

Submitting Your Court Report

In October 2007, Department of Human Service (DHS) Director Lillian Koller said “We all know that resource families are often involved in making critical life decisions for their foster children, so it is important that these foster parents be able to attend Family Court hearings, if they wish, and offer their insights and recommendations to the Judge.” We strongly agree. Foster parent’s day-to-day care of the child and regular contact with therapists, teachers, and other service providers gives foster parents a unique perspective on the child’s needs.

Foster parents are strongly encouraged to submit a written statement to court as well as to attend court. Written reports should:

- be short (no more than 2-3 pages, double-spaced),
- be well organized,
- be typed or neatly handwritten, and
- include the child's name, birth date, and case number (referred to as the FC-S number)
- list the parties to whom you are sending a copy

The written report or letter should be provided at least a week and preferably two weeks before the hearing to the court, the social worker, the guardian *ad litem*, and the parents' attorney, if you know who that is. Bring multiple copies to the court hearing in case someone didn't receive their copy. Remember that no information may be given to the judge that isn't shared with all the parties.

- On **Oahu** (First Circuit), you may fax it to the attention of the court officer in Juvenile Intake at 539-4224 or mail it to: Juvenile Intake, ATTN: *name of court officer*, P.O. Box 3498, Honolulu, HI 96811-3498. (You can find the name of court officer by calling 539-4292.)
- On **Kauai** (Fifth Circuit), fax your report to 482-2442 or mail it to: David Lam, Administrator, Family Court of the Fifth Circuit, 3970 Ka’ana St., Suite 305, Lihue, HI 96766-1283.
- For **Maui, East** and **West Hawaii**, send the report to the guardian *ad litem* and the social worker, requesting that they attach the entire report to their report to the court. At the court hearing, be sure to confirm with the judge that he received your report.

