



Children's Commission.

Jurist in Residence Letter:

For Judges Handling Child Protective Services Cases

April 6, 2018

Deadlines Extended to Apply for Trial Skills Training and to Submit Your Response to Legal Representation Surveys

Hands-On Trial Skills Opportunity Applications Due Wednesday April 11, 2018

Designed for less experienced attorneys handling CPS cases who want to improve their litigation skills, the Children's Commission's annual Trial Skills Training will be taught in San Marcos, Texas on July 25-27th, 2018. Space is limited to 21 attorneys who represent DFPS, parents, and/or children on CPS dockets. For purposes of the training, "less experienced" means that prior to applying to the Trial Skills Training, applicants who represent children and parents will have completed two to three contested Adversary Hearings and/or two to three final termination trials as first chair, and applicants who represent DFPS will have completed at least three contested Adversary Hearings and/or three to five final termination trials as first chair.

The extended application deadline is **midnight on Wednesday, April 11, 2018**. This will be the only opportunity to attend this hands-on opportunity this year. For more information and to submit an application for the training, please visit the [Trial Skills Training webpage](#).

Judicial and Attorney Surveys Due Friday April 13, 2018

The Children's Commission is implementing a comprehensive study of the legal representation provided to parents and children in child protection cases. The goal of the study is to capture the most accurate picture possible of how legal representation of parents and children in CPS cases is currently functioning across the state and how it might be improved.

The Commission has decided to extend the survey deadline to allow for as many judicial responses as possible, in order for judges' opinions to be properly represented in our report to the Texas Legislature. While the overall level of participation in the study has exceeded our expectations, to date the judicial participation has been significantly lower than that from other professional stakeholders. If you have not yet completed the survey, please do so at the following: <http://bit.ly/CC-IRS-Professionals-Survey>. The new survey deadline is **midnight on Friday, April 13, 2018**.

In addition, please consider making attorneys on your appointment wheel aware of the attorney study by sending them the link above. We have also extended that survey to April 13, 2018 in order to reach the most complete audience of attorneys possible. Many attorneys who represent parents and children are not members of the statewide organizations that have been promoting the survey and may only receive emails from their local jurisdictions.

We also want to thank you for your efforts in making parents and relatives aware of their ability to participate in the study. The parent and relatives surveys will remain open until April 27, 2018 and flyers,

available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) to announce the surveys to parents and relatives, are available online and attached to this message.

If you should have any questions about any of the surveys, need assistance in providing copies of the flyer, or would like additional materials or ideas to help publicize the surveys in your courtroom, please email children@txcourts.gov.

Thank you for your time and for everything you do on behalf of Texas children and families in the child welfare system.



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For a complete list of Jurist in Residence Letters, please visit: <http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/jir/jir-letters.aspx>

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