



A TRIP THROUGH FAMILY COURT

INSTRUCTIONS:

You are a caseworker who has been asked by a judge to explain how a case travels through Family Court. To do so, you must rank in sequence the following events. Place number 1 by the first event, number 2 by the second event, and so on until all the items are in order. You have already told the judge that you consulted with the Supervisor II prior to going on the field investigation visit. You will have 10 minutes to complete this phase of the exercise.

2 Consultations with Supervisor II

5 701B to Parent/Parents

12 Fact-Finding Hearing

3 Reasonable Efforts to prevent the Need for Removal

10 Remand Hearing

4 Emergency Removal

7 Develop Petition with DLS

9 Case Docketed

14 Court Placement

6 Complete W-865D

13 Dispositional Hearing

1 Imminent Danger to Child/Children

11 1028 Hearing

8 File Petition with Family Court Clerk



DO'S

1. Be respectful of the judge. Say “Your Honor”. Know the judge’s name.
2. Get pictures or arrange for pictures to be taken. They may be needed as evidence.
3. Know your case. Be completely familiar with the case record.
4. Get names, titles, badge numbers and phone numbers of other agency personnel. You just might need to contact them again.
5. Have a plan for your case. Remember your good case management skills.
6. Use free time in the waiting area to go over your case records and notes and recall details relating to the case.
7. Discuss the case with your lawyer before you enter the courtroom and or testify.
8. Stick to the facts. Testify to what you saw, smelled, heard, touched or tasted.
9. Testify to what you know, not what you believe.
10. Tell the truth.
11. Bring the case record unless otherwise instructed by the Judge or your attorney. You may need it to refresh your recollection or to submit the record as evidence.
12. Bring your date/calendar book. You’ll need it to schedule your next court appearance.
13. Speak clearly during the hearing. Speak louder than you normally speak.
14. Project an image of objectivity.
15. If you give a wrong or unclear answer, correct it immediately.
16. Stop speaking when the Judge interrupts you or when another attorney objects to what you are saying.
17. Know why you are in court, the goals you are trying to achieve, and the purpose of the specific court hearing.
18. Be respectful to other court personnel. They can make your job a lot easier.
19. Read these Do’s and Don’ts again.

HANDOUT



DON'Ts

1. Miss a court date. The only exception might be a catastrophic emergency, such as an earthquake.
2. Tell the judge you won't answer a question.
3. Talk back to the Judge.
4. Act 'holier' than your clients.
5. Memorize exactly what you are going to say. It will look staged if you do.
6. Answer a question you don't understand. Have the question repeated if necessary.
7. Say "I think" and "I believe". If you haven't been qualified as an expert witness, then don't say "In my opinion".
8. Guess an answer to a question or be evasive. If you don't understand a question or don't know an answer, say so.
9. Volunteer additional information when you testify. If an attorney wants more information, let him/her ask for it.
10. Lie on the witness stand.
11. Exaggerate facts to make your case look better.
12. Personalize these proceedings. Don't take things personally.
13. Dress like a 'slob'.
14. Forget your body language.
15. Act in an undignified manner, such as using loud laughter or foul language before entering the courtroom.
16. Smoke or chew gum in the courtroom.