

Checklist for Disposition or Review Hearings

Disposition Preparation

- _____ Received a copy of the Disposition Report.
- _____ Clarified any confusing or problematic issues in the Report (have received updated information on the case and had the opportunity to meet with your client and the CPS/DFS Caseworker).
- _____ Your client will/ will not be present at the hearing.
- _____ Your client will/will not testify.
- _____ You know your client's feelings regarding this proceeding and have prepared him for the proceedings or to testify.
- _____ You are prepared to advocate for your client's position concerning all issues detailed below under "key issues that should be addressed at disposition or review"
- _____ You are aware of placement alternatives that have been explored, the pros and cons of each.
- _____ You have knowledge of CPS/DFS position regarding issues for Disposition or Review.
- _____ You have enough knowledge of parent(s)' position regarding issues for disposition or review to allow for adequate preparation for the hearing.
- _____ You have subpoenaed necessary witnesses or documents for hearing, or have arranged for specific persons and/or documents to be available for the hearing.
- _____ You have done any necessary preparation of witnesses or documents for the hearing.

Disposition or Review Hearing

Persons who should be present:

Judge/Hearing Master _____

Parent(s) _____

Parent(s) Atty(s) _____

CPS/DFS Caseworker(s) _____

CASA Volunteer _____

DA/AG _____

Relatives with legal standing, other
custodial adults _____

Law Enforcement _____

Persons whose presence may be needed:

Child(ren) _____

Extended Family Members _____

Counselor/Therapist _____

Experts _____

Foster Parents _____

Probation or Parole Officer _____

Other Service Providers _____

Anyone else with knowledge about the
family's situation _____

Key issues that should be addressed at Disposition or Review:

- _____ Where your client should be placed (for Review: how is placement going?).
- _____ What your client's needs are and what services should be offered to him.
- _____ What the parents' needs are, what changes they must make, and the services that should be offered to them. (For Review, the key question is also what have they done so far to improve their circumstances, and where do they go from here?)
- _____ What orders need to be entered by the Court?
- _____ What is the timetable for the accomplishment of goals?
- _____ Visitation between parents and your client.
- _____ Visitation between siblings (if they are not removed and placed together).
- _____ Whether recommended placement will cause your client to change schools, whether that is a problem and whether there is any way to avoid such a change.
- _____ Whether return to his parents or placement with his parents should be conditioned on certain people having no contact with his parents and/or your client.
- _____ Whether DFS has made reasonable efforts to prevent or eliminate the need for placement outside the home. What has the response been to such efforts?
- _____ Whether there has been an exhaustive effort to identify family and friends as potential placement alternatives.
- _____ Whether the case should be moving toward reunification or termination.
- _____ When the case should be reviewed.