



## **COURT REPORTS**

The Task List is your guide for working a case so that we have covered all areas in order to be able to accurately provide information to the court. Each court report should include (unless not applicable) something about each of the following categories pertaining to each child and the parents:

### **Placements**

- Minimally face to face visit once a month
- Information from the placement:
  - behavior
  - medical issues
  - medications – dosages, date prescribed, any changes, reasons on med
  - school issues, performance
  - visitation issues
  - concerns, problems, incidents
  - paperwork needed from placement (obtain from CPS, facility or foster agency: incident reports, therapy reports, plans of service

### **School**

- Know the curriculum and level
- Grades for each class
- Any areas of problems; the reasons, what is in place, what needs to be in place
- Relationship of caregivers with school
- Behavior issues
- Concerns
- Positives

### **Medications**

- Names and current dosages
- Why are they on it, as of what date and why, doctor monitoring
- Any problems with the meds

### **Therapy Issues**

- What are the goals and time frame to accomplish
- How often is therapy – need more or less
- Progress
- Working on what
- Cooperation of patient, caregiver
- Any other needs that are not being addressed
- Reports

### **Service Plans/Parent Progress**

- Evaluate each task – what are the measureable outcomes, are those being worked in a way that will bring the parent to an adequate level with measureable outcomes by the final hearing
- Are there any other issues that need to be addressed
- Parent progress – if not, why not, needs to be addressed in writing and Measures put in place that illustrate it has been addressed and any other Measures put in place to allow accomplishment

### **Vistations**

- Attend and observe
- Describe interaction, deficits, areas needed for improvement, positives

### **Outstanding Issues**

- Any issues not being addressed
- Any additional needs
- According to the task list, what still needs to be done
- Have all paternity, relative and home study issues been addressed
- What is needed to move the case forward for the child's best interest
- What is needed to move the case forward for finality

### **Permanency Plan/Recommendations**

- What are the CASA recommendations
- What is the CPS recommendation
- What is the AAL recommendation
- Does CASA need help from the AAL
- What are the reasons for the recommendations
- Would a mediation be helpful – what would the mediation issues be

Some placement, parent, relative information will be in the tables on page 1 of the report. Further information regarding issues will be in the summary. Information regarding service plans will be in the tables. Further elaboration of those issues will be in the summary.

The Child/Situation section is basically a summary of the affidavit that stated why the children initially came into foster care. It does not need to be detailed. State the date and reasons why the children were removed.

Each supervisor should be notifying the volunteer of upcoming hearings as soon as they are notified and at least 4 weeks in advance of the hearing. The court report form is available to each volunteer. The volunteer should fill out the court report form as completely as possible and then e-mail it to the supervisor who will then make any necessary changes or include any additional information. The court report will then be e-mailed back to the volunteer for approval. The supervisor will be available to help the volunteer in any way necessary.

All court reports **MUST** be submitted to the Judge, DA and all attorneys 1 week before the hearing. Do not wait until the last minute to do the reports. If you think there will be additional information coming in, the report still has to be handed in according to schedule. Additional information can be orally presented at the hearing.

### **Court Hearings/Reports**

- Know your case and be prepared; speak up (Holloway example)
- Know all areas of your case – use the task list, advocacy plan and court report criteria to avoid delays, continuances, sending children home “just because”; note the number of reabuse cases
- Drug test results may not be admitted
- Meet with your supervisor one month ahead of time to determine if there are any holes in the case of issues not resolved
- Timely time sheets, summaries and good documentationaid in writing court reports
- Write as much as possible and send to your supervisor. You and the supervisor will work together to complete the final copy of the report to be handed in – 1 week ahead of the court hearing.
- Example of the court report