



**Resource Letter:
For Judges and Attorneys Handling Child Protective Services Cases**

August 31, 2018

Announcing Live CPS-Related MCLE on Tuesday, September 11, 2018

In partnership with the State Bar of Texas, the Children's Commission will present three live webcasts on basic and advanced topics for attorneys providing legal representation in CPS cases. The total MCLE is six hours, which includes .25 hours of ethics. Please read below for detailed information about each of the topics, registration, cost, and applicable discounts and scholarships.

Webcast #1: *Navigating Concurrent Civil and Criminal CPS Cases: Tips and Traps* will focus on issues that arise when child abuse cases are concurrently being handled in civil and criminal court. This presentation gives an overview of the systems and how they interact, as well as practical tips for attorneys in their various roles.

1.0 hours of MCLE, with .25 hours of ethics credit.

Tuesday, September 11, 2018 from 9:00 am to 10:00 am.

For more information and to register, please click below:

[Registration](#)

Webcast #2: *Understanding Common Evidentiary Issues in CPS Cases: Social Media, Drug Testing, and Medical Diagnoses & Exhibits* will cover the following topics:

Part One - *Social Media* will focus on authentication of social and electronic media communications. The session will not focus on finding or legally obtaining digital communication, but rather on related case law and the practicalities of authentication and presentation under the rules of evidence.

Part Two - *Drug Testing Issues in CPS Cases* will review various drug test options, along with the evidentiary rules for all CPS attorneys concerning how to admit drug test results into evidence and how to successfully object to drug test results being admitted. Also included will be a discussion of how drug test results impact a CPS case.

Part Three - *Medical Diagnoses and Exhibits in CPS Cases* will focus on building knowledge

about relevant medical issues in CPS litigation. Common physical abuse and neglect diagnoses will be reviewed and discussed with the help of exhibits, along with the difference between evidence-based medicine and “junk” science. While expert witness qualifications will not be explicitly covered, participants will gain an understanding of the evaluating physician's role and how to understand various medical conditions, in order to more fully take advantage of medical expert testimony in CPS cases.

2.5 hours of MCLE.

Tuesday, September 11, 2018 from 10:30 am to 1:00 pm.

For more information and to register, please click below:

[Registration](#)

Webcast #3: Expanding Opportunities for Older Youth in CPS Cases: Sealing Juvenile Records, Youth Voice in Court, and Postsecondary Readiness and Success will provide the following information:

Part One - *Sealing Juvenile Records* will cover the legislative changes in Chapter 58 of the Texas Family Code regarding how juvenile records are sealed, including the new procedures and practical considerations involved in sealing juvenile records. Challenges to effectively seal juvenile records, best practices, and resources will also be presented.

Part Two - *The Importance of Youth Voice in Court* will cover state and federal law regarding youth attending court and lawyers' ethical duties to prepare for their client's attendance. Also discussed will be the perspectives from youth from around the country on their experiences attending court and how the concept of procedural justice informs and explains the impact which attending court has on youth and on judges. Additionally, the presentation will include practice tips and best practices for overcoming obstacles to youth court attendance and making youth's experiences at court positive and productive.

Part Three - *Postsecondary Readiness and Success* will cover the following topics: state and national data on postsecondary outcomes for youth who experience foster care, college and career readiness for youth in foster care, an overview of different postsecondary opportunities from certificates to four year degrees, the state tuition and fee waiver, education as a component of Preparation for Adult Living, Extended Jurisdiction, Supervised Independent Living as a placement option, and foster care liaisons at public institutions of higher education. The presentation will include practical information about how to support postsecondary readiness and success for youth in foster care.

2.5 hours of MCLE.

Tuesday, September 11, 2018 from 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm.

For more information and to register, please click below:

[Registration](#)

Please note that each webcast has a different CLE number, so viewers will need to register and pay separately for each webcast. Also, viewers who cannot watch the entire webcast at its scheduled time may still register now and view when the archived version becomes available

after the broadcast until August 31, 2019 to complete the program at their convenience.

The full cost of each webcast varies dependent on its length. Please note that the following discounts and scholarships are available upon registration:

- Judges and their staff attorneys can register for free.
- Court-appointed attorneys currently taking cases on the CPS docket can receive a discount from TexasBarCLE, bringing the cost per webcast to \$25.
- Discounts are not available through TexasBarCLE to prosecutors who represent the State or DFPS. However, any prosecutor who cannot afford to pay or whose employer cannot pay the full cost of the webcast may apply for one of two scholarships:
 1. A scholarship through the Children's Commission, where the applicant pays for the full cost of the webcast to TexasBarCLE and then is reimbursed by the Children's Commission, bringing the cost per webcast to \$25. This scholarship form is available on the Children's Commission website [Scholarship Request](#) page.
 2. A scholarship through the State Bar of Texas, where the applicant agrees to pay whatever amount she or he can afford for a webcast. This scholarship form is available on the [TexasBarCLE MCLE registration page](#).

Please note that both of the above scholarships are available until a year after their broadcast date.

If questions, please contact children@txcourts.gov.

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