

COURT INFORMATION & TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS

This checklist was made for **caregivers of children** involved in child welfare. This includes **foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, kinship caregivers, group home or residential care staff.**

- ☐ Child(ren) Name(s) and Age(s): _____
- ☐ Cause Number: _____
- ☐ Court Name & Address: _____
- ☐ Next Hearing (Date & Time): _____
- ☐ Date Child Entered Temporary Managing Conservatorship (TMC): _____
- ☐ Date Child Entered Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC): _____
- ☐ Dismissal Date: _____

Key Contacts

- ☐ Child's Attorney Ad Litem (Name & Contact): _____
- ☐ CASA / Guardian Ad Litem (if applicable): _____
- ☐ Caseworker (Name & Contact): _____
- ☐ Caseworker Supervisor (Name & Contact): _____
- ☐ Additional Caseworker (Ex: Kinship or Licensing Agency): _____
- ☐ Additional Contacts: _____

Resources

WHO THIS APPLIES TO

- ☐ Caregivers include:
- Foster parents
 - Pre-adoptive parents
 - Kinship caregivers
 - Group home or residential care staff

The Family Helpline:  tlsc.org/family  (844) 888-6565

Texas Children's Commission  texaschildrenscommission.gov

Understanding the Roles in a CPS Case  texascasa.org

Notes:

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WHAT TO EXPECT BEFORE COURT

- ☐ You should receive at least 10 days' notice of hearings from the caseworker.
- ☐ Notice may come by phone, letter, or in person.
- ☐ If you're unsure of the next hearing date, ask the caseworker.

WHAT TO DISCUSS WITH THE CASEWORKER OR CHILD'S ATTORNEY

- ☐ How the child is doing.
- ☐ The child's needs (therapy, services).
- ☐ Your needs as a caregiver (childcare, transportation, support).
- ☐ Ask about how to keep your information confidential, if that is a concern.
- ☐ The Court's expectations for the child's attendance at hearings.
- ☐ If you have a need for an interpreter to attend the hearing.

WHAT TO WEAR

- ☐ The dress code for court is usually business casual such as:
 - a collared shirt and pants for men; and
 - a blouse and pants/knee-length skirt or dress for women.
- ☐ Ask the caseworker or child's attorney if you have questions.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT COURT

- ☐ Hearings may not start right away—you may wait for your case to be called.
- ☐ Share any concerns about your safety and the need for confidentiality.
- ☐ Check in with the child's attorney when you arrive.
- ☐ Attendance is optional unless you receive a subpoena.
- ☐ You have the right to be heard and share information about the child.

VIRTUAL (ZOOM) HEARINGS

- ☐ Some courts offer virtual attendance.
- ☐ Ask for a Zoom link from the caseworker or the child's attorney.
- ☐ Tips for Zoom:
 - Join from a quiet, private place. Be aware of children listening and what they may overhear.
 - Keep your camera on.
 - Mute when not speaking.
 - You may label yourself on Zoom as "foster parent" or "caregiver."
 - Let the court know if the child is present.

IF YOU ARE ASKED TO SPEAK

- ☐ You may be sworn in before speaking.
- ☐ Answer only the questions asked.
- ☐ Share what you have personally seen or experienced.
- ☐ Pause if there is an objection and follow the judge's instructions.
 - "Sustained" means that the judge agrees with the objection.
 - "Overruled" means the judge does not agree with the objection.