



# Youth Representation Checklist

*Use the following checklist to ensure effective representation:*

## Shelter Care Hearing or Newly Appointed Client

- Complete conflict check.
- Inquire about and document potential Native American ancestry.
- File your notice of appearance and take care to serve all parties. Notice of appearance should include a discovery demand. (Email [crp@ocla.wa.gov](mailto:crp@ocla.wa.gov) for samples)
- Review initial discovery packet and save for easy access.
- Create new client in CAROS and record time.
- Add client's contact information to your client contact list.
- Provide client with "Know Your Rights Handout;" your business card; and all upcoming court/staffing dates.
- Have client sign appropriate releases of information for you for any services they are involved in. (Email [crp@ocla.wa.gov](mailto:crp@ocla.wa.gov) for samples)
- Complete Children's Representation Intake Form and place in file.
- Make an appointment to visit youth in their placement.
- Call the assigned social worker to get a case update.
- Find out if there are any issues related to school, placement, visitation, services etc. and determine whether a motion or other advocacy is needed.
- Be prepared to contest entry of continued shelter care order, every 30 days.
- Be prepared to contest visitation supervision level, every 30 days if initial supervision is ordered.

Tip: seek mutual agreements on electronic service of process from the parties to make service easier.

Be prepared to text with older youth clients!

## Fact-Finding/Disposition

- Seek, review, and save updated discovery.
- Go over proposed dependency/disposition order with youth.
- Attend any scheduled settlement conference.
- Ensure your client receives court report 10 days prior to disposition hearing and go over the report with youth.
- Contact parent attorneys to see if they are requesting placement change or additional services.
- Ensure fact-finding takes place within 75 days of dependency petition filing absent good cause.
- Ensure disposition takes place within 14 days of fact-finding absent good cause for a continuance.
- Seek/secure expert if needed to litigate any issues necessary to promote youth's stated or legal interests.
- Subpoena/secure witnesses if fact-finding/disposition contested.
- File witness list.
- File notice of intent to take child testimony if your client will be testifying.
- Prepare client for testimony (if child is testifying). This can include showing the youth the courtroom in which they will be testifying; walking them through the trial process; and identifying any supports that may be necessary to minimize the trauma of testifying

If submitting agreed order, edit order for client

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## Review Hearings

- Ensure first review takes place six months from the beginning date of the placement episode or no more than 90 days from the entry of the disposition order, whichever comes first.
- Ensure permanency planning review hearing takes place no later than 12 months following commencement of the current placement episode.
- Notify youth of review hearing dates well in advance- determine whether a continuance is needed to accommodate their appearance in cases where the client wishes to attend.
- Ensure youth receives DCYF court report and/or CASA/GAL report prior to review hearing.
- Determine whether youth wishes to attend review and in what manner (virtually—with camera on or off—or in person).
- Go over court reports and proposed review hearing order with youth.
- Edit proposed review hearing order with any requested changes.
- Determine whether your client wishes to directly address the court.
- Submit youth impact statement/declaration/response to the court (*highly* recommended).
- Draft any motion that may be needed to coincide with review date or set on motion docket.
- Determine what your client would like to have verbally reported to the court and what they do not.
- Determine any special considerations or accommodations youth needs in order to feel comfortable in court.
- Refer to *Special Considerations for Older Foster Youth* for more information on age-specific rights. (Email [crp@ocla.wa.gov](mailto:crp@ocla.wa.gov))

Note: Review orders call for specific court inquiry of youth 14+, if present

AAG's office will need to be notified of any special requests in advance.

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## Termination Proceedings

- Consider accepting service of termination petition on behalf of your client.
- Go over termination petition and potential alternative outcomes with client.
- Go over proposed open adoption agreement/DCYF contract for communication with client if there is one. (Common where parents are relinquishing.)
- Submit any objections to documents offered under ER 904(b) within 14 days of receiving them.
- Secure an expert witness, if needed.
- Submit your witness list pursuant to the Court's scheduling order.
- Submit notice of intent to take child testimony, if needed.
- Create trial binder for the Court and parties with documents you intend to submit at trial.
- Create personal trial binder with discovery, organized by witness.
- Practice testimony with your client.
- Ensure that transportation to the trial and meal accommodations have been arranged for youth.
- Consider whether your client may need additional support (such as a well-timed counseling appointment) at the conclusion of trial and ask for this to be arranged if so.

Will client be with you during breaks/lunch or is alternate supervision needed?

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## Permanency Planning Staffings/FTDMs

- Explain the nature of the meeting to your client and what they can expect to be discussed.
- Discuss your client's goals prior to the meeting.
- Notify your client of the date/time/format for the meeting and ensure they have the ability to attend if they so wish (otherwise it may need to be re-scheduled).
- Prepare your client regarding what will be asked of them during the meeting.
- If meeting is virtual, find out whether your client is comfortable having their camera on (and if not, notify participants that youth's camera will remain off).

If your client asks you to attend the meeting in their absence, find out exactly what they want reported.

- Notify youth 14+ of the right to bring support persons to the meeting. Assist with arranging this if needed. Younger youth may also request to have support persons participate.
- Determine who will be attending the meeting and notify your client.
- Consider any special requests that will make your client more comfortable during the meeting (e.g. they may not be comfortable sharing in front of certain participants).
- Protect your client during the meeting—do not allow for hostility, belittling or confrontational conversation with your client. Recognize that your client may need to step out momentarily or leave a meeting altogether.
- Save time to de-brief with your client after the meeting about whether motions or other further action is needed.