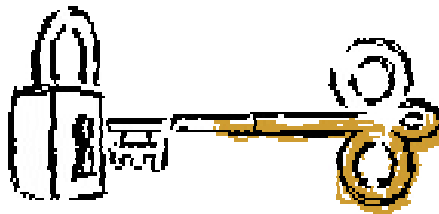


# FOUR KEYS for CASA Programs:

Unlocking doors to permanent homes  
for abused and neglected children



**The Washington State Association of CASA/GAL Programs**  
603 Stewart Street, Suite 206 Seattle, WA 98101  
(206) 667-9716 [www.washingtonstatecasa.org](http://www.washingtonstatecasa.org)

---

The Stuart Foundation provided grants to the Washington State Association of CASA/GAL Programs for the Achieving Permanence Project. Washington State CASA administered the project and produced this manual with the assistance of the local CASA/GAL programs in Benton/Franklin, Chelan/Douglas, Cowlitz, Island, Okanogan, Pierce, Snohomish, Walla Walla, and Yakima counties.

# FOUR KEYS

## for CASA Programs:

### Unlocking doors to permanent homes for abused and neglected children

#### INTRODUCTION

A PERMANENT HOME... MAKING IT HAPPEN!	page	5
WHO IS THIS MANUAL FOR? How to use it.		6

#### PART 1 – COMMUNITY COLLABORATION AND COMMITMENT

SETTING THE STAGE:	7
Permanence – What is it?	
Permanence – Why it is needed	
ORGANIZING THE PLAYERS:	10
Preparing the program	
Preparing the community	
<b>Take Action!</b> 1, 2, 3	13-18

#### PART 2 - TRAINING VOLUNTEERS TO ADVOCATE FOR LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN

VOLUNTEERS MUST ...BE CONSISTENT!	19
VOLUNTEERS MUST ...BE READY!	
Diligent Search	
Reasonable Efforts	
Concurrent Planning	
Adoption: Open / Closed	
<b>Take Action!</b> 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	27-38

#### PART 3 – SUPERVISING VOLUNTEERS AND NURTURING THE PROCESS

ASSIGNING VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE COMMITTED TO PERMANENCE	39
NETWORKING WITH OTHERS COMMITTED TO PERMANENCE	
MONITORING THE PROCESS	40
KEEPING UP WITH THE DEMAND – PUBLICITY FOR RECRUITMENT	42
EVALUATION	43
<b>Take Action!</b> 10	45

#### PART 4 – RESOURCES: TOOLS TO USE ALONG THE WAY

1. THE DEPENDENCY PROCESS – an annotated timeline:	49-52
2. PERMANENCY YELLOW PAGES	53-56
3. THE LAW: ASFA, RCW / WACs and Superior Court Rules	57-76
4. USEFUL FORMS AND SAMPLES to keep the information flowing	77



# INTRODUCTION

## A PERMANENT HOME... MAKING IT HAPPEN!

Achieving Permanence for legally free children is a goal that involves many agencies and concerned individuals in Washington State. Permanency Summits, which began to address this goal in 1998, include a diverse and multidisciplinary group of professionals and community activists who envision permanent homes for children in foster care. CASA/GAL program staff and volunteers are among those who created and continue that vision of a safe and permanent home for every child.

In April of 1998 the Stuart Foundation funded a 3-year Achieving Permanence Project through the Washington State Association of CASA/GAL Programs. The purpose of the project was to recruit, train, and supervise CASA/GAL volunteers as advocates for legally free children. The initial participants in the project were the Benton/Franklin County CASA/GAL Program, Chelan/Douglas Counties CASA, Cowlitz County CASA, Snohomish County Juvenile Court CASA/VGAL Program, Walla Walla CASA Association, and Yakima County GAL Program. At the end of the first year Pierce County Juvenile Court CASA/GAL Program replaced the Yakima County program. Throughout this project many ideas have been tried and most have been successful in achieving the goal of timely permanence for legally free children. Increasing collaboration and communication around the best interests of each child have proven to be the key to success.

The Stuart Foundation has provided continuing support for Washington State CASA to make sure the work of achieving permanence for legally free children is included in the training given to all CASA/GAL volunteers in the state. A training module on issues specific to Achieving Permanence will supplement information included in the National CASA Training Curriculum as customized for Washington State in 2001. This document outlines the best practices developed during this project.

Some of these best practices may already be a part of your CASA program policies and procedures. That's wonderful! If programs have other and more "ways that work" to achieve permanence for legally free children, please share them with us! Washington State CASA will make sure that all programs in the State have the opportunity to learn about any and all best practices for Achieving Permanence.

We appreciate your feedback and comments!

The Washington State Association of CASA/GAL Programs  
603 Stewart Street, Suite 206 Seattle, WA 98101  
Phone: (206) 667-9716 Fax: (206) 667-9753 email: [info@washingtonstatecasa.org](mailto:info@washingtonstatecasa.org)  
Website: [www.washingtonstatecasa.org](http://www.washingtonstatecasa.org)

## WHO IS THIS MANUAL FOR?

This manual is designed primarily for **CASA/GAL program managers** and designated staff focusing specifically on the needs of children who are legally free for adoption. One of the important findings in the Achieving Permanence project is that planning for permanence begins as soon as a CASA/GAL volunteer is assigned to a case. Whether permanence is achieved by reunification with a parent or relative, through guardianship, or adoption there are steps a CASA/GAL volunteer can take from the beginning that will assist in achieving permanence in a timely way.

Training and supervision of volunteers is essential through the entire process – from the filing of dependency to permanence. This manual includes action steps, checklists and sample forms that may be copied and adapted as necessary for training, supervision and use by volunteers. A training module for on-going, in-service training based on the information in this manual will focus on concurrent planning and making timely recommendations for a permanent plan as required in the Superior Court Rules, 3(b).

### How to use it:

There are several options depending on your program's experience with Achieving Permanence.

1. *Read it beginning to end!* Recommended for everyone, especially if Achieving Permanence is a new concept for you. You are invited to make it your own. There are spaces for notes and forms are meant to be adapted to local program needs.
2. *Go to the information you need - now!* The table of contents and index of Useful Forms at the end of the manual should help you find a specific topic.
3. *Use the reference features* - These are resources and tools to use along the way that will help you locate additional information. They include sample forms that are being used in some CASA/GAL programs, and a timeline of the dependency process for tracking progress in a case.

The four parts of this manual provide four keys for CASA/GAL programs to use in unlocking doors to permanence for children.

**COMMUNITY COLLABORATION AND COMMITMENT** 

**TRAINING VOLUNTEERS TO ADVOCATE FOR LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN** 

**SUPERVISING VOLUNTEERS AND NURTURING THE PROCESS** 

**RESOURCES - TOOLS TO USE ALONG THE WAY** 

**Take  
Action!**

At the end of each part you will find action steps and check lists to use as you, your staff and volunteers work with children, families, and the community to make sure every child has a safe and permanent home.



# PART 1

## COMMUNITY COLLABORATION AND COMMITMENT

The involvement and commitment of members of the community are crucial to finding permanent homes for children in out of home care – especially for children who are legally free for adoption. Collaboration is key!

### SETTING THE STAGE:

#### Permanence – What is it?

“A primary goal of the CASA/GAL volunteer”, according to the National CASA Training Curriculum, “is to advocate for a safe, permanent home as soon as possible, honoring the child’s sense of time. While there is never a guarantee of permanence, having such intentions can ensure that you are working toward a plan that supports permanence. At a very basic level, permanence is most probable when the *legal* parent is also the *emotional* parent as well as the *parenting figure present in the child’s life*.”

When a child has been placed in out-of-home care, there are really only two “permanent” resolutions to the case:

1. **Return to a parent, or**
2. **Adoption by a relative or non-relative.**

A third option, while not truly “permanent,” is sometimes considered an appropriate option when the other two are not available to a child. It is the “next best thing”:

3. **Placement and custody or guardianship with relatives.**

*(Please note: “Some Indian people have a strong bias against adoption and certain tribes do not approve of adoption. This creates a special situation when considering the permanent options for an Indian child. In some cases, placement with an Indian custodian can truly be considered permanent.”)*<sup>1</sup> Please see further information in Part 2 under Diligent Search and Take Action! 5.

In 1997, Congress passed the **Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)** -Public Law 105-89, which embodies three key principles:

- The safety of children is the paramount concern;
- Foster care is a temporary setting and not a place for children to grow up; and
- Permanency planning should begin as soon as the child enters foster care.

---

<sup>1</sup> National CASA Curriculum, 2001 - Chapter 6.  
Achieving Permanence Project – Washington State CASA – March 2002  
[www.washingtonstatecasa.org](http://www.washingtonstatecasa.org)

ASFA provides specific timelines. A permanency hearing must be held within twelve months of placement, with court reviews every six months. A plan for permanency must be in place after twelve months.<sup>2</sup>

For certain foster children, ASFA provides special considerations. A petition to terminate parental rights must be filed, and a concurrent plan developed to identify, recruit, process and approve a qualified foster family for the following groups of children.

1. The child has been in foster care for 15 of the most recent 22 months, **or**
2. The court determines an infant has been abandoned [abandonment is defined for Washington State in RCW 13.34.030; see also RCW 13.34.180(2)], **or**
3. The court has determined that the parent has assaulted the child with serious bodily injury resulting, or killed or assaulted another of their children, resulting in serious bodily injury.

The **purpose of a permanency hearing** is to determine plans for:

1. Reunification,
2. Termination of Parental Rights,
3. Referral for legal guardianship, or
4. Placement in another planned permanent living arrangement.

**EXCEPTIONS** - In the above cases, there are three exceptions to the requirements for termination of parental rights outlined in ASFA:

1. at the option of the state, if the child is being cared for by a relative; **or**
2. If a state agency has documented in a case plan, which must be available for court review, a compelling reason for determining that filing such a petition would not be in the best interests of the child; **or**
3. In cases where reasonable efforts to reunify the family have been required, if the state has not provided the child's family (consistent with the time period in the case plan) with the services it deems necessary for the safe return of the child.

ASFA requires consideration of a child's safety in provisions dealing with child welfare services, case plans, and case review procedures. Termination of parental rights may start according to earlier timetables when it is determined to be in the child's best interests.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> National CASA Training Curriculum customized for Washington State – Chapter 2

<sup>3</sup> Legislative Update, The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, Child Law Practice, Vol.16, No. 11, by Miriam Rollin, JD.

## **Permanence – Why it is needed**

Children need safe, permanent homes. The following are several examples of cases where CASA volunteers have made a difference in a child's journey to permanence.

When a CASA program was first assigned the case of an 8-year-old girl and her 6-year-old brother, their mother was a drug user and their stepfather had abused them. They were placed with their maternal grandmother and step-grandfather. The children were thriving with the grandparents, but as their mother and stepfather completed the recommended services, the department re-unified the family. The CASA volunteer did not recommend the re-unification, because she felt the parents had not benefited from services. Soon after, the mother returned to drugs and the stepfather assaulted the boy. The CASA volunteer recommended that the children return to the grandparents. The CASA volunteer helped the grandparents work through their frustrations with their daughter and her drug use. At first, they wanted their daughter's treatment to succeed so badly that they did not want to do anything toward adopting the children. They were also worried that, if they adopted them, they would have to change the children's last name. The CASA volunteer helped the grandparents contact a lawyer, who told them that a name change would not be necessary. The CASA volunteer also helped them fill out the adoption support papers and encouraged them through the adoption classes. The children were adopted 2½ years after their first placement. The children are thriving with their grandparents and continue to have supervised contact with their mother as long as she is drug free.

A teenage boy had been severely abused by his mother and her boyfriends. He had been in the "system" for over 4 years with over 15 placements. The CASA volunteer faithfully visited him every month, and watched as the most recent foster mother worked with him. The CASA volunteer realized that a permanent placement with this family was in the boy's best interest and made that recommendation. It worked. The foster family became his permanent family.

These children and others who have achieved permanence now have a place to call "home" - a place where they are accepted, loved, and supported. When they are grown, it will be a place to bring their own families for holidays. Investing in permanent homes for children is an investment in the future of the whole community.

### **See *RESOURCES*:**

THE LAW: ASFA

THE LAW: RCW / WAC

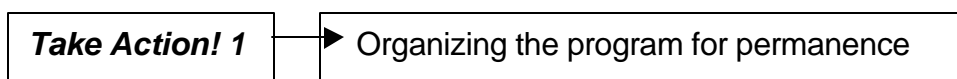
## ORGANIZING THE PLAYERS

### Preparing the program

The focus for CASA volunteers from the beginning of a case is on finding out what would be in a particular child's best interests. Those best interests usually include a safe place for the child to be, whether the goal is re-unification or another type of permanent placement. As soon as a child is heading toward becoming legally free or is legally free, there is a tendency for attention and manpower to be redirected toward a more active case in crisis. There are always new cases to keep volunteers busy. When the child is safe in placement, follow-through on a permanent outcome can slow down, or even stop completely.

Beginning to concentrate the focus of a program on achieving permanence needs dedicated staff with capacity for extra outreach, recruitment, case management and supervision. If your program typically does not have volunteers continue on a case past termination of parental rights (TPR), there will need to be some training time for program staff and volunteers on the information necessary for a TPR hearing and the post – TPR process. As volunteers stay with cases past TPR, there will need to be more volunteers recruited to fill the program's needs for volunteers to take new cases. Understanding that these adjustments are normal at the beginning of a new project makes it possible to shift the focus to the long-term benefits of achieving permanence for children.

As legally free children (LFC) achieve permanence, the volunteers who have experienced the post-TPR process typically feel energized, successful and ready to take on a new case. Because they now know the information necessary for achieving permanence, transitions can be made more smoothly and delays kept to a minimum.



**See RESOURCES:** (These materials are in alphabetical order as listed below under USEFUL FORMS)

APPOINTMENT LETTER FOR VOLUNTEER

JOB DESCRIPTION: OFFICE ASSISTANT FOR LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN

JOB DESCRIPTION: PROJECT COORDINATOR FOR LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN

JOB DESCRIPTION: VOLUNTEER POST-TPR SPECIALIST

TEN STEPS TO CONCURRENT PLANNING

VOLUNTEER COURT RESUME

VOLUNTEER TRAINING STATEMENT

## Preparing the community

Collaboration with others in the community who are also concerned about children in out-of-home care can be a deciding factor in the success of a program in achieving permanence. It is often tempting to play the blame game, or say that's not my job, and lose sight of a shared concern for the best interests of a child. With collaboration, the focus shifts to possible child-centered solutions to problems that seemed insurmountable if addressed alone.

It takes personal contacts to reach others in the community who are concerned with children, especially children in out-of-home care. All of those personal connections can lead to collaboration. Let the people you contact know that your concern extends to all children who are in need of a permanent home.

Set up meetings with Court Commissioner and community professionals from agencies and programs directly related to children in out of home care, especially those who are legally free. These contacts might include: Council for Children, Crisis Nursery, Foster parent training programs, Lutheran Social Services, DSHS, AG's office, Attorney for CASA/GAL program, Catholic Family Services, Service Alternative, School personnel, CASA/GAL volunteers.

Invite representatives from all agencies to brainstorm ways to deal with any identified roadblocks to permanence. Find out if they are experiencing other roadblocks. Clear up misunderstandings.

Choose an advisory committee from the above areas directly related to LFC and CASA program staff. They're also invested in the community's children, so enlist each participant's commitment to the project. Form an "Investment Team"!

Investment Teams expedite permanence by:

- ✓ Removing resistant barriers
- ✓ Improving communication
- ✓ Making connections with others
- ✓ Providing resources and expertise to  
CASA program staff

Initial Investment Team meetings will outline goals and the activities needed to begin helping accomplishing them.

The Benton/Franklin CASA/GAL Program's Investment Team facilitated a two-day Workshop: **Common Grounds and Boundaries** on permanency planning for children who are legally ready for adoption.

The focus of this training workshop was on understanding the dependency process and specifically what "reasonable efforts" have been provided to the families to determine a permanency plan for the child.

The workshop was intended for all who are a part of this process: CASA/Volunteer Guardians ad Litem, caseworkers, social service providers, foster parents and all those who work with the children.

**Take Action! 2**

▶ STEP BY STEP – FORMING AN INVESTMENT TEAM

**Take Action! 3**

▶ *WHERE ARE OUR ROADBLOCKS?*

A brainstorming worksheet for a multi-agency meeting.

**See RESOURCES:** (These materials are in alphabetical order as listed below under USEFUL FORMS)

AWARENESS WORKSHOP SAMPLE AGENDA – COMMON GROUND  
WHERE CAN I GO FOR HELP?

# ***Take Action! 1***

## **Organizing the program for permanence**

\_\_\_ Review all files of legally free children to determine

- 1. Where they are in the process, and
- 2. Identify roadblocks to permanence.

\_\_\_ Assign a person to supervise and provide support for volunteers working with legally free children.

\_\_\_ Include issues related to permanence in basic and ongoing CASA training. (See part 2 for information about training.) The National CASA Volunteer Training Curriculum as customized for Washington State includes introductory information on Permanence.

\_\_\_ Contact Washington State CASA for information on an Achieving Permanence training module being developed in 2002 for on-going training.

\_\_\_ Form an investment team to begin building trust and collaboration with other agencies working with legally free children (see Step by Step – *Take Action! 2.*)

NOTES:

## **Take Action! 2**

### **Step by Step – Forming an investment team**

\_\_ Brainstorm with your staff and/or Board of Directors to make a list of the following people in your community who work with legally free children, or children in foster care. This list of agencies, organizations, and individuals will be your contact list for providing information on legally free children and what your program is doing to achieve permanence.

Suggestions: Judge, Juvenile Court Administrator  
Domestic Violence Program  
DCFS supervisor  
DCFS worker  
Child Abuse Council  
Attorney  
Children’s Home Society representative  
Therapeutic Foster Care Home coordinator

\_\_ Summarize the situation for legally free children in your area (how many, how many months in out of home care, etc.), and present your findings to individuals from local agencies and court programs.

\_\_ Answer questions about CASA and exchange ideas about how to make sure legally free children are kept on track to permanence. The “Where are our roadblocks?” exercise (*Take Action! 3*) is useful in exploring solutions with others.

\_\_ Make sure everyone has something to report back on at the next meeting.

\_\_ Ask who else should be “at the table”.

\_\_ Set up a next meeting – time, date, and place - to track the progress of legally free children in the system

\_\_ Add anyone else who “should be at the table” to your contact list.

\_\_ Send an email reminder a few days before the meeting and attach an agenda.

NOTES:

## Take Action! 3

*A beginning to plan exercise....*

### Where are our Roadblocks to Permanence for legally free children? How can we break through and get past those roadblocks?

Identify the roadblocks as specifically as possible and then fill out one of the boxes to the right →	<u>Who</u> can do something right now and <u>what</u> can they do? →	Who needs to get together – collaborate to identify a solution?	Which systems are involved? Who might you collaborate with to begin the process.
<b>ROADBLOCK</b>	<b>Can do something about the roadblock NOW!</b>	<b>Requires local COLLABORATION</b>	<b>Requires large SYSTEMS CHANGE</b>

*Share your lists with others concerned about achieving permanence for children in out-of-home care. Begin the collaborations!*

NOTES:



## **PART 2**

# **TRAINING VOLUNTEERS TO ADVOCATE FOR LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN**

### **VOLUNTEERS MUST... BE CONSISTENT!**

When this project began, we all thought that special volunteers would be trained to work specifically with legally free children. What we found is that it works best for the child to keep the CASA volunteer on the case from the beginning of the dependency until permanence is achieved!

As a child progresses through the dependency system, the adults around them change. The child's care shifts from parents to foster parents, or other relatives. Social workers change from a Child Protective Services worker, to a Child Welfare Services worker, to an Adoption Unit worker. When the CASA volunteer stays on the case from the beginning and through all the other changes, that volunteer will have the most complete and current information about the child, that child's specific needs, and best interests.

As programs begin to address a backlog of cases and legally free children who have no CASA/GAL volunteer assigned to them, there may be volunteers who become post-TPR specialists. The Snohomish VGAL program realized that volunteers who were having difficulty dealing with the abuse and neglect issues early in the dependency process found a niche as post-TPR specialists. Previously, the program might have lost those volunteers, but they are now working well with legally free children.

Volunteers say when they stay on a case - through termination of parental rights - until the child is placed in a permanent home, the feeling of success is there for everyone!

### **VOLUNTEERS MUST... BE READY!**

A beginning awareness of a child's need for permanence is provided in the National CASA Volunteer Training Curriculum 2001 – Chapter 6, Unit 5 and resource materials for Chapter 6: Permanent Resolutions; Placement with Relative or Kin; Long Term Foster Care, An Impermanent Solution; and Principles of Permanence.

Prior to the shelter care hearing a Child Protective Services social worker will have been doing their preliminary investigation into the allegations of abuse or neglect. During this time, the CPS worker is assessing the situation, looking for signs of safety in the home, making sure the child is in a safe place, and beginning to develop a plan for providing assistance to the family.

In some counties, a court order is entered appointing the CASA/GAL program staff as a temporary guardian ad litem for the child at the shelter care hearing. Some programs have found it useful to have a CASA program staff person at the shelter care hearing and the judge requests CASA involvement at that time. The program then assigns the case to a volunteer at the first opportunity and the volunteer can quickly begin working on the case.

It is important to remember that any party, including the CASA guardian ad litem, may request a review hearing whenever it is determined that further intervention by the court is necessary.

Checklists of tasks a volunteer can do regarding each of the topics listed below are included at the end of the chapter in the “Take Action!” pages.

### **Diligent Search**

CASA /GAL volunteer reports provided during the initial phases of the dependency process will be very important at all later hearings. A child’s family tree may yield information crucial for the child’s health care or identify other relatives for possible support or even placement. It is essential that the CASA/GAL volunteer thoroughly investigate relationships in the family prior to the fact-finding hearing.

A diligent search for relatives must include questions regarding a child’s ethnicity including native heritage. Once it has been determined that a child has Indian or native ancestry, the tribes must be notified of the child’s placement and provisions required by the **Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)** will apply. Further information regarding ICWA’s implementation in Washington State may be found in the Department of Children and Family Services Indian Child Welfare Manual, issued in 1991. A new ICW manual for Washington State has been developed and is currently being reviewed by Washington tribes. Washington State CASA will keep programs up to date on any new information regarding this manual.

If a CASA/GAL volunteer discovers that the child was born outside the United States, a **Special Immigration Juvenile Status (SIJS)** application may be considered.

A child born outside the United States to parents who are neither citizens nor legal permanent residents, is not legally allowed to be in the United States. This means that s/he is subject to deportation back to their home country, is not allowed to legally work in the United States, and may not be eligible for certain public services. Legal Permanent Residence allows the child to become a “legal alien” by holding a “green card”. If the child wishes, s/he can later apply to become a US citizen. SIJS is a way that dependent children born outside the US may be able to become lawful permanent residents (8 USC (a)(27)(j) and 8CFR 204.11).

#### **Questions to ask in every case:**

1. Is the child of Indian or native ancestry?
2. Whether the child is or has been the ward of any Tribal Court

Once it is known that a child is of Indian ancestry, steps must be taken immediately to identify the child’s tribe.

(See: *Take Action! 5*)

The following guidelines for SIJS were researched by the Chelan/Douglas CASA Program.

The program manager should consider a policy regarding documentation of the location of a child's birth in each case, including how early in the proceedings the issue of the child's the residency status is entered into the record. The risk of losing eligibility for services must be weighed against the necessity of having this information as part of a permanency plan for the child.

There are four criteria that need to be met before a child can apply for SIJS:

1. The child must be dependent on the juvenile court.
2. The child must be "deemed eligible for long-term foster care."
3. The court must rule that it is not in the child's best interest to be returned to his/her country.
4. The court must declare that all of these findings and orders are due to abuse, neglect or abandonment. (NOT for immigration purposes.)

A dependent child is deemed to be eligible for long-term foster care when reunification is no longer considered a viable option. The child can be in a guardianship or adoption situation. Physical placement in a foster care setting is not necessary in order to qualify.

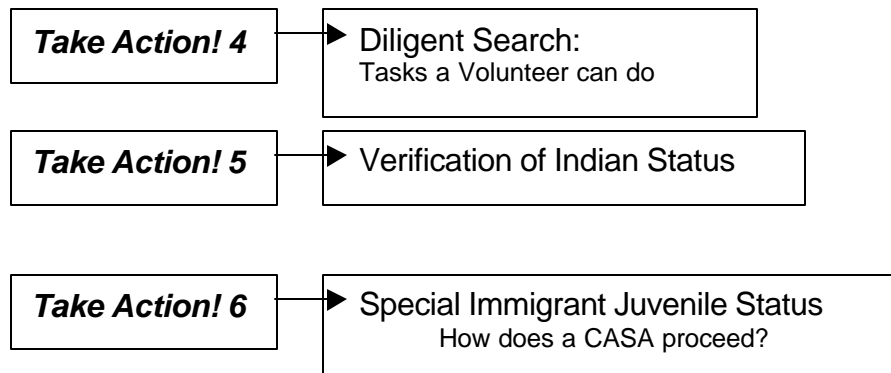
NOTE: If a child is approaching 18 or is in fact over 18, it is important that the dependency remain active. The Immigration service interview may not take place for a year after the application is made. The child remains eligible for SIJS only as long s/he is dependent on the court, is under 21, continues to remain eligible for long-term foster care and is unmarried.

In addition to the above requirements, the child must meet general eligibility requirements. Any persons applying for lawful residence status may be turned down and subject to deportation if they have a record of involvement with drugs, prostitution or other crimes, or if they are HIV positive.

It is important that an immigration attorney be contacted if the child has a criminal or drug history, has been previously deported, committed fraud to enter the United States, helped others to illegally enter the US, has been a prostitute or pimp or is currently a threat to himself or others. HIV testing will be done as part of the INS physical. This test is NOT confidential. If there is a possibility that the child will test positive for HIV, it is better to have an anonymous test done first. This will allow the child to receive counseling and seek legal advice. Evidence of "moral turpitude", or mental illness that poses a risk to self or others, can be grounds for denying an application.

By filing an application for SJIS the child is in effect turning him/her self in to the INS. If the application is denied, the child faces the risk of deportation. DO NOT apply for SIJS if there is a reason to believe the child may not be approved. Contact an

immigration attorney if the child may be HIV positive, have a history of drug use, extensive immigration violations or a criminal history. NOTE: If the child is already in a deportation proceeding there is no reason not to apply for SIJS if they have a chance of qualifying. This action may halt the deportation proceedings. Again, it is best to contact an immigration attorney.



### Reasonable Efforts

The volunteer must be aware of the commitment of the parents to a program of change throughout the course of the dependency. The parent's demonstration of that commitment must also be well documented.

The Adoptions and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA) requires that states make reasonable efforts (a) prior to the placement of a child in foster care to prevent or eliminate the need for removal from his or her home; and (b) to make it possible for him or her to return home from foster care. Following the guidelines established by ASFA, the Washington Administrative Code (specifically WAC 388-25-0450) outlines circumstances when a relative may not be considered as a placement option for a child. (See resource section for details.)

ASFA also states that the paramount concern governing an agency's actions must be the health and welfare of the child. In certain extreme circumstances where a child's health and welfare has been severely compromised, reasonable efforts are not required.

#### Reasonable efforts are NOT required if:

- 1) The parent has subjected a child to an aggravated circumstance – abandonment, torture, chronic or sexual abuse;
- 2) The parent has been convicted of murder or manslaughter or having aided, attempted, or conspired to kill his or her child, or been convicted of felony assault resulting in serious bodily injury to one of his or her children; or

The Revised Code of Washington (**RCW**) and Washington Administrative Code (**WAC**) contains laws relating specifically to ASFA requirements. (See specific references to RCW and WAC included in RESOURCES.)

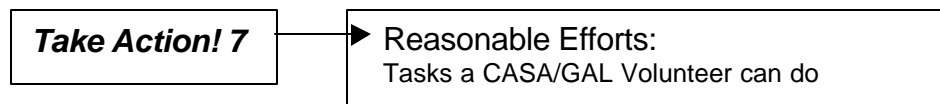
3) The parents rights to a sibling were involuntarily terminated.

If the court determines that no reasonable efforts need to be made, then a hearing to determine the permanent plan for the child must be held within 30 days and **efforts to place the child in a permanent home must begin immediately.**

The Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 388-27-0145 defines “a reasonable effort to place a child for adoption without adoption support” to include:

1. A child registered for three months with the Washington Adoption Resource exchange (WARE) without finding an adoptive family; or
2. A child for whom a documented, formal agency search was conducted for three months, without finding a family who would adopt the child without adoption support services; or
3. A child for whom the placing agency’s selected prospective adoptive family is unable to adopt the child without assistance from the adoption support program.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.13.031. 01-08-045, WAC 388-27-0145, filed 3/30/01, effective 4/30/01]



### Concurrent Planning

The Adoptions and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA) also states that while DCFS social workers are making reasonable efforts to reunite families at the same time, they must make a plan for what will happen if the family cannot be reunited and parental rights are terminated. The Washington State Superior Court Rules, adopted Nov. 27, 2001, outline the roles and responsibilities of a CASA /volunteer guardian ad litem to explore concurrent planning.

If the process is proceeding toward termination of parental rights (TPR), the CASA volunteer can provide critical assistance in many ways to make sure everything is in order and to help smooth the way to a permanent home. Concurrent planning is the primary focus of the training module being developed by Washington State CASA for use by programs in their ongoing in-service training of all volunteers.

**Superior Court Rule 3 (b)** specifically says that in addition to other roles and responsibilities specified in RCW 13.34.105, the CASA/GAL volunteer in Title 13 juvenile court proceedings “**shall explore concurrent planning** and make a timely recommendation to the court for a permanent plan for the child.”

In some programs, a primary roadblock to timely finalization of adoptions is poor communication among parties to the case, DCFS, and the adopting family. The family’s paperwork is not complete because of trust issues, lack of clarity about deadlines, as

well as lack of pressure, support, and encouragement to complete it ASAP. CASA volunteers can serve as a communication link between DCFS, and both the birth and adopting families.

IF parental rights are terminated, ALL the information needed for adoption should already be in the file and ready to go.

### **Adoption: Open / Closed**

The following information about open and closed adoption is included in the Snohomish program's training for volunteers working with legally free children.

Open adoption, also known as cooperative adoption, is becoming more and more common. The reasons for open adoption are many and complex. Children placed in foster care may be old enough to have a relationship with their birth family and memories of their lives prior to placement. Foster parents in a concurrent planning program have also usually met the birth family many times during visits. Unlike traditional adoptions where infants are placed at birth voluntarily, there is an ongoing relationship established during the foster care process. There is much to be gained and little to be lost by nurturing this connection.

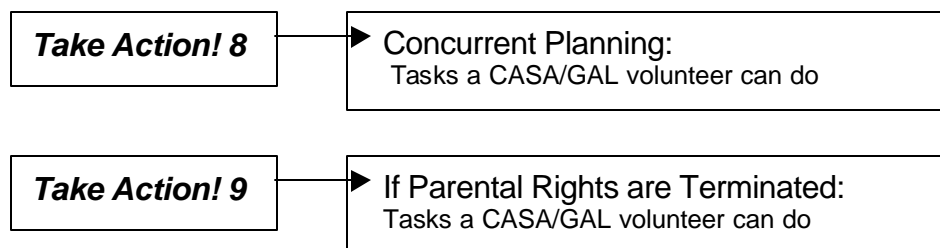
Relinquishment (voluntary termination of parental rights) followed by open adoption is a very common outcome for children involved in concurrent planning foster care programs. Birth parents frequently decide to relinquish after realizing that they are unable to make the substantial changes that the court requires of them. When it looks unlikely that the birth parents will be able to regain custody of their child, these parents often wish to relinquish rather than face a painful court battle. This can happen when the birth parents have established a trusting relationship with the foster parents during the visitation process.

The birth parents and their attorneys will often negotiate at this point for an open adoption. Social workers must be thoroughly familiar with the type of contact a particular foster family can handle, and the extent of contact that would be beneficial for the child in questions. Both of these factors will vary from case to case.

### **WHEN TO NOT DO AN OPEN ADOPTION**

- from Snohomish County VGAL Program

- If the birth parents are a threat to either the adoptive parents or the child;
- If the child was so severely abused physically or sexually by birth parents that future contact would be traumatic;
- If the birth parents are so angry following a final court decision that they are unable to cooperate with the agency and adoptive parents;
- If the relationship between the birth parents and the adoptive parents is so hostile that the child would be adversely affected.
- If the birth parents are not supportive of the child's placement, sabotage the placement, or do not emotionally give the child permission to attach to another family.



**See RESOURCES:** (These materials are in alphabetical order as listed below under USEFUL FORMS)

- ADDRESS UPDATE - LETTER TO POSTMASTER
- ADOPTION CHECKLIST
- ADOPTION PROGRESS CHECKLIST
- ADOPTION SUPPORT APPLICATION CHECKLIST
- CASE TRACKING FORM FOR PROGRAM
- CASE TRACKING WORKSHEET FOR VOLUNTEER
- INITIAL RELATIVE SCREENING FORM
- INITIAL RELATIVE CONTACT FORM
- LIFE BOOKS
- MEDICAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND REPORT
- OPEN OR CLOSED ADOPTION? QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
- PRE-TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS (TPR) CHECKLIST
- POST-TPR CHECKLIST
- REFERENCE FOR POSSIBLE CHILD PLACEMENT
- RELATIVE SCREENING RECORD FORM
- SPECIAL IMMIGRANT JUVENILE STATUS APPLICATION INFORMATION
- SPECIAL IMMIGRANT JUVENILE STATUS COURT RECORD FORM
- TEN STEPS TO CONCURRENT PLANNING (from the social worker's point of view)

NOTES:

## **Take Action! 4**

### **Diligent Search - Tasks a CASA/GAL volunteer can do:**

page 1 of 2

- ❑ Discuss the case, needs, and time frame regarding Diligent Search with CASA supervisor and social services caseworker.
- ❑ Review the CPS/DCFS files thoroughly, and enter all family information on the Diligent Search Family Tree Form (which should be in the DCFS or CPS file). Provide a copy of any information you have that isn't on the form. **Diligent Search is a collaborative effort!**
- ❑ Take notes regarding the caseworker's assessment and any other assessments of family members and relationships. Note also:
  - Any message of contact phone numbers, even if no name for the phone number is given (the name may turn up later);
  - Names, addresses, phone numbers of friends and neighbors, often found in referral reports as referents;
  - Names, addresses, phone numbers of child care providers, school personnel, church members, anyone who may have knowledge about the extended family;
  - Any variations of spellings, aliases or nicknames. Be aware that in some cultures, family or surnames may be presented in different orders and there may be more than one surname. Either or both may be used at various times. In Hispanic families, the first of the two surnames will be the person's paternal name, and the second will be his or her maternal name. If the person must list only one surname, it will most likely be the paternal name, but not always. This system does give you the advantage of knowing the names of maternal/paternal grandparents names!
- ❑ Work with the CPS social worker as needed. The social worker's phone number is located on the last page of the dependency petition. If the social worker is not available within two days of CASA /GAL volunteer assignment to the case, the volunteer should contact the social worker's supervisor and make arrangements to view the social worker's file.
- ❑ Obtain family history from birth parents for the child in the future.
- ❑ Obtain medical history from birth parents. Talk with the social worker about the Child's Medical and Family Background Information Form (DSHS 13-041(X) (Rev.2/1998) when first receiving case. A list of information on this form is included in RESOURCES. Obtain as much medical history from birth parents as possible. This will aid in understanding of child's special needs and if necessary, shorten the timeline in filing for termination.

HAVING A RECORD OF FAMILY AND MEDICAL BACKGROUND IS ALWAYS IN A CHILD'S BEST INTEREST!

## Diligent Search - Tasks a CASA/GAL volunteer can do:

page 2 of 2

- ❑ Visit the child. Ask what information s/he may have about the family tree. Don't forget that "family" in this instance includes close family friends who may be a resource, whether for placement or for further family information.
- ❑ Assist birth parents in filling out the "Relative Search Form".
- ❑ Begin interviewing relatives, friends, and other contacts to fill out the information you have on the family tree (This will overlap with the next step).
- ❑ Systematically interview each relative regarding their possible interest in helping the child. (Use the Initial Relative Screening form provided in RESOURCES.) Ask each one for their opinion regarding the ability of other relatives or close family friends to care for the child.
- ❑ Interview foster parent(s).
- ❑ Does this case relate in any way to the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)? Search for child's tribal affiliation / heritage, and follow up with the tribe involved with the child.
- ❑ Make sure all contacts have been documented on appropriate forms and proper signatures obtained.
- ❑ Make a Life Book" for the child with photos from the birth family (including relatives other than parents).
- ❑ Identify where all paperwork is located in the process.
- ❑ Submit all screening and Family Tree forms to the CASA supervisor. Work with your supervisor to arrange a meeting with the caseworker and other appropriate people involved in the case to review and decide which relatives will get formal home studies. As the CASA/GAL volunteer on the case you will be included in this meeting and asked for your recommendations regarding placement options. You should have your recommendations in written form to be included in the case records at both DCFS/CPS and the CASA office. (This process may vary from program to program. It is working well for Chelan/Douglas CASA)

You might want to organize a service group to make life books as they have in the Snohomish County VGAL program. A local scrap-booking group volunteered to help with the project. In an afternoon, Life Books were created for many children. In recognition, each volunteer was given a sticker that said, "I helped a foster child today".

## **Take Action! 5**

### **Verification of Child's Indian Status**

- ❑ A request for verification of the child's Indian status from a tribe **must be done within one (1) working day** of the date of discovery of the tribe's identity.
- ❑ A request by telephone should be followed by a written request for verification.

In addition to this request,

- ❑ Ask whether the tribe considers the child to be Indian regardless of the child's membership status.
- ❑ If tribal identity is unknown, call the Bureau of Indian Affairs to request assistance (again - follow with written request)!
- ❑ The regional Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee may also be contacted regarding assistance in obtaining verification.
- ❑ **All requests for verification should include a request for a written response.**
- ❑ If a child is thought to be Canadian Indian, but the identity of the tribe or band is not known, the Indian Child Welfare Specialist at your DCFS office must be contacted immediately for assistance.

If you have questions on any of the above: Consult with your program supervisor. At your local DCFS office, the Indian Child Welfare Specialist is a source for up to date information.

#### **Questions to ask in every case:**

1. Is the child is of Indian or native ancestry?
2. Whether the child is or has been the ward of any Tribal Court

Once it is known that a child is of Indian ancestry, steps must be taken **immediately to identify the child's tribe.**

NOTES:

## ***Take Action! 6***

### **Special Immigrant Juvenile Status - How does a CASA proceed?**

- Inform your supervisor as soon as you discover that the child was born outside the United States or is not a US citizen.
- When doing a diligent search of the child's family tree, find out if any parents or grandparents were/are US citizens or legal residents. Get as much specific information concerning the location of the birth as possible, along with the names and addresses of any friends or family still in the area.
- Try to locate the child's birth certificate. The parents may be able to locate the document for you or at least provide the best information to track it down. It may take some time so start early.
- Ask your program supervisor when and how to enter the child's residency status in the record. The risk of losing eligibility for services must be weighed against the necessity of having this information as part of a permanency plan for the child.
- At the time of permanency planning the court should be asked to sign an order outlining the four requirements for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) if reunification is no longer considered possible. This order should include a statement that these findings are the result of abuse, neglect, or abandonment.
- The immigration procedure should be explained to the child so that s/he can make an informed decision about pursuing the application. If there is any reason to believe the child's application will not be approved, contact an immigration attorney.

NOTES:

## ***Take Action! 7***

### **Reasonable Efforts - Tasks a CASA/GAL volunteer can do:**

- ❑ Meet with the core group involved in child's case.
- ❑ Provide support to birthparents.
- ❑ Work together with the family group conferencing team.
- ❑ Copy caseworkers files to track diligent search, reasonable efforts and permanence planning.
- ❑ Continue to document contacts with ALL individuals connected with the case – including the adoption worker and CASA Staff.
- ❑ If the child is not yet legally free, check the case progress for compliance with the time frame requirements in ASFA related legislation.

NOTES:

## **Take Action! 8**

### **Concurrent Planning - Tasks a CASA/GAL volunteer can do:**

- ❑ Assist with Interstate Compact paperwork.
- ❑ Assist with termination paperwork.
- ❑ Pick up an adoption checklist from program coordinator and contact the adoption worker informing him/her of your availability as a CASA/GAL volunteer. Negotiate which activities are acceptable by each party to cover/assist with (some adoption workers prefer to do all the work and others are open to allowing the volunteer to participate in coordinating with them through the process.)
- ❑ Ask DSHS social worker what the barriers are to adoption and offer to help remove the barriers.
- ❑ Review home studies of prospective placements.
- ❑ Assist with referred home study applications.
- ❑ Assist adoption agencies and the AG's office with paperwork.
- ❑ Review families interested in providing a permanent home with the caseworker.
- ❑ Interview prospective adoptive or guardianship placement families.
- ❑ Gather information for the adoption package home study, and adoption support application. The results of this will information assist the court in the various steps in of the adoption process, and have helped in the identification of barriers that may exist.
- ❑ If grandparents might be a potential permanent home, they also need to fill out pre-adoptive paper work, which they sometimes think is too invasive. Grandparents-raising-grandchildren support groups may helpful.
- ❑ Facilitate the child's registration in the Washington Adoption Resource Exchange (WARE). This registration form must be signed by the social worker, but the CASA volunteer can make sure all the parts are completed before requesting the signature. If the petition is filed and parents agree, this can be done 30 days prior to Termination of Parental Rights.
- ❑ Make sure pre-adoptive families receive respite care (especially for families with special needs children).
- ❑ Update the WARE book and assist with WARE family autobiographies.

In Benton/Franklin County, the Assistant Attorney General makes appointment with the parent(s), calls the attorney and has him/her bring relinquishment paperwork to the meeting. Any questions can be addressed immediately. Completed paperwork can be signed by the parent(s). The AAG also tries to get the trial memorandum and attachments out as early as possible to the parties.

Always be looking for adoptive resources for **all children** who may be in the CASA/GAL program's Post-TPR caseload.

NOTES:

## **Take Action! 9**

### **If Parental Rights are Terminated - Tasks a CASA/GAL volunteer can do:**

- ❑ Send Termination of Parental Rights tickler (Notice to Adoption Unit of 30 day transfer policy) to CWS program manager and Adoption Unit Supervisors (See sample from Pierce County). This paper is included in the court file.
- ❑ Send “Transfer of Case to Legally Free Program” as necessary. (See example from Pierce County).
- ❑ Contact the adoption caseworker and keep communication lines open.
  - Ask what is needed
  - Offer volunteer time to expedite the process
- ❑ Assist families with adoption support paperwork if OK with social worker (explain process, forms, resources).
- ❑ Visit Potential adoptive family to see what the needs are, assess priorities and make recommendations to the court.
- ❑ Be a bridge between DCFS and the adoptive family.
- ❑ Work with the adoptive family as needed, providing information and support. They sometimes need help with the adoption support application and other paperwork, as well as CASA volunteer support in general.
- ❑ Provide links to adoptive family support groups (i.e. Catholic Family Services, Lutheran Social Services, etc.)
  
- ❑ Engage older children (who are able and willing) in the placement search.
- ❑ Keep track of adoption/guardianship process.
- ❑ Advocate for the child’s placement in an adoptive home.
- ❑ Keep track of services to the child through the process to make sure there are no disruptions. The child’s education is a key component here!!!

A CASA co-sponsored KIDSFEST has been a useful tool in several counties to bring together legally free children and potential adoptive parents. Contact Washington State CASA for more information.

***The bottom line is:***

**If at all possible, ONE VOLUNTEER**

**continues with ONE CHILD**

**throughout the process to PERMANENCE!**

NOTES:



## **PART 3**

# **SUPERVISING VOLUNTEERS AND NURTURING THE PROCESS**

Achieving permanence requires dedicated staff for case management and volunteer supervision throughout a child's case, especially after termination of parental rights. A supervisor must also nurture and monitor the process of moving children through dependency to permanence, building trust and communication among all concerned, addressing roadblocks as they arise.

### **ASSIGNING VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE COMMITTED TO PERMANENCE**

In some programs it has been the practice to remove the CASA volunteer from the case once parental rights are terminated. The child may be in a foster/adopt or kinship/adopt placement and it is assumed that the once the case is transferred from the DSHS Child Welfare unit to the DSHS Adoption unit, a permanent home will result in a timely way. CASA/GAL programs in this project have found that having a CASA volunteer on the case from the beginning - all the way to permanence, definitely helps the process move to permanence more smoothly and quickly.

As the program begins to focus on legally free children, a supervisor must review all files of legally free children and, **IF THEY DO NOT ALREADY HAVE A CASA VOLUNTEER ASSIGNED**, match child and volunteer. (See Take Action steps from part 1 and sample Volunteer Job Description in RESOURCES.)

### **NETWORKING WITH OTHERS COMMITTED TO PERMANENCE**

As volunteers develop expertise in the processes leading to permanence, enlist them in educating the community about the needs of legally free children. Look back at the tasks in Part 1: Setting the stage for permanence in the program and in the community. Always invite a volunteer who has helped bring a child to permanence to participate in community speaking / outreach efforts.

Nurture the collaborations that formed your investment team. Encourage volunteers to work with other child welfare organizations, i.e. sharing an information / recruitment booth at a mall, or planning an annual Light of Hope /Blue Ribbon Event during Child Abuse Prevention month in April.

Have volunteers help provide in-service training. Program staff and volunteers are becoming "experts" on the subject of adoption as they move through the process. Provide opportunities for them to share that knowledge.

Ask your volunteers for ideas to increase public awareness. Each of them has their own network of friends and acquaintances that might produce more volunteers, support for your program, and for legally free children.

## MONITORING THE PROCESS

As discussed in the sections of this manual describing “diligent search”, and “reasonable efforts”, the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) Section 103 sets the required time frames for the progress of the case. These guidelines are further outlined for Washington State in Chapters 13.34, 26.33, and 74.13 of the Revised Code of Washington. (See specific RCW listings in the resource section or go to <http://www.leg.wa.gov> ).

The various forms used by the court provide an outline of the things a judge will want to know. These forms may be found at the superior court website: <http://www.courts.wa.gov/forms/list.cfm> (you will need to “unzip” the Juvenile Court Forms file).

At a minimum, the child related information (in the box at right) must be recorded in some way that is easily accessible for the person supervising volunteers.

When reporting statistics on “closed” cases, it is helpful to indicate the local definition of “case closed” so that the person receiving the data has a better understanding of your local definition.

State law (RCW 13.34.100) also requires programs to keep certain volunteer information, which “shall be made available to the court”. By keeping information on each child referred to the program as well as a record for each volunteer, the program will be prepared to quickly produce the information needed for court hearings, and reports to funders of the program.

Always discuss the current permanency plan with the individual CASA volunteer assigned to a case, focusing on the time frame for legally free children.

### **Child Related information —For Both OPEN and CLOSED cases**

1. Demographics
  - Age/Birthday
  - Gender
  - Ethnicity
2. ICWA information
3. Name of the guardian ad litem assigned to the child
  - CASA volunteer / Staff / Attorney / None
4. Where the child is in the dependency process
  - Milestones and Dates of each (see timeline in RESOURCES)
5. Previous and current Child Placements
6. Names:
  - Other Parties to Case
  - Social Worker
  - Parents’ Attorney(s)

### **Volunteer Related Information**

1. Names of Children Assigned
2. Statutory Requirements
  - Core Training –Dates, Topics, & Hours
  - On-Going Trainings –Dates, Topics, & Hours
  - Criminal Background Check
3. Contact Information
4. Anniversary Date
5. Demographics:
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Ethnicity
  - Employment Status
  - Education Level
6. Hearing Dates and Times
7. Hours
8. Mileage
  - Other expenses

The last two items in your volunteer notes will help inform your overall volunteer recruitment and retention efforts:

9. How the volunteer was recruited, and
10. Why the volunteer is leaving.

A timeline of the dependency process is included in RESOURCES. It outlines major milestones from the first reporting of child abuse or neglect, to permanence. The “Useful forms” section of RESOURCES includes sample worksheets for volunteers and programs to use in keeping track of a child’s progress through the system. Making sure that all the necessary information is available for each hearing means fewer continuances and quicker permanence.

A single point of contact can be helpful in tracking the transition of children through the process of becoming legally free. The following process, developed by the Pierce County CASA program and Child Welfare Services, makes one person, the child welfare services program manager, the single point of contact for tracking the transition of children through the process of becoming legally free. It is a good example of documenting the coordination needed to make sure that children are not “lost in the system”.

*All termination referrals are routed through Child Welfare Services, and then forwarded to the Attorney General’s Office. The termination process is tracked from the time the referral is submitted to the AG’s Office. Cases are reviewed 3-4 months prior to the date of the termination trial to determine what additional information and documents are needed so the file will be ready to be transferred to an adoption unit upon the child becoming legally free.*

*The Attorney General’s office sends a copy of the Notice of Hearing for termination trials to CWS Program Manager.*

*The social worker notifies the CWS Program Manager when a child on their caseload becomes legally free.*

*The GALs and CASA volunteers also notify the CWS Program Manager when a child on their caseloads becomes legally free.*

*The Attorney General’s Office sends a copy of their monthly report of children who have become legally free that month to the CWS Program Manager.*

*CWS Program Manager schedules a transfer staffing within 30 days of the date the child becomes legally free.*

*If there are unusual circumstances that seem to warrant a case not being transferred immediately, the CWS social worker will submit an Exception to Policy (ETP) to the Area Administrator within 15 days of the termination. A copy of the ETP will be routed to CWS Program Manager so those cases can be tracked.*

*(See “Tracking the transfer of legally free children to the adoption units” and “Notice to Adoption Unit” in RESOURCES.)*

To keep lines of communication open, it is important to meet on a regular basis with DSHS adoption worker(s), attorneys from the Attorney General's office and the CASA/GAL staff. Keep the focus on what can be done to help move legally free children toward permanent homes. Ask questions. Could mediation help achieve permanence in this case? It is important to know what resources are available in your community and when they are appropriate to recommend. If there are roadblocks, brainstorm block-busters. If another system is involved, invite a decision maker from that organization to your next Investment Team meeting! Keep adding to your own local resource "yellow pages".

## **KEEPING UP WITH THE DEMAND – PUBLICITY FOR RECRUITMENT**

As volunteers begin to stay with cases, through termination of parental rights, to a final adoption or guardianship; it will become necessary to recruit more volunteers to take on new cases. Recruitment is an ongoing process. Typically, potential volunteers hear about CASA several times over a period of years before they actually make the commitment to call and volunteer. A recruitment opportunity happens each time a person sees or hears about CASA. Every article in a newspaper, every public speaking engagement, and every public service announcement is an opportunity to tell people about the program and the need for volunteers to be advocates for children. It's difficult to isolate which piece of publicity sparks the potential volunteer to take action!

Launching a focus on legally free children is a perfect newspaper story itself. Outline the problem, the number of legally free children in the county, and their need for permanent homes. A feature story about the first case brought to permanence within your new focus would be a great way to celebrate success and recruit more volunteers!

Washington State CASA can provide posters, brochures, and business cards to your program for use in publicity and recruitment. The business cards came from a suggestion by a volunteer who said that he really enjoyed telling his friends about his work with CASA, but when he handed them a brochure (which he had been carrying in his pocket for a couple of weeks), it was tattered and might not leave a good impression. The business cards are easily portable. Experienced volunteers suggest that supervisors give them to new volunteers about 6 months after training.

Public service announcements (PSA) and paid advertisements in the newspaper are useful tools to get a quick message before the public. They must have a simple, easily recognizable message and a call to action, CONTACT –or- CALL. On PSAs as well as any published material, be sure that either Washington State CASA or your program's contact information is easy to see (phone, email, website).

One of the benefits of being a member of the National CASA Association is that member programs have permission to use the CASA logo. This may be downloaded from [www.casenet.org](http://www.casenet.org) under the heading of publications. National CASA also sends out a press kit with many helpful suggestions regarding the Light of Hope campaign, which goes hand-in-hand with the National Child Abuse Prevention Month Blue Ribbon campaign in April each year. For assistance in developing a publicity/recruitment plan for your program or in your region, please contact Washington State CASA.

## EVALUATION

Knowing what you've done and what effects those efforts have had, is the key to knowing what to do next. The data you've collected regarding both children and volunteers will be invaluable as you assess whether your program is in compliance with both State law and National CASA standards.

To further track your success with legally free children, be sure to note the dates of entrance into out of home placement, termination of parental rights, and date of permanent placement. Tracking these dates will let you measure the number of months -TPR to permanence - and to track that information over time.

A post – adoption survey can help the CASA programs evaluate the work of volunteers in achieving permanence. See RESOURCES for a sample letter and survey questions that were sent to adoptive families through the Chelan-Douglas program. This might also be an opportunity to send a survey to children and adoption social workers involved in the case.

By keeping track of inquiries to the program each month (Always ask how they heard about the program; and contact information), you can measure the results of your publicity and recruitment efforts. Since volunteers always need to be recruited, it is useful to keep the names of those who have inquired about the program on your mailing list even if they don't become volunteers right away. Continue sending them your newsletter, or an invitation to community events.

Keep track of what type publicity was used on a given date. Combine that information with information from volunteer inquiries in the following months, and you'll be able to get a picture of what makes the potential volunteer decide to call. Compare that information with the number of volunteer applications received, and you'll have a better picture of what makes the difference in a call for information – and actually becoming a volunteer. (A sample form for tracking publicity and recruitment is included in RESOURCES.)

**Take Action! 10**

Tasks a CASA/GAL supervisor can do

**See RESOURCES:** (These materials are in alphabetical order as listed below under USEFUL FORMS)

NOTICE TO ADOPTION UNIT  
NOTICE OF TRANSFER OF CASE TO LEGALLY FREE PROGRAM  
POST - ADOPTION SURVEY  
PSA - PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS (30 SECONDS) FOR RADIO- 3 SCRIPTS  
PUBLICITY AND RECRUITMENT TRACKING FORM  
TRACKING THE TRANSFER OF LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN TO ADOPTION UNIT  
TRANSFER OF LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN

NOTES:

## ***Take Action! 10***

### **Tasks a CASA/GAL supervisor can do:**

- Include topics related to legally free children in the program's in-service trainings.
- As Investment Teams work together, program managers have discovered trainings related to legally free children offered by other agencies and organizations. Attend trainings that address issues related to legally free children and volunteer supervision. Continue the networking and collaboration.
- Provide and participate in formal and informal topic-specific training and sharing with other CASA supervisors across program and county lines.
- Coordinate training opportunities to include other agencies concerned about legally free children. Invite their staff to CASA/GAL ongoing trainings.
- Monitor your volunteer's cases as they move through the system. See sample case tracking forms in RESOURCES.
- Set up a system to keep track of crucial child and volunteer information (see page 30 for lists of information needed for most reports ).
- Make sure the items below are included in your supervision discussions with volunteers:
  - \_\_\_ Life Book information gathering and compiling
  - \_\_\_ Collection of records and background information on all relatives
  - \_\_\_ Documenting Diligent search efforts
  - \_\_\_ Researching permanent placement(s)
  - \_\_\_ Collaboration tasks outlined with Adoption Worker
  - \_\_\_ Completion of WARE registration
  - \_\_\_ Contacting prospective permanent placement(s)
  - \_\_\_ Other post-TPR activity not noted (please describe)

NOTES:



## **PART 4**

# **RESOURCES: TOOLS TO USE ALONG THE WAY**

**1. THE DEPENDENCY PROCESS – an annotated timeline:** page 49  
Who is responsible for what and when

**2. PERMANENCY YELLOW PAGES:** 53  
Websites, offices, phone numbers for other agencies and organizations working for the best interests of legally free children.

The third section includes the Washington State Superior Court Rules regarding guardians ad litem adopted in November 2001, and the federal and state laws specifically relating to termination of parental rights and permanence.

**3. THE LAW:**

Federal – Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)	57
RCW / WAC related to achieving permanence	59
Superior Court Rules (Adopted November 2001)	69

The last resource section comes from ideas and suggestions that have been developed over the course of the Achieving Permanence Project and by other agencies that also serve legally free children. You may already use similar forms in your program. If these information sheets and forms seem useful, please feel free to reproduce and/or adapt them for your program.

**4. USEFUL FORMS AND SAMPLES to keep the information flowing** 77  
(as referenced in alphabetical order)

NOTES:

## 1. THE DEPENDENCY PROCESS – an annotated timeline:

Event	A. Report to Child Protective Services	B. CPS Investigation	C. Child placed in out-of-home care	D. Dependency Petition
<b>Time Frame requirements</b>	Immediately on witnessing abuse or neglect of child, especially for mandated reporters. 911 or 1-866-END-HARM	Determined by the nature of allegations.	Determined by the nature of allegations.	Determined by the nature of allegations.
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>To ensure child safety</b>	<b>To ensure child safety</b>	<b>To ensure the child is in a safe environment.</b>	<b>CPS files specific allegations against the parents or child's caretaker concerning the safety of the child.</b>
<b>Relevant Law</b>	RCW 9A.16.100, RCW 26.44.010 through RCW 26.44.050, and WAC 388.15.132	RCW 26.44.030 and WAC 388.15.132	RCW 13.34.020; 13.34.050; 13.34.060; 13.34.065; 26.44.050; 74.13.031, WAC 388-15-132 (2)	RCW 13.34.30; 13.34.50 13.34.130; Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA); Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, PL 105-89 (ASFA); Multicultural Placement Act.
<b>NOTES:</b>	In Washington state "abuse or neglect" is defined in RCW 26.44.020 as the injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of a child by any person under circumstances which indicate that the child's health, welfare, and safety is harmed, excluding conduct permitted under RCW 9A.16.100.	CPS or, in some areas, law enforcement, investigates the report to determine the facts, the extent of the abuse or neglect, and the risk of harm to the child. In Washington State, when there is a reasonable cause to believe a crime has been committed against a child, death, sexual abuse, or non-accidental physical injury, law enforcement will be notified. If the investigation does not confirm abuse or neglect, the case is closed and the child remains in or returns home.	RCW 13.34.020 declares that the family unit is a fundamental resource of American life which should be nurtured and that the family unit should remain intact unless a child's right to conditions of basic nurture, health, or safety is jeopardized. When those rights are jeopardized, the rights and safety of the child should prevail. "The right of a child to basic nurturing includes the right to a safe, stable, and permanent home and a speedy resolution of any proceeding under this chapter."	Dependency petitions are filed when CPS needs the court to intervene on the child's behalf to minimize the risk that child maltreatment will recur, or when the child is removed from the home to ensure her or his safety.

Event	E. Shelter Care Hearing	F. Continued Shelter Care Hearings	G. Fact Finding Hearing	H. Disposition Hearing
<b>Time frame requirements</b>	Must be heard within 72 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) after the child is placed in out of home care.	Reviews must be made every 30 days until fact finding or dismissal of the petition.	No later than 75 days after the filing of the petition, unless exceptional reasons for a continuance are found.	Immediately after the entry of the findings of fact, unless there is good cause for continuing. If good cause is shown, the case may be continued for longer than fourteen days.
<b>Purpose</b>	Emergency hearing to decide whether the child should be returned home, remain in shelter care, or be placed with a relative.	To ensure the child's case is consistently reviewed and does not remain in shelter care longer than necessary	The court must decide if the child is dependent under the definition of RCW (See notes below).	To produce a case plan that sets forth actions to be taken by the family, DCFS, and other professionals to strengthen the home situation, while keeping the child safe.
<b>Relevant Law</b>	RCW 13.34.050, 13.34.060, 13.34.062, 13.34.065, 13.34.130; ICWA; ASFA	RCW 13.34.062(5)	RCW 13.34.030, RCW 26.44	RCW 13.34.110; 13.34.120; 13.34.130
<b>NOTES:</b>	<p>The court must decide whether there is reasonable cause to believe that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reasonable efforts have been made to prevent removal or eliminate the need for removal of the child from the home;</li> <li>The child has no parent/guardian or legal custodian to provide supervision and care;</li> <li>the release of such child would present a serious threat of substantial harm to the child; or</li> <li>the parent guardian or custodian to whom the child could be released has been charged with crimes listed in RCW 9A.40.060 or 9A.40.070.</li> </ol>	No child may be placed in shelter care for longer than 30 days without an order signed by a judge authorizing continued shelter care.	<p>Criteria for finding a child dependent:</p> <p>The child</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has been abandoned; or</li> <li>Is abused or neglected as defined in RCW 26.44 by a person legally responsible for the care of the child; or</li> <li>Has no parent, guardian or custodian capable of adequately caring for the child, such that the child is in circumstances which constitute a danger of substantial damage to the child's psychological or physical development.</li> </ol>	<p>The dispositional order shall address the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continued removal of the child</li> <li>a plan for alleviating the immediate danger to the child, including services for the child and family</li> <li>whether placement with a relative is appropriate or placement in a foster home.</li> </ol> <p>If there is insufficient information at the time of the disposition hearing to place a child with a relative, the child shall remain in foster care and the supervising agency must conduct necessary background investigations and report back to the court within 30 days. (see RCW 13.34.130).</p>

Event	<b>I. Dependency Review Hearing</b>	<b>J. Permanency Planning Hearing</b>
<b>Time frame requirements</b>	The first review hearing shall be held in court 6 months from placement or within 90 days of entry on the disposition order. Subsequent reviews are held within 6-month intervals after the first hearing. Any party may request an early review hearing at any time within the 6- month period.	Shall be held in all cases where the child has remained in out of home care for at least 9 months without an adoption decree, guardianship order, or permanent custody order. The hearing shall take place no later than 12 months following the commencement of the current placement episode. See * below.
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>In court review to examine the status of child and family, placement and needs of child; examine services offered, reunification efforts, placement efforts and goals.</b>	<b>Parties present information for the court to produce a plan to achieve a safe, permanent home for the child within a reasonable period of time. See ** below.</b>
<b>Relevant Law</b>	RCW 13.34.138	RCW 13.34.134; 13.34.136; 13.34.145
<b>NOTES:</b>	<p>The court bases the decision for continued supervision on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reasonable services have been provided or offered to facilitate reunion;</li> <li>2. The child is placed in the least restrictive setting with a preference for relatives;</li> <li>3. There is continuing need for placement and if the placement continues to be appropriate;</li> <li>4. there is compliance with the case plan;</li> <li>5. progress has been made toward correcting the problems that necessitated out of home care;</li> <li>6. the parents have visited the child;</li> <li>7. additional services needed;</li> <li>8. the projected date for achieving permanence for the child.</li> </ol>	<p>* If reasonable efforts are not ordered, a permanency planning hearing shall be held within 30 days of the court order to file a petition to terminate parental rights (TPR).</p> <p>** If the child has been outside the home for 15 of the most recent 22 months or meets any other criteria set out in the juvenile code, the judge shall order DCFS to initiate TPR proceedings unless the exceptions in Juvenile code are met. Such TPR petitions shall be filed within 60 days of the permanency hearing.</p>

Event	<b>K. Termination of Parental Rights (TPR)</b>	<b>L. Post-Termination Review Hearing</b>	<b>M. Permanent Placement</b>
<b>Time frame requirements</b>	TPR may be filed at any time after a dependency is established. Generally, a minimum of 6 months must transpire after the child has been removed from the home before a Petition for TPR may be filed.	The court must review the permanency plan and efforts to achieve the plan every 6 months.	In cases where the child is legally free for adoption, and adoption has been identified as the primary permanency goal; it shall be a goal to complete the adoption within 6 months following the entry of the termination order.
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>The judge must decide if one or more grounds exist, and if it is in the child's best interest for the rights of his or her parents to be terminated.</b>	<b>To review the status of the child in the post-TPR process until a safe, permanent home is achieved.</b>	<b>To ensure the child has a safe, supportive, and permanent home.</b>
<b>Relevant Law</b>	The grounds for termination are outlined in RCW 13.34.132 and 13.34.180. The following RCWs are also relevant: RCW 13.34.190; 13.34.200; and 13.34.210	RCW 13.34.134; 13.34.136; 13.34.138; 13.34.145. For further details on legal guardianship and permanent legal custody, see RCW 13.34.145; 13.34.210; 13.34.230.	ASFA, Adoption Assistance Child Welfare Act of 1980 (PL96-272). For information on adoption support see RCW 74.13.124; RCW 26.33
<b>NOTES:</b>	<p>A court may file for TPR if, among other requirements,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the child has been found dependent,</li> <li>2. the child has been removed from home for six months, and</li> <li>3. TPR is in the best interest of the child. If aggravating circumstances exist (including murder, rape by the parent, and assault against the child) the process may be expedited.</li> </ol> <p>To terminate parental rights, the court must find:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The allegations contained in the petition are established by clear, cogent and convincing evidence or beyond a reasonable doubt (depending on the allegations); and</li> <li>2. The termination order is in the best interests of the child.</li> </ol>	Judge's decision is based on monitoring reports from DCFS and CASA/GAL volunteer with input from the child, any foster parent, relative, or pre-adoptive parent providing care for the child and any other person or agency the court may specify.	<b>Celebration time!</b>

## 2. PERMANENCY YELLOW PAGES: websites, offices, phone numbers

### A Legislator's Guide to the Child Dependency Statutes

A useful outline of the dependency process with commonly asked questions published by the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee Staff  
P.O. Box 40482, Olympia WA 98504-0482  
Phone: (360) 786-7432 Fax: (360) 786-7899  
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/senate/scs/hsc/>

### Child Law Practice - <http://www.abanet.org/child>

"Adoption Assistance: A Legal Primer" by Debra Ratterman Baker. *Child Law Practice*, Vol. 19 No. 7, September 2000.

"Calling all Attorneys: How to Make ASFA Work Early in the Case" by Mimi Laver. *Child Law Practice*, Vol. 19 No. 8, October 2000. (Includes sidebar titled "Identify ICWA Issues Early in the Case")

"ASFA's Compelling Reasons Requirement" by Cecilia Fiermonte. *Child Law Practice*, Vol. 20 No. 4, June 2001.

"Reasonable Efforts to Finalize the Plan of Adoption: Termination of Parental Rights, the First Step" by Cecilia Fiermonte. *Child Law Practice*, Vol. 20 No. 4, June 2001.

"Reasonable Efforts to Finalize a Permanency Plan for Reunification" by Jennifer Renne. *Child Law Practice*, Vol. 20 No. 3, May 2001. "Reasonable Efforts to Finalize a Permanency Plan for Adoption" by Jennifer Renne. *Child Law Practice*, Vol. 20 No. 6, August 2001.

"Preventing Permanency Delays Caused by Default Judgments" by Tamara Sanders. *Child Court Works*, Vol. 4 Issue 6, July 2001.

### Casey Family Programs - [www.casey.org](http://www.casey.org)

Casey Family Programs provides an array of services for children and youth, with foster care as its core. Casey services include adoption, guardianship, kinship care (being cared for by extended family), and family reunification (reuniting children with birth families). Casey is also committed to helping youth in foster care make a successful transition to adulthood. As a direct service operating foundation, Casey Family Programs does not make grants.

**Child Care Resource and Referral Network** - [www.childcarenet.org](http://www.childcarenet.org)

A network of 18 community-based, private, nonprofit child care resource and referral agencies across Washington State (USA) offers consumer education, training, and technical assistance to parents, childcare providers, employers and the community.

**Children's Alliance** - <http://www.childrensalliance.org>

The Children's Alliance is statewide, member based advocacy organization dedicated to improving the safety, security, health and education of Washington's children. Its activities include policy analysis and development, public education, outreach, training, and policy advocacy. The Alliance supports collaborative efforts by individuals and organizations working on juvenile justice, food program policies, medical and dental services, family support, budget priorities, and prevention strategies.

**Children's Home Society of Washington** - <http://www.chs-wa.org>

Through adoption support, family support, parent education, early childhood development, advocacy, counseling, residential and foster care, Children's Home Society of Washington has served Washington State's children and families for more than 100 years.

**Department of Social and Health Services** - <http://www.dshs.wa.gov>

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) helps people in partnerships with families, community groups, religious organizations, private providers, other government agencies, with foster parents, neighbors, and citizens who make Washington a special place by taking care of each other.

**Families For Kids Partnership** – [www.FFKPartnership.org](http://www.FFKPartnership.org)

A Washington statewide initiative bringing together public and private agencies, the judicial system, tribal organizations, legislators, families, business leaders, and others to reform the foster/adoption system.

**Foster Parents Association of Washington State** – [www.fpaws.org](http://www.fpaws.org)

The mission of FPAWS is to empower, to support, and to advocate for foster families in order to enrich the quality of life for Washington State's children in foster care.

**Governor's Office of Indian Affairs** - [www.goia.wa.gov](http://www.goia.wa.gov)

GOIA, recognizing the importance of sovereignty, affirms the government-to-government relationship and principles identified in the Centennial Accord to promote and enhance tribal self-sufficiency and serves to assist the state in developing policies consistent with those principles

**Immigrant Legal Resource Center**

For information on obtaining a child's foreign birth certificate call 415-255-9499.

### **National Adoption Information Clearinghouse**

email: [naic@calib.com](mailto:naic@calib.com)

website: <http://www.calib.com/naic>

### **National Indian Child Welfare Association** - [www.nicwa.org](http://www.nicwa.org)

NICWA is the only Native American organization focused specifically on issues of child abuse and neglect and tribal capacity to prevent and respond effectively to these problems. Among many other goals, they advocate for and facilitate the proper implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act.

### **Northwest Adoption Exchange Program** – <http://www.nwae.org>

The Northwest Adoption Exchange program has been providing special needs adoption services since 1976 by facilitating adoptive placements in Alaska, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington through its regularly published photo-listing book.

### **Office of Crime Victims Advocacy (OCVA)** – <http://www.ocva.wa.gov>

Established in 1990, OCVA serves the state on many levels by: Advocating on behalf of crime victims in obtaining needed services and resources;  
Administering grant funds for community programs working with crime victims;  
Assisting communities in planning and implementing services for crime victims;  
and advising local and state government agencies of practices, policies, and priorities which impact crime victims.

### **Office of Family and Children's Ombudsman (OFCO)** -

<http://www.governor.wa.gov/ofco>

The Mission of the Office of the Family and Children's Ombudsman is to protect children and parents from harmful agency action or inaction, and to make agency officials and state policy makers aware of system-wide issues in the child protection and child welfare system so they can improve services.

### **Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)** - <http://www.k12.wa.us>

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is the primary agency charged with overseeing K-12 education in Washington state. OSPI works with the state's 296 school districts to administer basic education programs and implement education reform on behalf of more than one million public school students.

### **TeamChild** - [www.teamchild.org](http://www.teamchild.org)

A non-profit organization, TeamChild was founded on a simple premise: many juveniles can be diverted from delinquency or other trouble if their basic needs are met. TeamChild has developed manual and training on Education Advocacy.

## **Washington Council for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (WCPCAN)**

[www.wcpcan.wa.gov](http://www.wcpcan.wa.gov)

WCPCAN's mission is to provide leadership and a statewide focus on the prevention of child abuse and neglect, and to encourage and support effective community prevention efforts.

## **Washington State Courts** - <http://www.courts.wa.gov>

The State Supreme Court administers the Judicial branch of the Washington State Government. The website includes information on **The Office of the Administrator for the Courts (OAC)**. Forms used by Superior Court may be downloaded from the following website - <http://www.courts.wa.gov/forms/list.cfm> (you will need to "unzip" the Juvenile Court Forms file).

## **Washington State Association of CASA/GAL Programs** -

[www.washingtonstatecasa.org](http://www.washingtonstatecasa.org)

Washington State CASA's mission is to support effective volunteer advocacy for the best interests of abused and neglected children involved in the court system. Our vision is to ensure that every child has a safe, supportive and permanent home.

## **Washington State Legislature** - <http://www.leg.wa.gov>

To look up a specific item in the RCW or WAC, click on search. Tell the computer which areas to search in, and give it a key word or number to look for.

### 3. THE LAW: ASFA, RCW / WAC, and Court Rules

#### **A Legislator's Guide to the Child Dependency Statutes**

A useful outline of the dependency process with commonly asked questions published by the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee Staff

P.O. Box 40482, Olympia WA 98504-0482

Phone: (360) 786-7432

Fax: (360) 786-7899

<http://www.leg.wa.gov/senate/scs/hsc/>

#### **Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) related legislation in Washington:**

From the National Conference of State Legislatures information on ASFA related state law

**Adoption Across State Lines:** Existing law - Party to Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance.

**Assurances of Child Safety:** RCW 13.34.020

**Criminal Records Checks:** Adds convictions of crimes related to drugs to list of offenses that are included in records checks (RCW 43.43.834 (2)(c)). Existing law: Requires checks of prospective adoptive (RCW 26.33.190(3) and foster parents (RCW 74.15.030(b)). Requires convictions of crimes against persons or children, crimes related to financial exploitation or findings of physical or sexual abuse or exploitation of any minor to be included in background check reports (RCW 43.43.834(2)(a,b,d,e)). Requires department to develop rules for minimum standards for licensure, including results of background checks (RCW 74.15.030(2)).

**Health Insurance for Special Needs Children:** Existing law - Extends Title XIX Medicaid benefits to children receiving state-funded adoption subsidy.

**Notice Requirements:** Notice of review hearings given to foster parent, pre-adoptive parents or relative, but only if person is currently providing care to child (RCW 13.34.130; 13.34.180).

**Permanency Hearings:** (RCW 13.34.130 and 13.34.145) Existing law: no later than 12 months following commencement of current placement episode and at least every 12 months thereafter. New law: within 30 days after "no reasonable efforts" determination. Existing law: Permanency plan must provide for: 1. return home, 2. adoption, e. guardianship, 4. long-term relative or foster care, 5. independent living. Concurrent planning is allowed.

**Termination of Parental Rights:** (RCW 13.34.180 and 13.34.190) A court may file for a Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) if, among other requirements, the child has been found dependent, the child has been removed from home for six months, and TPR is in the best interest of the child. If aggravating circumstances exist (including murder, rape by the parent, and assault against the child) the process may be expedited.

NOTES:

**RCW / WACS:** For the most recent information go to [www.leg.wa.gov](http://www.leg.wa.gov) and click on the search button. Enter either a subject keyword or the specific RCW or WAC number. Be sure to click on the boxes telling the computer where to search. Check both RCW and WAC.

**RCW 13.34.020 - Legislative declaration of family unit as resource to be nurtured --**

**Rights of child.** The legislature declares that the family unit is a fundamental resource of American life, which should be nurtured. Toward the continuance of this principle, the legislature declares that the family unit should remain intact unless a child's right to conditions of basic nurture, health, or safety is jeopardized. When the rights of basic nurture, physical and mental health, and safety of the child and the legal rights of the parents are in conflict, the rights and safety of the child should prevail. In making reasonable efforts under this chapter, the child's health and safety shall be the paramount concern. The right of a child to basic nurturing includes the right to a safe, stable, and permanent home and a speedy resolution of any proceeding under this chapter. [1998 c 314 § 1; 1990 c 284 § 31; 1987 c 524 § 2; 1977 ex.s. c 291 § 30.] **NOTES: Finding -- Effective date -- 1990 c 284:** See notes following RCW [74.13.250](#). **Effective dates -- Severability -- 1977 ex.s. c 291:** See notes following RCW [13.04.005](#).

**RCW 13.34.130 - Order of disposition for a dependent child, alternatives -- Petition seeking termination of parent-child relationship -- Placement with relatives.**

If, after a fact-finding hearing pursuant to RCW [13.34.110](#), it has been proven by a preponderance of the evidence that the child is dependent within the meaning of RCW [13.34.030](#) after consideration of the social study prepared pursuant to RCW [13.34.110](#) and after a disposition hearing has been held pursuant to RCW [13.34.110](#), the court shall enter an order of disposition pursuant to this section.

(1) The court shall order one of the following dispositions of the case:

(a) Order a disposition other than removal of the child from his or her home, which shall provide a program designed to alleviate the immediate danger to the child, to mitigate or cure any damage the child has already suffered, and to aid the parents so that the child will not be endangered in the future. In determining the disposition, the court should choose those services, including housing assistance, that least interfere with family autonomy and are adequate to protect the child.

(b) Order the child to be removed from his or her home and into the custody, control, and care of a relative or the department or a licensed child placing agency for placement in a foster family home or group care facility licensed pursuant to chapter [74.15](#) RCW or in a home not required to be licensed pursuant to chapter [74.15](#) RCW. Unless there is reasonable cause to believe that the health, safety, or welfare of the child would be jeopardized or that efforts to reunite the parent and child will be hindered, such child shall be placed with a person who is: (i) Related to the child as defined in RCW [74.15.020\(2\)\(a\)](#) with whom the child has a relationship and is comfortable; and (ii) willing and available to care for the child.

(2) Placement of the child with a relative under this subsection shall be given preference by the court. An order for out-of-home placement may be made only if the court finds that reasonable efforts have been

made to prevent or eliminate the need for removal of the child from the child's home and to make it possible for the child to return home, specifying the services that have been provided to the child and the child's parent, guardian, or legal custodian, and that preventive services have been offered or provided and have failed to prevent the need for out-of-home placement, unless the health, safety, and welfare of the child cannot be protected adequately in the home, and that:

(a) There is no parent or guardian available to care for such child;

(b) The parent, guardian, or legal custodian is not willing to take custody of the child; or

(c) The court finds, by clear, cogent, and convincing evidence, a manifest danger exists that the child will suffer serious abuse or neglect if the child is not removed from the home and an order under RCW [26.44.063](#) would not protect the child from danger.

(3) If the court has ordered a child removed from his or her home pursuant to subsection (1)(b) of this section, the court may order that a petition seeking termination of the parent and child relationship be filed if the requirements of RCW [13.34.132](#) are met.

(4) If there is insufficient information at the time of the disposition hearing upon which to base a determination regarding the suitability of a proposed placement with a relative, the child shall remain in foster care and the court shall direct the supervising agency to conduct necessary background investigations as provided in chapter [74.15](#) RCW and report the results of such investigation to the court within thirty days. However, if such relative appears otherwise suitable and competent to provide care and treatment, the criminal history background check need not be completed before placement, but as soon as possible after placement. Any placements with relatives, pursuant to this section, shall be contingent upon cooperation by the relative with the agency case plan and compliance with court orders related to the care and supervision of the child including, but not limited to, court orders regarding parent-child contacts and any other conditions imposed by the court. Noncompliance with the case plan or court order shall be grounds for removal of the child from the relative's home, subject to review by the court.

[2000 c 122 § 15. Prior: 1999 c 267 § 16; 1999 c 267 § 9; 1999 c 173 § 3; prior: 1998 c 314 § 2; 1998 c 130 § 2; 1997 c 280 § 1; prior: 1995 c 313 § 2; 1995 c 311 § 19; 1995 c 53 § 1; 1994 c 288 § 4; 1992 c 145 § 14; 1991 c 127 § 4; prior: 1990 c 284 § 32; 1990 c 246 § 5; 1989 1st ex.s. c 17 § 17; prior: 1988 c 194 § 1; 1988 c 190 § 2; 1988 c 189 § 2; 1984 c 188 § 4; prior: 1983 c 311 § 5; 1983 c 246 § 2; 1979 c 155 § 46; 1977 ex.s. c 291 § 41.]

**NOTES: Findings -- Intent -- Severability -- 1999 c 267:** See notes following RCW [43.20A.790](#). **Short title -- Purpose -- Entitlement not granted -- Federal waivers -- 1999 c 267 §§ 10-26:** See RCW [74.15.900](#) and [74.15.901](#). **Severability -- 1999 c 173:** See note following RCW [13.34.125](#). **Finding -- Effective date -- 1990 c 284:** See notes following RCW [74.13.250](#). **Severability -- 1990 c 246:** See note following RCW [13.34.060](#). **Legislative finding -- 1983 c 311:** See note following RCW [13.34.030](#). **Effective date -- Severability -- 1979 c 155:** See notes following RCW [13.04.011](#). **Effective dates -- Severability -- 1977 ex.s. c 291:** See notes following RCW [13.04.005](#).

## **RCW 13.34.132 - Petition seeking termination of parent-child relationship -- Requirements.**

A court may order that a petition seeking termination of the parent and child relationship be filed if the following requirements are met:

- (1) The court has removed the child from his or her home pursuant to [RCW 13.34.130](#);
- (2) Termination is recommended by the supervising agency;
- (3) Termination is in the best interests of the child; and
- (4) Because of the existence of aggravated circumstances, reasonable efforts to unify the family are not required. Notwithstanding the existence of aggravated circumstances, reasonable efforts may be required if the court or department determines it is in the best interests of the child. In determining whether aggravated circumstances exist by clear, cogent, and convincing evidence, the court shall consider one or more of the following:

- (a) Conviction of the parent of rape of the child in the first, second, or third degree as defined in [RCW 9A.44.073](#), [9A.44.076](#), and [9A.44.079](#);
- (b) Conviction of the parent of criminal mistreatment of the child in the first or second degree as defined in [RCW 9A.42.020](#) and [9A.42.030](#);
- (c) Conviction of the parent of one of the following assault crimes, when the child is the victim: Assault in the first or second degree as defined in [RCW 9A.36.011](#) and [9A.36.021](#) or assault of a child in the first or second degree as defined in [RCW 9A.36.120](#) or [9A.36.130](#);
- (d) Conviction of the parent of murder, manslaughter, or homicide by abuse of the child's other parent, sibling, or another child;
- (e) Conviction of the parent of attempting, soliciting, or conspiring to commit a crime listed in (a), (b), (c), or (d) of this subsection;
- (f) A finding by a court that a parent is a sexually violent predator as defined in [RCW 71.09.020](#);
- (g) Failure of the parent to complete available treatment ordered under this chapter or the equivalent laws of another state, where such failure has resulted in a prior termination of parental rights to another child and the parent has failed to effect significant change in the interim. In the case of a parent of an Indian child, as defined in the Indian Child Welfare Act, P.L. 95-608 (25 U.S.C. Sec. 1903), the court shall also consider tribal efforts to assist the parent in completing treatment and make it possible for the child to return home;
- (h) An infant under three years of age has been abandoned;
- (i) Conviction of the parent, when a child has been born of the offense, of: (A) A sex offense under chapter [9A.44](#) RCW; or (B) incest under [RCW 9A.64.020](#). [2000 c 122 § 16.]

## **RCW 13.34.134 - Permanent placement of child.**

If reasonable efforts are not ordered under [RCW 13.34.132](#), a permanency planning hearing shall be held within thirty days of the court order to file a petition to terminate parental rights. Reasonable efforts shall be made to place the child in a timely manner in accordance with the permanency plan, and to complete whatever steps are necessary to finalize the permanent placement of the child. [2000 c 122 § 17.]

## **RCW 13.34.138 - Review hearings -- Findings -- Housing assistance.**

- (1) Except for children whose cases are reviewed by a citizen review board under chapter [13.70](#) RCW, the status of all children found to be dependent shall be reviewed by the court at least every six months from the beginning date of the placement episode or the date dependency is established, whichever is first, at a hearing in which it shall be determined whether court supervision should continue. The initial review hearing shall be an in-court review and shall be set six months from the beginning date of the

placement episode or no more than ninety days from the entry of the disposition order, whichever comes first. The initial review hearing may be a permanency planning hearing when necessary to meet the time frames set forth in **RCW 13.34.145(3)** or **13.34.134**. The review shall include findings regarding the agency and parental completion of disposition plan requirements, and if necessary, revised permanency time limits. This review shall consider both the agency's and parent's efforts that demonstrate consistent measurable progress over time in meeting the disposition plan requirements. The requirements for the initial review hearing, including the in-court requirement, shall be accomplished within existing resources. The supervising agency shall provide a foster parent, preadoptive parent, or relative with notice of, and their right to an opportunity to be heard in, a review hearing pertaining to the child, but only if that person is currently providing care to that child at the time of the hearing. This section shall not be construed to grant party status to any person who has been provided an opportunity to be heard.

(a) A child shall not be returned home at the review hearing unless the court finds that a reason for removal as set forth in **RCW 13.34.130** no longer exists. The parents, guardian, or legal custodian shall report to the court the efforts they have made to correct the conditions which led to removal. If a child is returned, casework supervision shall continue for a period of six months, at which time there shall be a hearing on the need for continued intervention.

(b) If the child is not returned home, the court shall establish in writing:

- (i) Whether reasonable services have been provided to or offered to the parties to facilitate reunion, specifying the services provided or offered;
- (ii) Whether the child has been placed in the least-restrictive setting appropriate to the child's needs, including whether consideration and preference has been given to placement with the child's relatives;
- (iii) Whether there is a continuing need for placement and whether the placement is appropriate;
- (iv) Whether there has been compliance with the case plan by the child, the child's parents, and the agency supervising the placement;
- (v) Whether progress has been made toward correcting the problems that necessitated the child's placement in out-of-home care;
- (vi) Whether the parents have visited the child and any reasons why visitation has not occurred or has been infrequent;
- (vii) Whether additional services, including housing assistance, are needed to facilitate the return of the child to the child's parents; if so, the court shall order that reasonable services be offered specifying such services; and
- (viii) The projected date by which the child will be returned home or other permanent plan of care will be implemented.

(c) The court at the review hearing may order that a petition seeking termination of the parent and child relationship be filed.

(2) The court's ability to order housing assistance under **RCW 13.34.130** and this section is: (a) Limited to cases in which homelessness or the lack of adequate and safe housing is the primary reason for an out-of-home placement; and (b) subject to the availability of funds appropriated for this specific purpose.

[2001 c 332 § 5; 2000 c 122 § 19.]

**RCW 13.34.145 - Permanency plan required -- Permanency planning hearing -- Time limits -- Review hearing -- Petition for termination of parental rights - Guardianship petition -- Agency responsibility to provide services to parents--Due process rights.**

(1) A permanency plan shall be developed no later than sixty days from the time the supervising agency assumes responsibility for providing services, including placing the child, or at the time of a hearing under **RCW 13.34.130**, whichever occurs first. The permanency planning process continues until a permanency planning goal is achieved or dependency is dismissed. The planning process shall include reasonable efforts to return the child to the parent's home.

(a) Whenever a child is placed in out-of-home care pursuant to **RCW 13.34.130**, the agency that has custody of the child shall provide the court with a written permanency plan of care directed towards securing a safe, stable, and permanent home for the child as soon as possible. The plan shall identify one of the following outcomes as the primary goal and may also identify additional outcomes as alternative goals: Return of the child to the home of the child's parent, guardian, or legal custodian; adoption; guardianship; permanent legal custody; long-term relative or foster care, until the child is age eighteen, with a written agreement between the parties and the care provider; a responsible living skills program; and independent living, if appropriate and if the child is age sixteen or older and the provisions of subsection (2) of this section are met.

(b) The identified outcomes and goals of the permanency plan may change over time based upon the circumstances of the particular case.

(c) Permanency planning goals should be achieved at the earliest possible date, preferably before the child has been in out-of-home care for fifteen months. In cases where parental rights have been terminated, the child is legally free for adoption, and adoption has been identified as the primary permanency planning goal, it shall be a goal to complete the adoption within six months following entry of the termination order.

(d) For purposes related to permanency planning:

(i) "Guardianship" means a dependency guardianship, a legal guardianship pursuant to chapter **11.88 RCW**, or equivalent laws of another state or a federally recognized Indian tribe.

(ii) "Permanent custody order" means a custody order entered pursuant to chapter **26.10 RCW**.

(iii) "Permanent legal custody" means legal custody pursuant to chapter **26.10 RCW** or equivalent laws of another state or of a federally recognized Indian tribe.

(2) Whenever a permanency plan identifies independent living as a goal, the plan shall also specifically identify the services that will be provided to assist the child to make a successful transition from foster care to independent living. Before the court approves independent living as a permanency plan of care, the court shall make a finding that the provision of services to assist the child in making a transition from foster care to independent living will allow the child to manage his or her financial, personal, social, educational, and nonfinancial affairs. The department shall not discharge a child to an independent living situation before the child is eighteen years of age unless the child becomes emancipated pursuant to chapter **13.64 RCW**.

(3) A permanency planning hearing shall be held in all cases where the child has remained in out-of-home care for at least nine months and an adoption decree, guardianship order, or permanent custody order has not previously been entered. The hearing shall take place no later than twelve months following commencement of the current placement episode.

(4) Whenever a child is removed from the home of a dependency guardian or long-term relative or foster care provider, and the child is not returned to the home of the parent, guardian, or legal custodian but is placed in out-of-home care, a permanency planning hearing shall take place no later than twelve months, as provided in subsection (3) of this section, following the date of removal unless, prior to the hearing, the child returns to the home of the dependency guardian or long-term care provider, the child is placed in the home of the parent, guardian, or legal custodian, an adoption decree, guardianship order, or a permanent custody order is entered, or the dependency is dismissed.

(5) No later than ten working days prior to the permanency planning hearing, the agency having custody of the child shall submit a written permanency plan to the court and shall mail a copy of the plan to all parties and their legal counsel, if any.

(6) At the permanency planning hearing, the court shall enter findings as required by **RCW 13.34.138** and shall review the permanency plan prepared by the agency. If the child has resided in the home of a foster parent or relative for more than six months prior to the permanency planning hearing, the court shall also enter a finding regarding whether the foster parent or relative was informed of the hearing as required in **RCW 74.13.280** and **13.34.138**. If a goal of long-term foster or relative care has been achieved prior to the permanency planning hearing, the court shall review the child's status to determine whether the placement and the plan for the child's care remain appropriate. In cases where the primary permanency planning goal has not been achieved, the court shall inquire regarding the reasons why the primary goal has not been achieved and determine what needs to be done to make it possible to achieve the primary goal. In all cases, the court shall:

(a)(i) Order the permanency plan prepared by the agency to be implemented; or

(ii) Modify the permanency plan, and order implementation of the modified plan; and

(b)(i) Order the child returned home only if the court finds that a reason for removal as set forth in **RCW 13.34.130** no longer exists; or

(ii) Order the child to remain in out-of-home care for a limited specified time period while efforts are made to implement the permanency plan.

(7) If the court orders the child returned home, casework supervision shall continue for at least six months, at which time a review hearing shall be held pursuant to **RCW 13.34.138**, and the court shall determine the need for continued intervention.

(8) The juvenile court may hear a petition for permanent legal custody when: (a) The court has ordered implementation of a permanency plan that includes permanent legal custody; and (b) the party pursuing the permanent legal custody is the party identified in the permanency plan as the prospective legal custodian. During the pendency of such proceeding, the court shall conduct review hearings and further permanency planning hearings as provided in this chapter. At the conclusion of the legal guardianship or permanent legal custody proceeding, a juvenile court hearing shall be held for the purpose of determining whether dependency should be dismissed. If a guardianship or permanent custody order has been entered, the dependency shall be dismissed.

(9) Continued juvenile court jurisdiction under this chapter shall not be a barrier to the entry of an order establishing a legal guardianship or permanent legal custody when the requirements of subsection (8) of this section are met.

(10) Following the first permanency planning hearing, the court shall hold a further permanency planning hearing in accordance with this section at least once every twelve months until a permanency planning goal is achieved or the dependency is dismissed, whichever occurs first.

(11) Except as provided in **RCW 13.34.235**, the status of all dependent children shall continue to be reviewed by the court at least once every six months, in accordance with **RCW 13.34.138**, until the dependency is dismissed. Prior to the second permanency planning hearing, the agency that has custody of the child shall consider whether to file a petition for termination of parental rights.

(12) Nothing in this chapter may be construed to limit the ability of the agency that has custody of the child to file a petition for termination of parental rights or a guardianship petition at any time following the establishment of dependency. Upon the filing of such a petition, a fact-finding hearing shall be scheduled and held in accordance with this chapter unless the agency requests dismissal of the petition prior to the hearing or unless the parties enter an agreed order terminating parental rights, establishing guardianship, or otherwise resolving the matter.

(13) The approval of a permanency plan that does not contemplate return of the child to the parent does not relieve the supervising agency of its obligation to provide reasonable services, under this chapter, intended to effectuate the return of the child to the parent, including but not limited to, visitation rights.

(14) Nothing in this chapter may be construed to limit the procedural due process rights of any party in a termination or guardianship proceeding filed under this chapter.

[2000 c 135 § 4; 2000 c 122 § 20; 1999 c 267 § 17. Prior: 1998 c 314 § 3; 1998 c 130 § 3; prior: 1995 c 311 § 20; 1995 c 53 § 2; 1994 c 288 § 5; 1993 c 412 § 1; 1989 1st ex.s. c 17 § 18; 1988 c 194 § 3.]

**NOTES: Reviser's note:** This section was amended by 2000 c 122 § 20 and by 2000 c 135 § 4, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under **RCW 1.12.025(2)**. For rule of construction, see **RCW 1.12.025(1)**. **Findings -- Intent -- Severability -- 1999 c 267:** See notes following **RCW 43.20A.790**. **Short title -- Purpose -- Entitlement not granted -- Federal waivers -- 1999 c 267 §§ 10-26:** See **RCW 74.15.900** and **74.15.901**.

## **RCW 13.34.180 - Order terminating parent and child relationship -- Petition - Filing -- Allegations.**

(1) A petition seeking termination of a parent and child relationship may be filed in juvenile court by any party to the dependency proceedings concerning that child. Such petition shall conform to the requirements of RCW 13.34.040, shall be served upon the parties as provided in RCW 13.34.070(8), and shall allege all of the following unless subsection (2) or (3) of this section applies:

(a) That the child has been found to be a dependent child;

(b) That the court has entered a dispositional order pursuant to RCW 13.34.130;

(c) That the child has been removed or will, at the time of the hearing, have been removed from the custody of the parent for a period of at least six months pursuant to a finding of dependency;

(d) That the services ordered under RCW 13.34.136 have been expressly and understandably offered or provided and all necessary services, reasonably available, capable of correcting the parental deficiencies within the foreseeable future have been expressly and understandably offered or provided;

(e) That there is little likelihood that conditions will be remedied so that the child can be returned to the parent in the near future. A parent's failure to substantially improve parental deficiencies within twelve months following entry of the dispositional order shall give rise to a rebuttable presumption that there is little likelihood that conditions will be remedied so that the child can be returned to the parent in the near future. The presumption shall not arise unless the petitioner makes a showing that all necessary services reasonably capable of correcting the parental deficiencies within the foreseeable future have been clearly offered or provided. In determining whether the conditions will be remedied the court may consider, but is not limited to, the following factors:

(i) Use of intoxicating or controlled substances so as to render the parent incapable of providing proper care for the child for extended periods of time or for periods of time that present a risk of imminent harm to the child, and documented unwillingness of the parent to receive and complete treatment or documented multiple failed treatment attempts; or

(ii) Psychological incapacity or mental deficiency of the parent that is so severe and chronic as to render the parent incapable of providing proper care for the child for extended periods of time or for periods of time that present a risk of imminent harm to the child, and documented unwillingness of the parent to receive and complete treatment or documentation that there is no treatment that can render the parent capable of providing proper care for the child in the near future; and

(f) That continuation of the parent and child relationship clearly diminishes the child's prospects for early integration into a stable and permanent home.

(2) In lieu of the allegations in subsection (1) of this section, the petition may allege that the child was found under such circumstances that the whereabouts of the child's parent are unknown and no person has acknowledged paternity or maternity and requested custody of the child within two months after the child was found.

(3) In lieu of the allegations in subsection (1)(b) through (f) of this section, the petition may allege that the parent has been convicted of:

(a) Murder in the first degree, murder in the second degree, or homicide by abuse as defined in chapter 9A.32 RCW against another child of the parent;

(b) Manslaughter in the first degree or manslaughter in the second degree, as defined in chapter 9A.32 RCW against another child of the parent;

(c) Attempting, conspiring, or soliciting another to commit one or more of the crimes listed in (a) or (b) of this subsection; or

(d) Assault in the first or second degree, as defined in chapter 9A.36 RCW, against the surviving child or another child of the parent.

(4) Notice of rights shall be served upon the parent, guardian, or legal custodian with the petition and shall be in substantially the following form:

#### "NOTICE

A petition for termination of parental rights has been filed against you. You have important legal rights and you must take steps to protect your interests. This petition could result in permanent loss of your parental rights.

1. You have the right to a fact-finding hearing before a judge.

2. You have the right to have a lawyer represent you at the hearing. A lawyer can look at the files in your case, talk to the department of social and health services and other agencies, tell you about the law, help you understand your rights, and help you at hearings. If you cannot afford a lawyer, the court will appoint one to represent you. To get a court-appointed lawyer you must contact: (explain local procedure).

3. At the hearing, you have the right to speak on your own behalf, to introduce evidence, to examine witnesses, and to receive a decision based solely on the evidence presented to the judge. You should be present at this hearing. You may call (insert agency) for more information about your child. The agency's name and telephone number are (insert name and telephone number)."

[2001 c 332 § 4; 2000 c 122 § 25; 1998 c 314 § 4; 1997 c 280 § 2. Prior: 1993 c 412 § 2; 1993 c 358 § 3; 1990 c 246 § 7; 1988 c 201 § 2; 1987 c 524 § 6; 1979 c 155 § 47; 1977 ex.s. c 291 § 46.]

**NOTES: Severability -- 1990 c 246:** See note following RCW 13.34.060. **Effective date -- Severability -- 1979 c 155:** See notes following RCW 13.04.011. **Effective dates -- Severability -- 1977 ex.s. c 291:** See notes following RCW 13.04.005.

**RCW 13.34.190 - Order terminating parent and child relationship -- Findings.**

After hearings pursuant to RCW 13.34.110 or 13.34.130, the court may enter an order terminating all parental rights to a child only if the court finds that:

- (1)(a) The allegations contained in the petition as provided in RCW 13.34.180(1) are established by clear, cogent, and convincing evidence; or
  - (b) The provisions of RCW 13.34.180(1) (a), (b), (e), and (f) are established beyond a reasonable doubt and if so, then RCW 13.34.180(1) (c) and (d) may be waived. When an infant has been abandoned, as defined in RCW 13.34.030, and the abandonment has been proved beyond a reasonable doubt, then RCW 13.34.180(1) (c) and (d) may be waived; or
  - (c) The allegation under RCW 13.34.180(2) is established beyond a reasonable doubt. In determining whether RCW 13.34.180(1) (e) and (f) are established beyond a reasonable doubt, the court shall consider whether one or more of the aggravated circumstances listed in RCW 13.34.132 exist; or
  - (d) The allegation under RCW 13.34.180(3) is established beyond a reasonable doubt; and
- (2) Such an order is in the best interests of the child.

[2000 c 122 § 26; 1998 c 314 § 5; 1993 c 412 § 3; 1992 c 145 § 15; 1990 c 284 § 33; 1979 c 155 § 48; 1977 ex.s. c 291 § 47.]

**NOTES: Finding -- Effective date -- 1990 c 284:** See notes following RCW 74.13.250. **Effective date -- Severability -- 1979 c 155:** See notes following RCW 13.04.011. **Effective dates -- Severability -- 1977 ex.s. c 291:** See notes following RCW 13.04.005.

**WAC 388-25-0450 - Under what circumstances may a relative not be considered as a placement option for a child?**

The department may exclude relatives who have criminal histories as included in the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) regulations.

- (1) If the department finds that, based on a criminal records check, a court of competent jurisdiction has determined that the relative or a member of the household has been convicted of a felony involving:
  - (a) Child abuse or neglect;
  - (b) Spousal abuse;
  - (c) A crime against a child or children (including child pornography); or
  - (d) Crimes involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide, but not including other physical assault or battery.
- (2) The department may not approve a relative placement if the department finds the relative, or a member of the household, has, within the last five years, been convicted of a felony involving:
  - (a) Physical assault;
  - (b) Battery; or
  - (c) A drug related offense.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.13.031. 01-08-047, § 388-25-0450, filed 3/30/01, effective 4/30/01.]

# Rules for Superior Court

## Guardian ad Litem Rules (GALR)

### Table of Rules

Rule	Title
------	-------

---

GALR 1	Scope and Definitions
GALR 2	General Responsibilities of Guardian ad Litem
GALR 3	Roles and Responsibilities of Guardian ad Litem in Title 13 RCW Juvenile Court Proceedings
GALR 4	Authority of Guardian ad Litem
GALR 5	Appointments of Guardian ad Litem
GALR 6	Limited Appointments
GALR 7	Grievance Procedures

### GUARDIAN AD LITEM RULE 1: SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

(a) **Statement of Purpose and Scope of Rule.** The purpose of these rules is to establish a minimum set of standards applicable to all superior court cases where the court appoints a guardian ad litem or any person to represent the best interest of a child, an alleged incapacitated person, or an adjudicated incapacitated person pursuant to Title 11, 13 or 26 RCW.

These rules shall also apply to guardians ad litem appointed pursuant to RCW 4.08.050 and RCW 4.08.060, if the appointment is under the procedures of Titles 11, 13 or 26 RCW.

These rules shall not be applicable to guardians ad litem appointed pursuant to Special Proceedings Rule (SPR) 98.16W and chapter 11.96A RCW.

(b) **Definitions.** As used in this rule, the following terms have these meanings:

(1) **Court.** Court shall mean any superior court in the state of Washington and all divisions thereof.

(2) **Guardian ad Litem.** Guardian ad litem shall mean any person or program appointed in a Title 11, 13, or 26 RCW action under the Revised Code of Washington to represent the best interest of a child, an alleged incapacitated person, or an adjudicated incapacitated person. The term guardian ad litem shall not include an attorney appointed to represent a party.

(3) **Judge.** Judge shall mean a judicial officer of the superior court, including commissioners and judges pro tempore.

(4) **Registry.** Registry shall mean the list of people authorized by the court to serve as guardians ad litem or CASA programs authorized by RCW 26.12.175.

[Adopted effective November 27, 2001.]

GUARDIAN AD LITEM RULE 2:  
GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF GUARDIAN AD LITEM

Consistent with the responsibilities set forth in Titles 11, 13, and 26 of the Revised Code of Washington and other applicable statutes and rules of court, in every case in which a guardian ad litem is appointed, the guardian ad litem shall perform the responsibilities set forth below. For purposes of these rules, a guardian ad litem is any person who is appointed by the court to represent the best interest of the child(ren), an adjudicated incapacitated person, or an alleged incapacitated person or to assist the court in determining the best interest of the child(ren), an adjudicated incapacitated person, or an alleged incapacitated person, regardless of that person's title, except a person appointed pursuant to rule 6.

(a) Represent best interests. A guardian ad litem shall represent the best interests of the person for whom he or she is appointed. Representation of best interests may be inconsistent with the wishes of the person whose interest the guardian ad litem represents. The guardian ad litem shall not advocate on behalf of or advise any party so as to create in the mind of a reasonable person the appearance of representing that party as an attorney.

(b) Maintain independence. A guardian ad litem shall maintain independence, objectivity and the appearance of fairness in dealings with parties and professionals, both in and out of the courtroom.

(c) Professional conduct. A guardian ad litem shall maintain the ethical principles of the rules of conduct set forth in these rules and is subject to discipline under local rules established pursuant to rule 7 for violation.

(d) Remain qualified for the registry. Unless excepted by statute or court rule, a guardian ad litem shall satisfy all training requirements and continuing education requirements developed for Titles 13 and 26 RCW guardians ad litem by the administrator of the courts and for Title 11 RCW guardians ad litem as required by statute and maintain qualifications to serve as guardian ad litem in every county where the guardian ad litem is listed on the registry for that county and in which the guardian ad litem serves and shall promptly advise each such court of any grounds for disqualification or unavailability to serve.

(e) Avoid conflicts of interests. A guardian ad litem shall avoid any actual or apparent conflict of interest or impropriety in the performance of guardian ad litem responsibilities. A guardian ad litem shall avoid self-dealing or association from which a guardian ad litem might directly or indirectly benefit, other than for compensation as guardian ad litem. A guardian ad litem shall take action immediately to resolve any potential conflict or impropriety. A guardian ad litem shall advise the court and the parties of action taken, resign from the matter, or seek court direction as may be necessary to resolve the conflict or impropriety. A guardian ad litem shall not accept or maintain appointment if the performance of the duties of guardian ad litem may be materially limited by the guardian ad litem's responsibilities to another client or a third person, or by the guardian ad litem's own interests.

(f) Treat parties with respect. A guardian ad litem is an officer of the court and as such shall at all times treat the parties with respect, courtesy, fairness and good faith.

(g) Become informed about case. A guardian ad litem shall make reasonable efforts to become informed about the facts of the case and to contact all parties. A guardian ad litem shall examine material information and sources of information, taking into account the positions of the parties.

(h) Make requests for evaluations to court. A guardian ad litem shall not require any evaluations or tests of the parties except as authorized by statute or court order issued following notice and opportunity to be heard.

(i) Timely inform the court of relevant information. A guardian ad litem shall file a written report with the court and the parties as required by law or court order or in any event not later than 10 days prior to a hearing for which a report is required. The report shall be accompanied by a written list of documents considered or called to the attention of the guardian ad litem and persons interviewed during the course of the investigation.

(j) Limit duties to those ordered by court. A guardian ad litem shall comply with the court's instructions as set out in the order appointing a guardian ad litem, and shall not provide or require services beyond the scope of the court's instruction unless by motion and on adequate notice to the parties, a guardian ad litem obtains additional instruction, clarification or expansion of the scope of such appointment.

(k) Inform individuals about role in case. A guardian ad litem shall identify himself or herself as a guardian ad litem when contacting individuals in the course of a particular case and inform individuals contacted in a particular case about the role of a guardian ad litem in the case at the earliest practicable time. A guardian ad litem shall advise information sources that the documents and information obtained may become part of court proceedings.

(l) Appear at hearings. The guardian ad litem shall be given notice of all hearings and proceedings. A guardian ad litem shall appear at any hearing for which the duties of a guardian ad litem or any issues substantially within a guardian ad litem's duties and scope of appointment are to be addressed. In Title 11 RCW proceedings, the guardian ad litem shall appear at all hearings unless excused by court order.

(m) Ex parte communication. A guardian ad litem shall not have ex parte communications concerning the case with the judge(s) and commissioner(s) involved in the matter except as permitted by court rule or by statute.

(n) Maintain privacy of parties. As an officer of the court, a guardian ad litem shall make no disclosures about the case or the investigation except in reports to the court or as necessary to perform the duties of a guardian ad litem. A guardian ad litem shall maintain the confidential nature of identifiers or addresses where there are allegations of domestic violence or risk to a party's or child's safety. The guardian ad litem may recommend that the court seal the report or a portion of the report of the guardian ad litem to preserve the privacy, confidentiality, or safety of the parties or the person for whom the guardian ad litem was appointed. The court may, upon application, and under such conditions as may be necessary to protect the witnesses from potential harm, order disclosure or discovery that addresses the need to challenge the truth of the information received from the confidential source.

(o) Perform duties in timely manner. A guardian ad litem shall perform responsibilities in a prompt and timely manner, and, if necessary, request timely court reviews and judicial intervention in writing with notice to parties or affected agencies.

(p) Maintain documentation. A guardian ad litem shall maintain documentation to substantiate recommendations and conclusions and shall keep records of actions taken by the guardian ad litem. Except as prohibited or protected by law, and consistent with rule 2(n), this information shall be made available for review on written request of a party or the court on request. Costs may be imposed for such requests.

(q) Keep records of time and expenses. A guardian ad litem shall keep accurate records of the time spent, services rendered, and expenses incurred in each case and file an itemized statement and accounting with the court and provide a copy to each party or other entity responsible for payment. The court shall make provisions for fees and expenses pursuant to statute in the Order Appointing Guardian ad Litem or in any subsequent order.

[Adopted effective November 27, 2001.]

GUARDIAN AD LITEM RULE 3:  
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF GUARDIAN AD LITEM IN TITLE 13 RCW  
JUVENILE COURT PROCEEDINGS

In addition to the roles and responsibilities enumerated in rule 2, a guardian ad litem in Title 13 RCW juvenile court proceedings shall have the following responsibilities:

(a) Role. Unless otherwise specified in the order of appointment, the roles and responsibilities of a guardian ad litem are those roles and responsibilities specified in RCW 13.34.105 and applicable court rules.

(b) Explore concurrent planning. A guardian ad litem shall explore concurrent planning and make a timely recommendation to the court for a permanent plan for the child.

[Adopted effective November 27, 2001.]

GUARDIAN AD LITEM RULE 4:  
AUTHORITY OF GUARDIAN AD LITEM

As an officer of the court, a guardian ad litem has only such authority conferred by the order of appointment. Consistent with the roles and responsibilities set forth in rules 2 and 3, and the grievance procedures set forth in rules 5 and 6, a guardian ad litem shall have the following authority:

(a) Access to party. Unless circumstances warrant otherwise, a guardian ad litem shall have access to the persons for whom a guardian ad litem is appointed and to all information relevant to the issues for which a guardian ad litem was appointed. The access of a guardian ad litem to the child or alleged incapacitated person and all relevant information shall not be unduly restricted by any person or agency. When the guardian ad litem seeks contact with a party who is represented by an attorney, the guardian ad litem shall notify the attorney in advance of such contact. The guardian ad litem's contact with the represented party shall be as permitted by the party's attorney, unless otherwise ordered by the court.

(b) Timely receipt of case documents. Until discharged by court order a guardian ad litem shall be timely furnished copies of all relevant pleadings, documents, and reports by the party which served or submitted them.

(c) Timely notification. A guardian ad litem shall be timely notified of all court hearings, administrative reviews, staffings, investigations, dispositions, and other proceedings concerning the case by the person or agency scheduling the proceeding.

(d) Notice of proposed agreements. A guardian ad litem shall be given notice of, and an opportunity to indicate his or her agreement or objection to any proposed agreed order of the parties governing issues substantially related to the duties of a guardian ad litem.

(e) Participate in all proceedings. Consistent with rule 2(l), a guardian ad litem shall participate in court hearings through submission of written and supplemental oral reports and as otherwise authorized by statute and court rule.

(f) Access to records. Except as limited by law or unless good cause is shown to the court, upon receiving a copy of the order appointing a guardian ad litem, any person or agency, including but not limited to any hospital, school, child care provider, organization, department of social and health services, doctor, health care provider, mental health provider, chemical health program, psychologist, psychiatrist, or law enforcement agency, shall permit a guardian ad litem to inspect and copy any and all records and interview personnel relating to the proceeding for which a guardian ad litem is appointed.

(g) Access to court files. Within the scope of appointment, a guardian ad litem shall have access to all superior court and all juvenile court files. Access to sealed or confidential files shall be by separate order. A guardian ad litem's report shall inform the court and parties if the report contains information from sealed or confidential files. The clerk of court shall provide certified copies of the order of appointment to a guardian ad litem upon request and without charge.

(h) Additional rights and powers under RCW 13.34 or RCW 26.26. In every case in which a guardian ad litem is a party to the case pursuant to RCW 13.34 or RCW 26.26, a guardian ad litem shall have the rights and powers set forth below. These rights and powers are subject to all applicable statutes and court rules.

(1) File documents and respond to discovery. A guardian ad litem shall have the right to file pleadings, motions, notices memoranda, briefs, and other documents, and may, subject to the trial court's discretion engage in and respond to discovery.

(2) Note motions and request hearings. A guardian ad litem shall have the right to note motions and request hearings before the court as appropriate to the best interests of the person(s) for whom a guardian ad litem was appointed.

(3) Introduce exhibits, examine witnesses, and appeal. A guardian ad litem shall have the right, subject to the trial court's discretion, to introduce exhibits, subpoena witnesses, and conduct direct and cross examination of witnesses.

(4) Oral argument and submission of reports. A guardian ad litem shall have the right to fully participate in the proceedings through submission of written reports, and, may with the consent of the trial court present oral argument.

(i) Additional rights and powers in other cases. For good cause shown, a guardian ad litem may petition the court for additional authority as set forth in rule 2(j).

(j) Additional training requirements. The Administrative Office of the Courts shall amend the current guardian ad litem mandatory training so that Titles 13 and 26 RCW guardians ad litem are prepared to carry out the additional requirements of this rule.

[Adopted effective November 27, 2001.]

GUARDIAN AD LITEM RULE 5:  
APPOINTMENTS OF GUARDIAN AD LITEM

(a) Equitable distribution of workload. Each court shall promulgate local rules providing a system of appointing and reasonably compensating guardians ad litem which ensures an equitable distribution of the work load among the guardians ad litem on the registry.

(b) Procedure to address complaints. The local rules shall provide a procedure to timely address complaints made by any guardian ad litem regarding registry or appointment matters.

[Adopted effective November 27, 2001.]

GUARDIAN AD LITEM RULE 6:  
LIMITED APPOINTMENTS

There may be situations where the court wishes to appoint a person in addition to, or instead of, a guardian ad litem to fulfill very limited roles. This will help avoid conflict of interest situations for guardians ad litem serving in a case and will limit the time and expense spent on cases which do not require a guardian ad litem. A person appointed pursuant to this rule is strictly limited to the duties of the role below selected by the court. If the order of appointment does not specifically designate a limited appointment as listed below, the person appointed is presumed to be a guardian ad litem, subject to the Guardian ad Litem Rules. The court may make the following limited appointments:

(a) Mediator. The court may either appoint or refer to a person or agency whose role is to assist the parties in reaching an agreement about any or all contested issues in the case.

(b) Evaluator. The court may appoint or refer to a person or agency for evaluation and findings regarding a specific issue or issues including but not limited to mental health, substance abuse, issues of abuse or neglect, cultural factors, and sexual deviancy.

(c) Visitation supervisor. The court may appoint or refer to a person or agency to supervise visits and report findings to the court.

(d) Settlement of minors' claims. The court may appoint a person for the limited purpose described in Special Proceedings Rules (SPR) 98.16W.

(e) Other. Under exceptional circumstances, upon good cause shown, the court may make other limited appointments as it deems necessary.

[Adopted effective November 27, 2001.]

## GUARDIAN AD LITEM RULE 7: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Each court shall promulgate rules that set out or refer to policies and procedures establishing and governing the filing, investigating, and adjudicating grievances made by or against guardians ad litem under Titles, 11, 13, and 26 RCW. The rules shall, at a minimum, comply with and address the following:

- (a) Clear and concise. The rules shall be clear, and concise and easily understood by both attorneys and non-attorneys.
- (b) Separate procedures. The rules shall establish separate procedures addressing grievances or complaints filed during the pendency of a case, and grievances or complaints filed subsequent to the conclusion of a case.
- (c) Fair treatment of grievances. The rules shall establish procedures providing for fair treatment of grievances including appearance-of-fairness and conflict issues.
- (d) CASA grievance procedures. Where applicable, local rules shall accommodate the grievance procedures of Court Appointed Special Advocate(s) (CASA) or other volunteer program(s).
- (e) Confidentiality. The rules shall provide for confidentiality of complaints until merit has been found.
- (f) Response to complaint. The rules shall provide a procedure for any guardian ad litem who is the subject of a complaint to respond to the complaint.
- (g) Complaint resolution time standards. The rules shall include a time limit during which a complaint must be resolved. The limit shall not be longer than 25 days for complaints filed while a case is pending or 60 days for complaints filed subsequent to the conclusion of a case.
- (h) Records of grievances. For its own reference purposes, the court shall maintain a record of grievances filed and of any sanctions issued pursuant to local court grievance procedure.
- (i) Removal from registry. When a guardian ad litem is removed from a county's registry pursuant to the disposition of a grievance, the court of that county shall send notice of such removal to the Office of the Administrator of the Courts, who shall on a regular basis, but not less than biannually, forward the information to the superior courts of each county in the state of Washington.
- (j) Implementation. Local court rules establishing a grievance procedure shall be filed in the manner provided in GR 7.

[Adopted effective November 27, 2001.]

NOTES:

## **4. USEFUL FORMS AND SAMPLES**

### **to keep the process and information flowing**

The following forms and handouts were developed (or have been found useful) in the Achieving Permanence Project sites. The resources are indexed below according to the sections of the permanency timeline where they have been used most effectively.

The pages that follow the index are copies of the actual forms and handouts in Microsoft Word. For optimum flexibility, they are arranged in alphabetical order by title.

#### **Preparing the program and community for an Achieving Permanence focus**

- APPOINTMENT LETTER FOR VOLUNTEER
- AWARENESS WORKSHOP - COMMON GROUNDS AND BOUNDARIES AGENDA
- JOB DESCRIPTION: ACHIEVING PERMANENCE COORDINATOR
- JOB DESCRIPTION: PROJECT COORDINATOR FOR LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN
- JOB DESCRIPTION: OFFICE ASSISTANT FOR LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN
- JOB DESCRIPTION: CASA/GAL VOLUNTEER DOING POST-TPR WORK
- PSA (30 SECOND PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS)– 3 SCRIPTS
- PUBLICITY AND RECRUITMENT TRACKING FORM
- WHERE CAN I GO FOR HELP? LOCAL INFORMATION TO BE FILLED OUT BY LOCAL PROGRAM

#### **Dependency Petition**

- CASE TRACKING COVER SHEET FOR PROGRAM
- CASE TRACKING WORKSHEET FOR VOLUNTEER
- MEDICAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND REPORT (DSHS FORM 13-041)

#### **Shelter Care Hearing**

- ADDRESS UPDATE - LETTER TO POSTMASTER
- CASA VOLUNTEER APPOINTMENT LETTER FROM PROGRAM
- CASA VOLUNTEER COURT RESUME
- CASA VOLUNTEER TRAINING STATEMENT
- CASE TRACKING COVER SHEET FOR PROGRAM
- CASE TRACKING WORKSHEET FOR VOLUNTEER
- INITIAL RELATIVE SCREENING FORM
- INITIAL RELATIVE SCREENING CONTACT CHART
- REFERENCE FOR POSSIBLE CHILD PLACEMENT
- RELATIVE SCREENING RECORD CHART

### **Fact Finding Hearing**

- SPECIAL IMMIGRANT JUVENILE STATUS APPLICATION INFORMATION
- SPECIAL IMMIGRANT JUVENILE STATUS COURT RECORD FORM
- DILIGENT SEARCH FAMILY TREE

### **Dependency Review Hearing**

- TEN STEPS TO CONCURRENT PLANNING
- PRE-TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS CHECKLIST FOR CASA/GALS

### **Permanency Planning Hearing**

- ADOPTION CHECKLIST
- ADOPTION SUPPORT APPLICATION CHECKLIST
- TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS CHECKLIST FOR CASA/GALS
- OPEN OR CLOSED ADOPTION? QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
- ADOPTION PROGRESS CHECKLIST

### **Termination of Parental Rights**

- TRACKING THE TRANSFER OF LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN TO ADOPTION UNITS
- NOTICE OF TRANSFER OF CASE FROM TO LEGALLY FREE PROGRAM
- NOTICE TO ADOPTION UNIT
- TRANSFER OF LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN – FORM

### **Post-Termination Review Hearing**

- ATTORNEY FINALIZATION CHECKLIST: ADOPTION

### **Permanent Placement**

- POST-ADOPTION SURVEY

# ADOPTION CHECKLIST

## Home Study Package Begins

(Note: The next three areas hold up the process the longest)

Fill out Application for Adoption

Three steps to be completed

1.  Sign up for pre-service class
2.  Sign up for foster parent class
3.  Attend adoption training class

Receive back reference letters

Criminal background from State and Local

Medical report from family physician

psychological evaluation only if flags go up

Must have marriage/divorce certificate

## If family requests – Adoption Support Application

(Note: The most difficult areas in this process are the following.)

Adoption Support Child Registration

Medical Coverage Information Form

Adoption Support Family Application, page 1 and 2

# ADOPTION PROGRESS CHECKLIST

FOR CHILD IN A PRE-ADOPTIVE PLACEMENT

<b>CHILD'S NAME:</b>	<b>TPR DATE:</b>	<b>MO:</b>
<b>PRE-ADOPTIVE FAMILY'S NAME:</b>	<b>FA:</b>	
<b>LEGAL NUMBER:</b>	<b>DATE FORM COMPLETED:</b>	

(THIS FORM WAS DEVELOPED BY FAMILIES FOR KIDS PARTNERSHIP , DCFS AND KING COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT – 2002)

**INSTRUCTIONS: COMPLETE THIS FORM FOR LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN AND UPDATE WITH EACH SUBSEQUENT ISSP. ATTACH THE FORM WITH THE ISSP AND PROVIDE COPIES TO EVERYONE WHO WILL RECEIVE A COPY OF THE ISSP.**

<u>Check when Done</u>	<u>TASK</u>
_____	First adoption staffing completed _____ (Date: mo./yr.)
<b>FAMILY AGREES TO ADOPTION PLAN</b>	
_____	Family has submitted adoption application forms
_____	Adoption home study approved _____ (Date: mo./yr.)
_____	<u>Child's Family Medical &amp; Background Report (13-041) completed and signed</u> _____ (Date: mo./yr.)
_____	Adoption Support application packet submitted
_____	Adoption Support contract approved and signed _____ (DATE: MO./YR.)
_____	Post-Placement Report completed
_____	Family's attorney sent documents
_____	Adoption court date set

**WHO IS RESPONSIBLE TO TAKE THE NEXT STEPS (DCFS, FAMILY, PRIVATE AGENCY, ATTORNEY)**

**BARRIERS TO ADOPTION PROCESS: (CHECK APPROPRIATE BOXES)**

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal history issues              | <input type="checkbox"/> Marital/partner Issues   | <input type="checkbox"/> Required paperwork not completed - agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drug/alcohol issues – family         | <input type="checkbox"/> CPS/DLR issues   | <input type="checkbox"/> Required paperwork not completed – family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health/mental issues - family        | <input type="checkbox"/> Family or child ambivalence  | <input type="checkbox"/> Reconsidering permanent plan or placement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health/mental issues - child         | <input type="checkbox"/> TPR appeal pending (family decided not to proceed until appeal decision) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adoption support negotiation         | <input type="checkbox"/> ICPC or Courtesy Supervision   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Concerns (i.e. child care) |   |  |

**ACTIONS TO ADDRESS BARRIERS (REFER TO “BARRIERS TO FINALIZING PERMANENT PLAN” SECTION OR OUTLINE ON BACK):**

# ADOPTION SUPPORT APPLICATION-CHECKLIST

- \_\_\_\_\_ Adoption Support Child Registration [DSHS 10-61 (X)] (Rev. 3/96)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Medical Coverage Information Form [DSHS 14-194 (X)] (Rev. 12/95) Page 1 only
- \_\_\_\_\_ Adoption Support Family Application [DSHS 10-62 (X)] (Rev. 3/96)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Adoption Support Family Application [DSHS 10-62 (A)], page 2 (Rev. 3/96)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Adoption Support IV-E Monitoring Schedule [DSHS 14-319]
- \_\_\_\_\_ Photocopy of Child's Social Security Card or Enumeration Form [DSHS 14-167X]
- \_\_\_\_\_ Adoption Planning Review Form (Any placements not made through WARE) [DSHS 15-174]
- \_\_\_\_\_ IRS 1040 Federal Income Tax Return (current copy)  
If the family is exempt from filing an IRS 1040, enclose a financial statement listing current income and source, signed and dated by the adoptive parent (s). The IRS 1040 needs to be signed by each prospective parent, preferably also dated.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Orders of Termination of Parental Rights
- \_\_\_\_\_ Documentation of SSI referral or award letter
- \_\_\_\_\_ Documentation of the child's special needs [Medical, Psychological, Educational, etc.] (A maximum of 100 pages of documentation will be accepted.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Exc. Request for state funded children re: 90 day WARE rule  
**WAC 388-27-0145 What constitutes a reasonable effort to place a child for adoption without adoption support?** Reasonable effort to place a child without adoption support includes:  
(1) A child registered for three months with the Washington adoption resource exchange (WARE) without finding an adoptive family; or  
(2) A child for whom a documented, formal agency search was conducted for three months, without finding a family who would adopt the child without adoption support services; or  
(3) A child for whom the placing agency's selected prospective adoptive family is unable to adopt the child without assistance from the adoption support program.  
[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.13.031. 01-08-045, § **388-27-0145**, filed 3/30/01, effective 4/30/01.]
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of Termination Order(s) need to input into legal actions (ACTNLA) under PLACEUP in CAMIS
- \_\_\_\_\_ Family needs to be input into the Adoption Module with an A(approved) status

## APPOINTMENT / INTRODUCTION LETTER

(This is a sample letter that can be customized for local program use. Be sure to use program letterhead and replace all the blanks with names and information.)

Date

In the matter of:

\_\_\_\_\_

Child's name

\_\_\_\_\_

DOB

\_\_\_\_\_

LN:

To whom it may concern:

This letter is to confirm that \_\_\_\_\_ is appointed Court Appointed Special Advocate for the above-named child(ren) who are subject(s) of a \_\_\_\_\_ County Superior Court proceeding.

The CASA volunteer is appointed by the Court to represent a child who is not old enough to present his/her own position to the Court. The CASA volunteer is a party to all legal proceedings involving the above-named child(ren).

The CASA volunteer's primary responsibility is to be an advocate for the child's best interests in the Court. This necessitates interviewing the parents, relatives, friends, and others having knowledge relevant to the child's situation.

Any questions regarding the CASA volunteer appointed in this case should be referred to the CASA Program office by calling \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

Program Director  
CASA Program

cc: Attorney General of Washington  
DSHS Social Worker

## ATTORNEY FINALIZATION CHECKLIST: Adoption

\_\_\_\_\_ COVER LETTER

\_\_\_\_\_ PRE-PLACEMENT REPORT

\_\_\_\_\_ CERTIFIED COPY OF TERMINATION ORDER

\_\_\_\_\_ 13-41 SIGNED (MEDICAL AND BACKGROUND REPORT)

\_\_\_\_\_ ORIGINAL BIRTH CERTIFICATE

\_\_\_\_\_ CONSENT TO ADOPT

\_\_\_\_\_ WAIVER OF NOTICE OF FURTHER HEARING

\_\_\_\_\_ POST-PLACEMENT REPORT

\_\_\_\_\_ ADOPTION SUPPORT AGREEMENT (SIGNED)

# AWARENESS WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Developed by Benton/Franklin CASA Program

A workshop, titled COMMON GROUNDS AND BOUNDARIES, was planned and presented by the Benton/Franklin CASA Program in May 1999.

*“Common Grounds and Boundaries” is a two -part workshop on permanency planning for “Legally Free Children”, children who are legally ready for adoption. The focus of this training workshop is to present an understanding of the dependency process and specifically that “reasonable efforts” have been provided to the families in order to determine a permanency plan for the child. The workshop is intended for all who are a part of this process: CASA/Guardians ad Litem, Caseworkers, Service Providers, Foster Parents, and all those who work with the children.*

## **Day 1:**

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
Introduction - Reasonable Efforts	CASA/GAL Attorney
Changing the Plan to Termination of Parental Rights	DCFS Supervisor
Psychological Evaluations	Service Provider
A Caseworker’s Perspective	DCFS social workers
Loss / Grief Issues	Therapist
Panel luncheon - open for discussion	

## **Day 2:**

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
Legally Free Terminology	Attorneys at Law
Process and Finalization	DCFS Adoption Worker
Foster Families Experiences	Foster Parents
Judicial Perspective	Juvenile Court Commissioner
Panel luncheon - open for discussion	



## CASE TRACKING WORKSHEET for CASA Volunteer (page 1 of 2)

Name of Child:

Age (DOB):

LN:

Social worker:

Mother's Name:

Attorney for Mother:

Father's Name:

Attorney for Father:

<b>EVENT/TYPER OF HEARING</b>	<b>DATES</b> Deadline	Actual date/time	<b>PERSON INVOLVED</b> (changes if applicable)	<b>NOTES:</b>
A. Report to Child Protective Services				
B. CPS Investigation				
C. Child placed in out-of-home care				(Placement type)
D. Dependency Petition filed				
E. Shelter Care Hearing				
F. Continued Shelter Care Hearings				

CASE TRACKING WORKSHEET  
for CASA Volunteer (page 2 of 2)

<b>EVENT/TYPE OF HEARING</b>	<b>DATES</b> Deadline	Actual date/time	<b>PERSON INVOLVED</b> (changes if applicable)	<b>NOTES:</b>
G. Fact Finding Hearing				
H. Disposition Hearing				
I. Dependency Review Hearing				
J. Permanency Planning Hearing				
K. Termination of Parental Rights				
L. Post-Termination Review Hearing				
M. Permanent Placement				



# CHILD'S MEDICAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND REPORT

Information contained in DSHS form 13-041(x)(REV. 02/1998  
(13-041 is currently being revised by DSHS – 3/2002) page 1 of 8

The information in this document and any attached reports shall not disclose any identifying information on the birth parent

Date:
-------

**Each item must be addressed; and if information is unavailable or unknown, please indicate.**

**SECTION I:**

**CHILD'S IDENTIFYING INFORMATION**

1. NAME OF CHILD	2. SEX    male    female	3. ETHNICITY	4. PLACE OF BIRTH	5. DATE OF BIRTH
------------------	--------------------------	--------------	-------------------	------------------

**SECTION II:**

**BIRTH MOTHER'S BACKGROUND AND FAMILY GENETIC/MEDICAL HISTORY**

1. YEAR OF BIRTH	2. ETHNICITY	3. RELIGION	4. HEIGHT	5. WEIGHT
------------------	--------------	-------------	-----------	-----------

6. EYE COLOR	7. HAIR COLOR	8. SKIN COLOR	9. Left - Right handed
10. LAST SCHOOL ATTENDED	HIGHEST GRADE ACHIEVED	LEARNING PROBLEMS	

11. HOBBIES / INTERESTS / PROFESSION

12. USE OF TOXIC ENVIRONMENTAL SUBSTANCES AND/OR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)    Alcohol    Amphetamines    Cocaine    Heroin    Marijuana    Tobacco  
 Tranquilizer    Other (specify)

*Please remember, we are trying to give as complete a medical history for the child as possible. Indicate if the birth mother, grandparents, siblings, or other extended family members (blood relatives) have had or now have any of the medical conditions listed below. Where appropriate give age at onset, treatment, medication, etc.*

13. MEDICAL CONDITION (SPECIFY CONDITION)	BIRTH MOTHER	AGE AT ONSET, TREATMENT, MEDICATION (IF APPLICABLE)	FAMILY MEMBER	RELATIONSHIP TO BIRTH MOTHER	AGE AT ONSET, TREATMENT, MEDICATION (IF APPLICABLE)
Alcoholism and/or drug addiction					
Allergic reaction (e.g., food, drugs)					
Arthritis					
Asthma					
Birth defects					
Blood disorders (e.g., hemophilia, sickle cell anemia, hepatitis)					

## CHILD'S MEDICAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND REPORT

NAME OF CHILD:	DOB:
----------------	------

Information contained in DSHS form 13-041(x)(REV. 02/1998  
(13-041 is currently being revised by DSHS – 3/2002) page 2 of 8

### SECTION II: *continued* BIRTH MOTHER'S BACKGROUND AND FAMILY GENETIC/MEDICAL HISTORY

13. MEDICAL CONDITION (SPECIFY CONDITION)	BIRTH MOTHER	AGE AT ONSET, TREATMENT, MEDICATION (IF APLICABLE)	FAMILY MEMBER	RELATIONSHIP TO BIRTH MOTHER	AGE AT ONSET, TREATMENT, MEDICATION (IF APLICABLE)
Cancer (type: )					
Cardiovascular (e.g., high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke)					
Developmental disability					
Gynecological problems/history (e.g., spontaneous abortion, miscarriage, still birth, neonatal death)					
Hearing problem					
Heart defects					
Hormonal disorder (e.g. diabetes, thyroid)					
Learning Disability (e.g., neurological, organic brain dysfunction)					
Muscle disorder (e.g. muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, spina bifida)					
Psychiatric disorder (e.g., severe depression, schizophrenia, bipolar)					
Respiratory disorder					
Seizure disorder					
Known inheritable diseases					
Visual problems					
FAS/FAE					
ADD/ADHD					
Other medical condition (specify):					

#### 14. DESCRIBE BIRTH MOTHER'S CURRENT HEALTH

## CHILD'S MEDICAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND REPORT

Information contained in DSHS form 13-041(x)(REV. 02/1998  
(13-041 is currently being revised by DSHS – 3/2002) page 3 of 8

NAME OF CHILD:	DOB:
----------------	------

### SECTION III: BIRTH FATHER'S BACKGROUND AND FAMILY GENETIC/MEDICAL HISTORY

<b>1. YEAR OF BIRTH</b>	<b>2. ETHNICITY</b>	<b>3. RELIGION</b>	<b>4. HEIGHT</b>	<b>5. WEIGHT</b>
<b>6. EYE COLOR</b>	<b>7. HAIR COLOR</b>	<b>8. SKIN COLOR</b>	<b>9. Left - Right handed</b>	
10. LAST SCHOOL ATTENDED	HIGHEST GRADE ACHIEVED	LEARNING PROBLEMS		
11. HOBBIES / INTERESTS / PROFESSION				
12. USE OF TOXIC ENVIRONMENTAL SUBSTANCES AND/OR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES				
(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)				
Tranquilizer	Alcohol Other (specify)	Amphetamines	Cocaine	Heroin
				Marijuana
				Tobacco

*Please remember, we are trying to give as complete a medical history for the child as possible. Indicate if the birth father, grandparents, siblings, or other extended family members (blood relatives) have had or now have any of the medical conditions listed below. Where appropriate give age at onset, treatment, medication, etc.*

13. MEDICAL CONDITION (SPECIFY CONDITION)	BIRTH MOTHER	AGE AT ONSET, TREATMENT, MEDICATION (IF APPLICABLE)	FAMILY MEMBER	RELATIONSHIP TO BIRTH MOTHER	AGE AT ONSET, TREATMENT, MEDICATION (IF APPLICABLE)
Alcoholism and/or drug addiction					
Allergic reaction (e.g., food, drugs)					
Arthritis					
Asthma					
Birth defects					
Blood disorders (e.g., hemophilia, sickle cell anemia, hepatitis)					
Cancer (type: )					
Cardiovascular (e.g., high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke)					

## CHILD'S MEDICAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND REPORT

NAME OF CHILD:	DOB:
----------------	------

Information contained in DSHS form 13-041(x)(REV. 02/1998  
(13-041 is currently being revised by DSHS – 3/2002) page 4 of 8

### SECTION II: *continued* - BIRTH FATHER'S BACKGROUND AND FAMILY GENETIC/MEDICAL HISTORY

MEDICAL CONDITION (SPECIFY CONDITION)	BIRTH MOTHER	AGE AT ONSET, TREATMENT, MEDICATION (IF APPLICABLE)	FAMILY MEMBER	RELATIONSHIP TO BIRTH MOTHER	AGE AT ONSET, TREATMENT, MEDICATION (IF APPLICABLE)
Developmental disability					
Gynecological problems/history (e.g., spontaneous abortion, miscarriage, still birth, neonatal death)					
Hearing problem					
Heart defects					
Hormonal disorder (e.g. diabetes, thyroid)					
Learning Disability (e.g., neurological, organic brain dysfunction)					
Muscle disorder (e.g. muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, spina bifida)					
Psychiatric disorder (e.g., severe depression, schizophrenia, bipolar)					
Respiratory disorder					
Seizure disorder					
Known inheritable diseases					
Visual problems					
FAS/FAE					
ADD/ADHD					
Other medical condition (specify):					

#### 14. DESCRIBE BIRTH FATHER'S CURRENT HEALTH

## CHILD'S MEDICAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND REPORT

Information contained in DSHS form 13-041(x)(REV. 02/1998  
(13-041 is currently being revised by DSHS – 3/2002) page 5 of 8

NAME OF CHILD:	DOB:
----------------	------

### SECTION IV: CHILD'S MEDICAL HISTORY

1. a. Is mother's prenatal care report attached?    yes    no    INITIAL ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF REPORT:    IF NOT AVAILABLE, EXPLAIN:
- b. Is birth labor record attached?    yes    no    INITIAL ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF REPORT:    IF NOT AVAILABLE, EXPLAIN:
- c. Is child's birth record attached?    yes    no    INITIAL ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF REPORT:    IF NOT AVAILABLE, EXPLAIN:

2. Check if the child was exposed to any of the following substances prenatally:

Tobacco      Alcohol      Illegal drugs (specify):      Other toxic substances (specify):

Describe frequency of use and when during gestation:

3. History of immunizations: **Attach Immunization Record or passport.**      **Initial acknowledging receipt of report:**

4. Other tests:

TEST	DATE	RESULTS
TB (tuberculosis)		
HIV testing		
Hepatitis B		

5. Child's health history:

MEDICAL CONDITION (SPECIFY CONDITION)	AGE AT ONSET	MEDICAL CONDITION (SPECIFY CONDITION)	AGE AT ONSET
Allergic reaction (e.g., food, drugs)		Hearing problem	
Arthritis		Sight problems	
Asthma		Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD)	
Hormonal disorder (e.g., diabetes, thyroid)		Heart defects	
Learning disability (e.g., neurological, organic brain dysfunction)		Psychiatric disorder (e.g., severe depression, schizophrenia, bipolar)	
Seizure disorder		Alcoholism	
Birth defects		Cardiovascular	
Developmental disability		Cancer	
Muscle disorder (e.g., muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, spina bifida)		Blood disorders (e.g., hemophilia, sickle cell anemia, hepatitis)	
Respiratory disorder		OTHER MEDICAL CONDITION (SPECIFY	
FAS/FAE (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Effect)			

## CHILD'S MEDICAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND REPORT

NAME OF CHILD:	DOB:
----------------	------

Information contained in DSHS form 13-041(x)(REV. 02/1998  
(13-041 is currently being revised by DSHS – 3/2002) page 6 of 8

### 6. Childhood illnesses (check all that apply):

ILLNESS	DATE	ILLNESS	DATE	ILLNESS	DATE	ILLNESS	DATE
Chicken Pox		Rheumatic Fever		Mumps		Other (specify)	
Measles		Tonsillitis		Tuberculosis			
Pneumonia		German Measles		Whooping Cough			

Explain other illnesses and injuries including illnesses, diseases and physical defects of a genetic or hereditary nature (specify dates):

### 7. Hospitalizations/Surgeries/X-rays/Physical Examinations/Dental History

DATE	TYPE OF TREATMENT AND/OR EXAMINATION	ATTACH REPORT	INITIAL (RECEIVED REPORT)

### 8. Additional comments/information:

## SECTION V: CHILD'S PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND

### 1. History of abuse/neglect and exposure to domestic violence (need not repeat information in attached reports):

DATE	CIRCUMSTANCES	BY WHOM (i.e., FATHER, MOTHER, ETC.)

### 2. Child's placement/experiences: (check appropriate boxes):

DATE	BIRTH PARENT	RELATIVE	FOSTER HOME	RECEIVING CARE	OTHER (SPECIFY)

### 3. List court reports pertaining to dependency or custody (delete identifying information):

DATE	ATTACH REPORT	INITIAL ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF REPORT	DATE	ATTACH REPORT	INITIAL ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF REPORT

# CHILD'S MEDICAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND REPORT

Information contained in DSHS form 13-041(x)(REV. 02/1998  
(13-041 is currently being revised by DSHS – 3/2002) page 7 of 8

NAME OF CHILD:	DOB:
----------------	------

## **SECTION V: *continued*** **CHILD'S PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND**

4. Describe child's current behavior and functioning in family and social settings:

5. Child's psychiatric/psychological evaluations: (use back if more space is necessary)

TYPE OF EVALUATION	DATE	DIAGNOSIS	ATTACH REPORT	INITIAL ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF REPORT

6. Describe child's relationship to birth mother:

7. Describe child's relationship to birth father:

8. Child's scholastic information (attach copies of all school reports):

DATE	SCHOOL	ATTACH REPORT	INITIAL ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF REPORT	DATE	SCHOOL	ATTACH REPORT	INITIAL ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF REPORT

9. Additional comments/information:

## CHILD'S MEDICAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND REPORT

NAME OF CHILD:

DOB:

Information contained in DSHS form 13-041(x)(REV. 02/1998  
(13-041 is currently being revised by DSHS – 3/2002) page 8 of 8

**I, the undersigned, am over age 13 and consent to the release of the following information:**

HIV status;  other, as specified:  mental health counseling history and diagnoses;  current mental health treatment;  birth control; and

CHILD'S SIGNATURE

DATE

FACILITATOR'S SIGNATURE

DATE

I/we, the undersigned adopting parents, have received the above listed medical information and attached reports as listed concerning my/our adoptive child. I/we have reviewed the information with the social worker and have had an opportunity to consult with a doctor of our choice regarding this information. We have had the opportunity to ask that additional information be sought by the social worker. We accept this child for adoptive placement into our family. It is our intention to adopt this child.

ADOPTIVE PARENT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

ADOPTIVE PARENT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

I have provided the information referenced in this document to the adoptive parents.

FACILITATOR'S SIGNATURE

DATE

I/we, the undersigned adopting parent(s) state that I/we have had the opportunity to review this child's record and request additional information. I/we have been informed of the availability of the Adoption Support Program and choose to  apply.  not apply. I/we have received the above listed child's family and social history information concerning my/our adoptive child. I/we have reviewed this information with the social worker and have had the opportunity to consult with appropriate professional(s) of our choice. It is our intention to proceed with the adoption of this child. We accept this child for adoptive placement into our family.

ADOPTIVE PARENT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

ADOPTIVE PARENT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

**PLEASE NOTE: Sibling information is also important. Attach the health and education passport – or - Sections IV & V of this form describing known and available information about siblings.**

Achieving Permanence Project –March 2002

For copies of this form please contact Washington State CASA

[www.washingtonstatecasa.org](http://www.washingtonstatecasa.org)

Achieving Permanence Project –March 2002  
For copies of this form please contact Washington State CASA  
[www.washingtonstatecasa.org](http://www.washingtonstatecasa.org)

# DILIGENT SEARCH - FAMILY TREE

## **Mother's Family**

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Race / Ethnicity (check all that apply): African American\_\_\_\_ Latino\_\_\_\_ Asian\_\_\_\_  
Native American\_\_\_\_\_ Tribe\_\_\_\_\_

Caucasian\_\_\_\_ Other\_\_\_\_\_

### **MOTHER:**

### Husband / Partner:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

SS#: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

County \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

County \_\_\_\_\_

Other relatives and contact information (use back if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_

Reporting parent \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# DILIGENT SEARCH - FAMILY TREE

## **Father's Family**

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Race / Ethnicity (check all that apply): African American \_\_\_ Latino \_\_\_ Asian \_\_\_  
Native American \_\_\_\_\_ Tribe \_\_\_\_\_

Caucasian \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

### **Father:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Wife / Partner:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

SS#: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

County \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

County \_\_\_\_\_

Other relatives and contact information (use back if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Reporting parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# INITIAL RELATIVE SCREENING

developed by Chelan/Douglas CASA  
page 1 of 2

The following areas should be covered in the initial interview with relative/s of the child. This is a preliminary look at potential risks or strengths of placement with a family. A home study would be done by Children's Services if placement seems a good possibility. If in the initial discussion, the relative expresses interest in being considered for placement of the child, the following areas should be covered (continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

## **Introduction:**

1. Identify self and role (CASA volunteer, working for the best interest of the child, and looking for placement resources within the family, if possible).
2. Identify ways relatives can help (possible placement, information about other relatives who may be possible placement).
3. Very general information about the child (is in foster care, school behavior health).

## **Potential placement pre-screen:**

### **Adults in the home:**

**Name**

**Date of Birth**

**Relationship to the child**

(continue on separate sheet if necessary)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

### **Children in the home:**

**Name**

**Date of Birth**

**Relationship to the child**

(continue on separate sheet if necessary)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**Connection with child:** How well does family know this child? How much contact have they had?

---

\_\_\_\_\_

# INITIAL RELATIVE SCREENING

developed by Chelan/Douglas CASA  
page 2 of 2

## **History of the adults: (note name with information)**

### **Education and employment**

1. Education level attained: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Military service (branch, years in, type discharge) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Employment: (Current job and how long in job) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Past jobs, durations, and reasons for leaving: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Health:**

5. Serious illnesses, surgeries, hospitalizations: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Physician's name and phone # (if appropriate) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Mental health problems, treatment or counseling \_\_\_\_\_

### **Substance use/abuse:**

8. Alcohol: Age first used \_\_\_\_\_ Approximate date of last use \_\_\_\_\_

About how much / how often \_\_\_\_\_

Legal/family problems as a result of use? \_\_\_\_\_

Treatment? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, dates \_\_\_\_\_

9. Other drugs: Drug of choice \_\_\_\_\_ Age first used \_\_\_\_\_ last use? \_\_\_\_\_

If current, how much / how often \_\_\_\_\_

Legal/family problems as a result of use? \_\_\_\_\_

Treatment? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, dates \_\_\_\_\_

10. Family substance abuse history (who, what, how close to this family) \_\_\_\_\_

**Arrest or criminal history** (offense, date, outcome): \_\_\_\_\_

**Housing** (briefly describe home): \_\_\_\_\_

# INITIAL RELATIVE SCREENING CONTACT CHART

page \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_

<b>Name and Relationship to child</b>	<b>Address and Phone</b>	<b>Date and Type of contact</b>	<b>Outcome</b>

## JOB DESCRIPTION: ACHIEVING PERMANENCE COORDINATOR

1. Recruit new CASA/GAL volunteers to advocate for all children, especially those who are legally free for adoption.
2. Gather materials and attend workshops or trainings that pertain to legally free children and the process following termination of parental rights.
3. Organize and conduct Permanency Advisory or Investment Committee meetings and direct committee toward accomplishing achieving permanence goals.
4. Include considerations for the best interests of children legally free for adoption in training for all volunteers.
5. Provide ongoing / in-service training for volunteers on the process/activities for getting children into new and existing permanent homes.
6. Collect accurate data on recruitment and training activities specific to legally free children.
7. Supervise and assist all CASA/GALs appointed to legally free children
  - Facilitate ongoing communication between CASA/GALs, DCFS Adoption Unit caseworker, and other agencies re: TPR cases.
  - Track progress and time line of TPR cases
  - Monitor permanent plans for TPR cases until finalized
8. Attend all court hearings pertaining to legally free cases.
9. Track outcomes for permanence: i.e. decreasing the number of months TPR to permanence for children with a CASA volunteer.
10. Submit required reports with information specific to legally free children.

One program added: The Project Coordinator will spend two 4-hour days per week at DCFS assisting with the paperwork and research regarding permanent placement of legally free children assigned to CASA.

**JOB DESCRIPTION:**

**OFFICE ASSISTANT FOR LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN**

1. Provide receptionist support for Executive Director, Program Coordinator, and CASA/GAL volunteers working with legally free children caseloads.
2. Maintain files and court documents and process paper flow involving legally free children / cases.
3. Input data into the COMET program to assure accurate data collection and reporting.
4. Assist Program Coordinator with recruitment and training activities.

## JOB DESCRIPTION:

Volunteer Post-TPR Specialist  
Developed by Snohomish County VGAL Program

A CASA/GAL volunteer will be assigned or remain active on a case and continue to monitor activities, placement, movement, and general case progress until permanency is achieved.

The CASA/GAL is an ongoing consistent advocate for the child compiling the complete history of the case from day one and providing historical perspective when necessary.

Assist the transition from Child Welfare worker to Adoption Worker and aid in completing the paper flow as necessary:

- medical information / background as needed;
- home study reports finalized;
- provide / gather financial support information for potential adoptive parents;
- provide support services information as needed.

Complete investigations / further assessments of potential adoptive parents upon request. Provide reports to the court as to findings and recommendations.

Monitor and make recommendations on services needed.

Be present and report at all review hearings.

Additionally, if an open adoption agreement is signed, the CASA/VGAL will continue to monitor and track progress toward permanency.

## LIFE BOOKS, a handout

From materials developed by Snohomish County VGAL Program

A Life Book is a scrapbook of a child's life. The life book can contain photos of the child, biological family, foster families, and adoptive family. Small mementos can be added to personalize the life book (i.e. awards, locks of hair, hospital identification bracelets, etc.). You can use some of the child's own paintings or artwork to add special touches. Life books can have stamps, stickers, cut outs, and 3-D effects. To include letters to the child from significant people in their life can be especially meaningful. There is no limit to the life book. A child's life book can be as simple or extravagant as you like.

The CASA/GAL, adoptive parents, foster parents, biological parents and other relatives, and / or the children themselves can work on a life book. The life book can be a cooperative experience to bring families together for the child, or it can be a special gift to the child at their time of adoption.

There is no right or wrong way to create a life book. The only limit is that of your imagination. Life Books can be created in groups or alone.

Remember, the purpose of a Life Book is to document the child's life, preserve their history, and create a past for the child as he/she moves into the future.

A copy of Life Book sample pages used by Snohomish County, "ALL ABOUT ME", is available from Washington State CASA.

**NOTICE OF TRANSFER OF CASE TO  
LEGALLY FREE CASA PROGRAM**  
developed by Pierce County CASA

TO: \_\_\_\_\_  
DCFS Social Worker

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please be advised that the following case has been transferred to the Legally Free Program from \_\_\_\_\_.

Please forward all correspondence to \_\_\_\_\_, the CASA/GAL Coordinator who can be contacted at

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The CASA/GAL volunteer on this case is \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ will be supervising volunteers serving these legally free children. If the case is going to be transferred to the Adoption Unit and/or to a new Social Worker, please advise the program as soon as possible.

CHILD(REN):	Date of Birth:

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS AND/OR CONCERNS, PLEASE CALL THE CASA/GAL PROGRAM AT \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you!

**NOTICE TO ADOPTION UNIT**  
developed by Pierce County CASA/GAL Program

TO: \_\_\_\_\_, CWS Program Manager  
\_\_\_\_\_, Adoption Unit Supervisor

Social Worker: \_\_\_\_\_

Attorney General: \_\_\_\_\_

Court File: \_\_\_\_\_  
County Cause Number

RE: Child(ren): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please be advised that the above referenced child(ren) became legally free on:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Pursuant to Region 5 DCFS policy adopted January 1, 2000, the assigned CASA/GAL is requesting that this matter be transferred to the Adoption Unit within thirty (30) days. Please comply with this policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Guardian ad Litem

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# OPEN OR CLOSED ADOPTION? QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Developed by Snohomish County VGAL Program

1. What are the advantages of open adoption for the child?  
For the birth parents?  
For the adoptive parents?
2. Why did the birth parents relinquish?
3. What is the extent of contact now:
  - No contact
  - Social, health, cultural information exchanged
  - Ongoing pictures, information and/or gifts are exchanged through a private agency or a PO box
  - Birth and adoptive parents have met; no ongoing visits are planned
  - Visits with sibling or extended relatives are planned on a regular basis
  - Adoptive family maintains telephone contact with birth parents
  - Adoptive parents have given their address to birth parents
  - Adoptive parents arrange ongoing visits several times per year and call the birth family directly to arrange visits
  - Regular visits occur at either birth parents or adoptive parents home
4. How does a termination vs. a relinquishment affect the decision to establish an open adoption?
5. Is there someone else that the child can maintain contact with that would fulfill family/history of the biological parents, if an open adoption agreement with the birth parents is not available?
6. What is the relationship between the child and the birth parents?
7. Are there siblings to be considered?
8. What is the relationship between the birth parents and the adoptive parents?
9. Are the adoptive parents willing to cooperate with an open adoption?

**PRE-TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS**  
**Checklist for CASA/GAL volunteers**  
From Benton/Franklin CASA/GAL Program

**Pre-Termination:**

- Copy of Birth Certificate and Social Security card in file?
- Medical form started
- Medical form completed
- Is child in pre-adopt home?
- Are there any pictures
- Life Book started
- Life Book completed
- Has birth parent applied for an attorney for the termination trial?
- Testifying in Termination Trial worksheet – go over with CASA staff
- Make sure both parents have received notification and the termination paperwork has been filed
- Dependency Petition and Disposition Order have been filed on father and mother
- Both parents have received notification of hearings
- Family History/Relative Search Form completed
- Has Relinquishment/Termination options/Open Adoption agreement been discussed with birth parent(s)?

If parents are relinquishing, has paperwork been drawn up by the Attorney General's Office and given to the parent's attorney?

PSA SCRIPT – CASA gives a kid a chance - 30 sec.

**For some kids childhood means soccer games and family picnics. For others, it means abuse, neglect, and years in foster care waiting for a chance at a safe, permanent home. Those are the kids who need your voice. Volunteer as a CASA – a Court Appointed Special Advocate and give a child a chance.**

**Call \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_**  
Volunteer coordinator phone

**or \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_**  
Program manager phone

PSA SCRIPT – CASA # children - 30 sec.

**Over \_\_\_\_\_ children in \_\_\_\_\_ County live in foster care. Abused and neglected, they can spend years moving from placement to placement.**

**They need someone to take the time to figure out what’s best for them. Someone to be their voice in court.**

**Volunteer as a CASA – a Court Appointed Special Advocate and help give a child what every child deserves, a safe, permanent home.**

**Call \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_**  
Volunteer coordinator phone

**or \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_**  
Program manager phone

PSA SCRIPT – CASA one at a time - 30 sec.

**If your heart has been broken too many times by the tragic stories of abused and neglected children, it may be time to take a positive step and make a real difference in a child’s life.**

**Volunteer as a CASA – a Court Appointed Special Advocate. Together we can give these children a chance at a future, one child at a time.**

**Call \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_**  
Volunteer coordinator phone

**or \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_**  
Program manager phone

# PUBLICITY AND RECRUITMENT TRACKING FORM

YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

PUBLICITY	Jan. / July	Feb. / Aug.	Mar. / Sept.	Apr. / Oct.	May / Nov.	June / Dec.	6 mo. total
Who?							
Where?							
What?							
When?							
<b>INQUIRIES</b>							
Number of volunteer inquiries received this month.							
<b>APPLICATIONS</b>							
Number of volunteer applications received this month.							
<b>TRAINING</b>							
<b>Core training –</b> dates							
Number of new volunteers who completed core training this month.							
<b>In-service training</b> Dates							
Topic							
Number of volunteers who completed in-service training this month.							

# REFERENCE FOR POSSIBLE CHILD PLACEMENT

developed by Chelan/Douglas CASA

This reference is for \_\_\_\_\_, who is being considered as a possible placement for a child / children. If approved, this person/family will be parenting the child/ren. It is important that you answer each question as completely and honestly as you can. Please feel free to use the reverse side, or attach extra pages as necessary.

Thank you very much for your help.

1. How long have you known this person? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How would you describe your relationship to him/her? \_\_\_\_\_

---

3. How would you describe his/her personality? \_\_\_\_\_

---

4. (If applicable) How would you describe his/her marital relationship? \_\_\_\_\_

---

5. How would you rate his/her parenting skills? \_\_\_\_\_

6. How does s/he show affection to children? How does s/he discipline children? \_\_\_\_\_

---

7. Do you have any concerns or know of any problems regarding this person's ability to care for children (please be specific)? \_\_\_\_\_

---

8. If you were a caseworker, would you consider placing a child in this home? \_\_\_\_\_

Please specify why / why not? \_\_\_\_\_

---

9. Do you know of any drug / alcohol, mental health, or criminal problems in this person's family that could affect the children in the home? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Please feel free to add any observations /comments not addressed above.

**SPECIAL IMMIGRANT JUVENILE STATUS**  
Court record form from Chelan County

In the matter of: \_\_\_\_\_ )  
 )  
 ) No:  
a Minor ) ORDER REGARDING  
 ) MINOR'S ELIGIBILITY FOR  
 ) SPECIAL IMMIGRANT STATUS

---

\_\_\_\_\_ is appointed to represent the above-mentioned child and is directed to assure a timely application for special immigrant status is made to the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and that all necessary information and supporting evidence is compiled.

The court reviewed the social study from the social worker and other supporting material on file, heard the arguments of counsel and found the following:

- ( ) The minor was declared dependent on the Juvenile Court of the County of \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.
- ( ) The minor was deemed eligible by this court for long-term foster care on \_\_\_\_\_.
- ( ) The court finds that it is not in the best interest of the minor to be returned to his/her or his/her parent's previous country of nationality or country of last habitual residence, \_\_\_\_\_.  
It is in the minor's best interest to remain in the United States.
- ( ) The above findings and actions were made due to to ( ) abuse, ( ) neglect, and/or ( ) abandonment of the minor.
- ( ) An application is to be made to the Immigration and Naturalization Service pursuant to USC Section 1101 (A)(27)(J).

A progress report is due on \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ regarding the status of the application.

DATED: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judge / Commissioner of the Juvenile Court

# SPECIAL IMMIGRANT JUVENILE STATUS INFORMATION

Information developed by Chelan/Douglas CASA Program, p. 1 of 2

## **Risks of applying**

By filing an application for SIJS the child is in effect turning him/her self in to the INS. If the application is denied, the child faces the risk of deportation. DO NOT apply for SIJS if there is a reason to believe the child may not be approved. Contact an immigration attorney if the child may be HIV positive, have a history of drug use, extensive immigration violations or a criminal history.

NOTE: If the child is already in a deportation proceeding there is no reason not to apply for SIJS if they have a chance of qualifying. This action may halt the deportation proceedings. Again, it is best to contact an immigration attorney.

## **How does a child apply for SIJS?**

There are two separate applications that must be filed with the INS. One application is for SIJS and the other is an application for lawful permanent residence. Typically the two are filed together.

## **What documents need to be filed with the INS?**

- Form I-485 Application for Permanent Residence (Adjustment of status)
- Form 325A Biographic Information
- (If age 14 or older) Form FD 258 FBI fingerprint card
- Form I-693 Medical Examination of Aliens Seeking Adjustment of Status
- Supplemental Form to I-693 Documentation of Immunizations
- Form I-360 Petition for Amerasian, Widow, or Special Immigrant
- Form I-765 Request for Work Authorization (if desired)
- 4 "green card" size photographs (follow specific guidelines)
- Dependency order (certified copy)
- Birth Certificate with translation (send copy – bring original to interview)
- School Report Card
- I-485 filing fees or Declaration of Fee Waiver
- Passport, Form I-94 or I-186 showing lawful entry to United States (if it exists)
- "Audit" sheet if required by local INS office

## **Foreign Birth Certificates**

Every applicant must provide some documentary proof of age. Generally this is a birth certificate but can also be a passport, official foreign identity document, baptismal certificate, affidavits from people personally aware of the birth, or early school records showing a date of admission.

If a birth certificate is not available, it is best to provide a statement documenting the efforts made to locate it. If all else fails, sometimes the juvenile court can enter an order stating the child's age as a finding.

# SPECIAL IMMIGRANT JUVENILE STATUS

Information developed by Chelan/Douglas CASA Program, p. 2 of 2

Foreign birth certificates can most easily be obtained through family or friends in the child's home country. These people can contact the appropriate registry to obtain a certified copy. Unfortunately, children eligible for SIJS often lack these connections.

To get the birth certificate yourself, send a letter written in the language of the country you are contacting, addressed to the registrar in the town the child was born, (or where the birth was likely registered, if different). Include the name, birth date, and birthplace of the child, as well as the parents' names. You will also need to enclose an international money order for the fee.

For information on how to obtain a foreign birth certificate you can contact the consulate for that country or look at the Foreign Affairs Manual from the Department of State. If unavailable through a local law library or immigration attorney call 415-255-9499 and an attorney at the Immigrant Legal Resource Center will send you the information from the country you are trying to locate.

# TEN STEPS TO CONCURRENT PLANNING

Developed by Linda Katz and Chris Robinson, Families for Kids 1995  
page 1 of 2

These 10 steps were developed for social service workers. They can help CASA volunteers in collaboration efforts by knowing what social service workers are collecting.

1. The first step is a thorough family assessment, sensitive to cultural differences, including psycho-social evaluation of the child, parent, and family dynamics to identify risk factors and principle problem areas. Included is a thorough interview of family members, including extended family, for the family history and their perception of problem areas. The agency record is reviewed and information is sought from collateral sources such as drug treatment providers, schools, mental health centers, and physicians. Special care is given to assess the child's attachment to adult caregivers. Tools used include: family questionnaires and worksheets. At minimum, the central problem requiring agency attention must be identified.
2. Relatives and non-custodial parents are contacted, not just for information on the family functioning, but also for their availability and suitability as a placement resource for the child. Diligent search efforts for absent or unknown fathers should be pursued immediately and identities should be verified and documented.
3. The child's race / ethnic heritage is determined. Any possible Native American heritage must be documented.
4. The findings of the worker's assessment are shared with the family including the strengths and weaknesses of the family system, the effects of the abuse/neglect on the child, the negative effects of substitute care on the child and the need to determine a permanent plan in a timely manner. Again, input is requested from the parents. The central problem should be emphasized.
5. A service plan is established with the involvement of the parents and other family members if possible. As many courts will not order treatment services prior to the dispositional hearing, a service contract to be implemented pending dependency may be negotiated with the family. The parent's attorney should be consulted to ensure the parent's rights are protected. A service plan form is helpful in documenting the service plan. Part of any service plan is visitation except on rare occasions when this is clearly contrary to the needs of the child and this has been documented to the court. After dependency, the service plan becomes a court ordered dispositional plan.

## TEN STEPS TO CONCURRENT PLANNING

Developed by Linda Katz and Chris Robinson, Families for Kids 1995  
page 2 of 2

6. The agency worker refers the family for services whether or not they are cooperative. The agency provides written referrals for service; provides funding, transportation, and facilitation if required; obtains releases of information to monitor the client's progress and supports the client's involvement in services; requests and shares with the client written documentation from service providers.

7. The agency worker ensures the opportunity for consistent, meaningful visits based on the child's developmental needs. The intention of visitation is to preserve the bond between the parent and the child, to assess their relationship, and to encourage parent-child interaction.

8. If the prognosis is very poor, or if the parent fails to engage in a service plan, the worker develops and begins discussion of a permanent plan. Relinquishment or guardianship is often discussed with the parent at this point. Services must continue, however, until the court orders otherwise.

9. Periodic court and administrative reviews are used to share with parents, the agency, and service providers' assessments. Progress and change to correct the central problem is the goal, not simply compliance.

10. Throughout the case it is the responsibility of the agency worker to re-evaluate progress made by the parties. If the parent's compliance or progress changed, steps are taken to alter the legal progress.

**TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS**  
**Checklist for CASA/GAL volunteers**  
From Benton/Franklin CASA/GAL Program

**Termination:**

- Adoption Support paperwork completed
- Adoption Support paperwork turned in
- Has Pre-Trial Conference been scheduled? (Can mediation help?)
- Have home studies been completed?

**Post Termination:**

- Has adoption caseworker been assigned?
- Has file been transferred to the Adoption Unit?
- Make appointment to meet with adoption caseworker
- Ask adoption caseworker if anything can be done to help expedite the process
- Adoption Checklist – go over with adoption caseworker. Ask if any of the steps can be completed by the CASA/GAL.
- Prepare Review Hearing Reports after Termination of Parental Rights
- Continue contact with DCFS
- If the children are not in an identified pre-adopt home, have they been registered in WARE?
- Ask pre-adoptive parents what their needs are
- Keep track of services provided to children so there are no disruptions
- Maintain contact with the pre-adopt family and help keep them informed of progress

NOTES:

# TRACKING THE TRANSFER OF LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN TO THE ADOPTION UNITS

(see also NOTICE TO ADOPTION UNIT)  
From Pierce County CASA Program

This process makes one person, the child welfare services program manager, the single point of contact for tracking the transition of children through the process of becoming legally free. It has been very useful in making sure that children are not “lost in the system”.

1. All termination referrals will be routed through Child Welfare Services, who will then forward them to the Attorney General's Office. The termination process will be tracked from the time the referral is submitted.
1. To provide the CWS worker with the time to prepare the file, cases will be reviewed 3-4 months prior to the date of the termination trial to determine what additional information and documents are needed so the file will be ready to be transferred to an adoption unit upon the child becoming legally free.
2. The Attorney General's office will send a copy of the Notice of Hearing for termination trials to CWS Program Manager.
3. The social worker will notify CWS Program Manager when a child on their caseload becomes legally free.
4. The GALs and CASA volunteers have agreed to notify CWS Program Manager when a child on their caseloads becomes legally free.
5. The Attorney General's Office will send CWS Program Manager a copy of their monthly report of children who have become legally free that month.
6. CWS Program Manager will schedule a transfer staffing within 30 days of the date the child becomes legally free.

If there are unusual circumstances that seem to warrant a case not being transferred immediately, the CWS social worker will submit an Exception to Policy (ETP) to the Area Administrator within 15 days of the termination. A copy of the ETP will be routed to CWS Program Manager so those cases can be tracked.

## TRANSFER OF LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN

Legal Number:

Next review Date and time:			
Child's Name:	Date of Birth:	Social Security #	Circle: M / F
Ethnicity:	Disabilities / Special Needs / Concerns:		
Indian Child? Y / N	Tribal Identity:	Tribal involvement:	
Dependency Date:		Termination Date:	
School:		Primary Language if other than English:	
AAG:		Phone #:	
Child's CASA / GAL:		Date Discharged:	
Foster / Relative Placement (circle one)		Address and Phone #	
How long in this placement?		Is this the identified adoptive home? Y / N	
Social worker:		Agency name, address and phone #	
Child's counselor:		Agency and phone #	
What barriers if any exist to finalize adoption?		Other important information: (Use back if necessary)	

## WHERE CAN I GO FOR HELP?

Developed by Walla Walla CASA Program – page 1 of 2

Please adapt for your own community by adding appropriate agencies and phone numbers.  
Sample organizations have been listed.

<p><b>... when I can't handle my preschooler?</b></p> <p>Catholic Children and Family Services 555-0000          Children's Home Society          Christian Counseling Center          Community Center          Family Support Nursery          Mental Health Center          School          YWCA          Private counselors – see Yellow Pages listings</p>	<p><b>... when my teenager is too much to handle or won't go to school?</b></p> <p>Catholic Children and Family Services 555-0000          Children's Home Society          Christian Counseling Center          Community Connections          Court Services          Mental Health Center          School          Youth Drop-in Center          Private counselors – see Yellow Pages listings</p>
<p><b>... when I feel nobody knows I'm alive?</b></p> <p>Helpline          Mental Health Hotline          Good Samaritan Ministries</p>	<p><b>... when someone is hurting me?</b></p> <p>Adult Protective Services (age 18 &amp; up) 555-0000          Child Protective Services 1-866-END-HARM          YWCA Domestic Violence Center</p>
<p><b>... when I suspect child abuse?</b></p> <p>Child Protective Services 1-866-END-HARM          Police 911 or (local number)</p>	<p><b>... when I have been sexually abused, either recently or in the past?</b></p> <p>Police 911 or (local number)          YWCA Support Group</p>
<p><b>... when I can't stop hurting those I love?</b></p> <p>Child Protective Services (local number)          Parents Anonymous 1-800-932-HOPE</p>	<p><b>... when I'm pregnant and don't know what to do?</b></p> <p>Birthright 555-0000          County Health WIC Program          Options for Pregnancy          Planned Parenthood Center          YWCA's Phone Friend</p>
<p><b>... when I feel like suicide or think that someone else does?</b></p> <p>Mental Health Center          YWCA's Phone Friend</p>	<p><b>... when I need support in parenting my disabled child?</b></p> <p>Parent to Parent          Dept. of Developmental Disabilities</p>
<p><b>... when I want to get my GED?</b></p> <p>Community Center          Project Read (Literacy program)          Community College</p>	<p><b>...when I need to get a job?</b></p> <p>Job Training Center          State Employment Office          Employment Security          Community Action Council</p>

## WHERE CAN I GO FOR HELP?

Developed by Walla Walla CASA Program – page 2 of 2

Please adapt for your own community by adding appropriate agencies and phone numbers.  
Sample organizations have been listed.

<p><b><i>...when I need babysitting so I can go to school or work?</i></b> Community College Family Services YWCA Adventure Club</p>	<p><b><i>...when I am on welfare and want to go back to school?</i></b> JOBS</p>
<p><b><i>...when I am homeless or in danger of eviction?</i></b> Helpline City Housing Authority Community Action Council Salvation Army</p>	<p><b><i>... when I'm not sure who to call about services?</i></b> Community Action Council Community Service Office Dept. of Human Services Inter-Agency Coordinating Council</p>
<p><b><i>...when I need confidential information, free testing, or support for HIV/AIDS?</i></b> Health Department</p>	<p><b><i>... when I need a doctor or medicine and can't afford it?</i></b> Family Medical Center Health Department</p>
<p><b><i>... when drugs or alcohol are a problem?</i></b> Alcoholics Anonymous Community Alcohol &amp; Drug Abuse Center Narcotics Anonymous Outpatient Treatment Center</p>	<p><b><i>... when I am in a dispute or need a lawyer and can't afford it?</i></b> Columbia Legal Services                      1-800-572-8716 Lawyer's Referral Service                      1-800-552-0787 Community Action Council</p>

\_\_\_\_\_CASA/GAL Program  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

