maintenance.

If the child doesn’t live at home, the court can:

- Give the child back to a parent. The family will stay with the parent and they will have a family maintenance case plan.
- Keep the child out of the home and continue family reunification services.
- Terminate family reunification services and set for a hearing in 120 days to decide on a permanent plan.

If the child was under three when they were removed from the parents, the court can stop family reunification at six months. This happens if the parent hasn't participated or made significant changes even with treatment. If the child is over three, the parents may have up to twelve months to make the necessary changes to have their child returned to them.

What happens at a Twelve-Month Status Review Hearing?

At this hearing:

- If the case is in Family Maintenance Services the case may be dismissed or continued.
- If the case is in Family Reunification Services and the parents have progressed in their case plan, the child can be placed back with a parent and they can participate in Family Maintenance Services.
- If the parents are doing well and there is a good chance the child who was over three at the time of detention will be returning home, they may continue with Family Reunification Services another six months.
- The court can terminate Family Reunification Services and sets it for a hearing in 120 days to determine a permanent plan.

What happens at an Eighteen-Month Status Review Hearing?

At this hearing:

- The court can let the child go back to the parent.
- If the child doesn't return to the parent, the judge will terminate the Family Reunification Services and set it for a hearing in 120 days to determine the child's permanent plan.

What happens at an Implementation Hearing?

At this hearing a permanent plan is made for the child.

The plans can be:

- Terminate parental rights so the child can be adopted.

- Name a legal guardian for the child
- Put the child with a relative, foster parents or in a group home as a long term placement.

The preferred permanent plan by law for a child is *adoption*. The second choice is *legal guardianship*. The last choice is *long-term foster care*. This is the least likely to give a child a permanent home and usually only older children have this plan.

What other kinds of Hearings are there?

- Sometimes there are hearings if a child needs surgery or certain medications.
- Sometimes there are hearings to change a previous court order because circumstances have changed.
- Occasionally after Family Reunification Services were terminated, and if the parent still has parental rights, and has made a significant change in their lives, and they want to try to get their child back, a hearing can take place to allow the court to determine if this change is what's best for the child.
- There may be other types of hearings that your attorney can discuss with you.

What other things can happen?

If the child lives with a parent and the court doesn't need to supervise the child anymore, it can dismiss the case and open up a family law case in which custody order/visitation orders are kept on file. The judge then makes a custody order if the parents don't live together. These orders tell the parents who has the custody and who will visit. If there is a disagreement about the orders later on, the parents can go to Family Law Court and see the court mediator or have the Family Law Court judge hear about the custody issues.

If the child stays in foster care, review hearings are held every six months. The parents are given notice of when those hearings will take place.

If the child is being adopted, the Adoption hearing is held in the Dependency Court.

Concurrent Planning means that two plans are happening at the same time. It's very important to find a permanent home for a child as soon as possible. So when a child is taken from the home of the parents, the Department of Social Services can put children in homes that want to adopt them. If a child can't go back to live with their parents after a certain amount of time, then the child is already placed in a permanent home.

When you fight or contest the petition and then the judge rules against you, your attorney can file an appeal. In some cases you have to file a form called “extraordinary writ to the Court of Appeals”. Talk to your lawyer about this.

Remember: Your *social worker* may be able to answer some of your questions about court. You can always call or see your *attorney* if you have questions about the court process.

Who is Who and What Do They Do?

When you go to court, there will be a lot of people in the court room. It may be confusing as to who is there and why they are there. Each parent has an attorney, the children have an attorney, and CPS has an attorney. Other attendees may be relatives, foster parents, Indian Tribe representatives, and other social workers. The social worker makes recommendations, but the Judge is the ultimate decision maker. Following is a list of the main people you will see in court.

PERSON	WHAT THEY DO
Judge	Decision maker, makes orders
Bailiff - security	Keep Order in the Court
Assigned Social Worker	Present as agent of Child Welfare Services, Petitioner
Prosecuting or Agency Attorney	County Counsel represents Child Welfare Services.
Parents with legal rights	Mother and any alleged or presumed fathers
Attorney-Parent	Advocates parent's interests
Attorney-Child	Advocates child's interests
Child, unless inappropriate	Subject of the Child Welfare petition
Indian Child Welfare from the child's Tribe and tribal attorney	Advocates tribal interests
Relatives, other interested persons	Provide additional information to the Court
Court reporter	Records everything said in court so that a record exist of the proceedings
Court clerk	Issues court's orders in written form

Language of the Juvenile Court

ASFA	Adoption and Safe Families Act
CPS	Child Protective Services
WIC §300	Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 300 (a)-(j) Gives the juvenile court jurisdiction over abused, neglected, or abandoned child or children.
DET	Detention Hearing First hearing after a dependency petition is filed when a child has been detained (initial hearing).
JURIS	Jurisdiction Hearing The hearing at which the court determines whether the allegations in the petition are true and that the child is a person.
DISPO	Disposition Hearing The hearing at which the court determines whether to declare the child or children to be a dependent of the court, whether to return home, and whether to provide reunification services and, if so, the nature of those services.
ICWA	Indian Child Welfare Act Applies when a child is a member of an Indian tribe or is eligible for membership in one.
PETITION	Document alleging harm or risk of harm to child as defined by WIC §300 (a)-(j)
COURT REPORT	Prepared by social worker for the court and parties. Primary source of evidence given to the Judge.
366.26	WIC §366.26 Hearing-has one of three purposes: 1) terminate Parental Rights; 2) Issue an Order of guardianship; 3) Order plan of planned permanent living arrangement.
CONFIDENTIAL	Classification for information—that restricts who may view or learn the information. A confidential court proceeding is not open to the public. Careful regard must be given to the discussion or sharing of confidential information.

INFORMAL SUP	Program informal (voluntary) supervision by Child Welfare Services instead of going to court.
FINDINGS	Legal requirements for Judge: Child Welfare Services must provide facts to support findings.
NREFM	Non-related extended family members.
NOTICE	Legal requirements to advise parties of time, date, place and reason for a hearing.
CONTINUANCE	Court orders case to another day and time.
PATERNITY	Identification of child or children's father.
REASONABLE EFFORTS	Requirements imposed upon Child Welfare Services to make reasonable efforts to prevent the removal of the child from the home.
REASONABLE SERVICES	Requirements imposed upon Child Welfare Services to make reasonable services to prevent the removal of a child from the home.
RELATIVE PLACEMENT	Placement that has preference if the child must be removed from parental care.
FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT	When child removed from parent's care, and there is no appropriate relative, home paid to care for child.
REUNIFICATION SERVICES	Services that the Department of Social Services is ordered to provide the parents or custodian to help the child to be returned to the child's home, unless a statutory exception to reunification services applies.

STAU REVIEW HEARING

Hearing that is held every six-months until child is returned home or in a permanent plan.

PERMANENCY HEARING

Hearing at which a permanent plan is identified.

POST PERMANENCY HEARING

Hearing every six months after permanent plan is implemented, held until child is adopted or is 18 years of age.

EXPERT WITNESS

A person who testifies at a trial because she or he has special knowledge in a particular field, and therefore may state his/her opinion concerning the area of expertise.

EXCEPTIONS TO TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS

There are six exceptions to a court finding that a child is likely to be adopted. For further explanation see your attorney.

POST ADOPTION CONTACT AGREEMENT

The adoptive parents and the birth parent or other birth relative may agree in writing about the contact with the child: Enforceable by court.

GUARDIANSHIP

Court ordered authority to act on behalf of the child in all matters related to the child needs. Parental rights remain intact.

CONCURRENT PLANNING

An alternative, permanent placement is developed at the same time as family reunification is attempted. With this approach, the child can be moved quickly to a stable home if reunification with the birth family cannot take place.

**THIS AREA IS FOR YOUR COURT
PETITIONS AND REPORTS**