2025 MISC

IN COUNTY COURT AT LAW NUMBER FIVE
NUECES COUNTY, TEXAS

STANDING ORDERS FOR TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES INITIATED SUITS AFFECTING THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

The Court finds the following Standing Orders to be in the best interests of the children safeguarded by Nueces County Court at Law #5.

Pursuant to the inherent authority of this Honorable Court to conduct all proceedings in the interest of judicial economy, with due process and fundamental fairness to all parties, the following general Orders of this Court shall govern all Texas Department of Family and Protective Services ("DFPS") suits affecting the parent-child relationship here forth conducted in County Court at Law No. 5 ("CC5") of Nueces County, Texas, to wit:

1. **Progress Notes and Counseling Notes:** All progress notes provided to DFPS by mental health service providers shall be immediately provided to all parties, including the attorneys for the child(ren), parents, intervenors, and the CASA guardian ad litem. Counseling notes shall be forwarded to the parties within 3 business days of receipt by the DFPS or immediately if the next hearing falls prior to the third business day. When a parent or child is assigned a new counselor or mental health professional, the previous therapy notes and case information should be given to the new service provider so that there can be adequate continuity of care. Said records are to remain confidential and any inappropriate use or redistribution of them will be subject to contempt and sanction.

2. **Emergency and Urgent Filings:** If immediate electronic filing is not possible for any reason, emergency and urgent notices to the Court may be filed in person. If matters are urgent, they may be filed directly with the clerk of CC5 via email or in person at 2310 Gollihar Road, Corpus Christi, Texas. Once the emergency Order is filed, the filing attorney shall contact the court manager to inform the Court that an emergency filing has occurred and certify all parties have been served with notice of the filing. DFPS shall not change any placement of any child without approval and/or hearing of the Court.

3. **E-Filing Exemption:** The Court finds that good cause exists to exempt Change of Placement requests from the e-filing requirement found in TRCP 21. Specifically, the Court finds that e-filling such a request is often time prohibitive, creates unnecessary barriers, and ultimately prevents or delays the Court's ability to timely rule on changes in placement. Such barriers are contrary to the best interest of the children whom this Court is charged with safeguarding and protecting.

4. **Service Plans and Substance Abuse:** If substance abuse is the predominant reason for Court intervention, then the parent's initial service plan shall only include a drug assessment and any substance abuse treatment services needed to address their drug or alcohol problem. There shall be nothing else in regard to a service plan agreed to or ordered in a family group conference or any other setting without specific approval by the Court. If the DFPS wishes to include additional services on the parents' service plan, they shall narrowly tailor those services to address the families' specific needs and request those additional services be ordered at the Status hearing. The Court finds the requirement of additional services instituted on the parents in these cases often makes it impossible for the parents to comply and, therefore, can prohibit family reunification, which is contrary to the intent of the law.

5. **Placement and Visitation Change Request and Approval Process:** In the event that DFPS needs to request a change of placement or change in visitation, DFPS shall, unless the request is made in open court on the record, draft a written request signed by either the caseworker assigned to the case or his/her supervisor briefly describing the reason(s) for the request in change of placement, the efforts made to maintain the current placement (if applicable), and the type and location (i.e. city) of the proposed placement. The request shall further include a signature line for the Court to sign, a place to indicate the date of ruling, and a place for the Court to indicate if the request is approved, denied, or other. The portion of the request set aside for the Court's ruling shall substantially conform to the example below:

The Court ORDERED that the Request for a Change in Placement is:

_____; Granted.

_____; Denied.

_____; Other. _____

_____

SIGNED this 24 day of February, 2015.

JUDGE PRESIDING

The written request shall be transmitted via email by DFPS legal counsel containing a scanned or digital copy of the notice and addressed to the Clerk of CC5 and the Court Manager, with all attorneys and CASA (if applicable) cc'd. The Clerk or Court Manager shall promptly notify the Court. Once the Court approves or denies the request, the Clerk shall record it as an official Order and notify the parties via a reply to the original email. If the Court requires a hearing, the requesting party must contact the Court Manager to schedule it.

6. **De-Identified Files for Trial:** If a case is set for trial, DFPS shall provide as a matter of course the entire De-Identified file to all parties of record, including the Attorney Ad Litem and Guardian Ad Litem for the child, no later than 30 days from the date of trial. The DFPS shall request and forward (once received) the De-Identified file on or before the date of the Initial Permanency hearing regardless of whether the case is set for trial. DFPS shall request and forward updates to said file as needed but at least every thirty days until the time of trial.

7. **CARE Team Testimony:** Whenever lawfully subpoenaed for testimony in any hearing or trial conducted in Nueces County Court at Law No. 5, doctors associated with the Driscoll Children's Hospital CARE Team shall be permitted to testify virtually or by telephone unless otherwise Ordered by the Court.

8. **Circulation of Final Termination Orders:** Once a parent's rights are terminated, all final Orders regarding the termination must be circulated to all counsel by the Nueces County Attorney's Office no later than seven business days after the final trial.

9. **Proposed Hearing Orders and Objections:** All proposed hearing Orders should be filed within 7 days of hearing with a five-day objection letter that accompanies the circulation. If there are no written objections to the final Order by opposing counsel, the Court will sign the Order immediately upon the expiration of the five days.

10. **Attorney Ad Litem Training:** All attorneys requesting ad litem appointments shall be ordered to take a court-approved course focusing on DFPS child welfare cases. Attorneys shall also comply with any specific CLE requirements of the Texas Family Code and Texas Rules of Professional Conduct. All attorneys shall be responsible for forwarding proof of their compliance yearly.

11. **Attorney Email Requirement:** All attorneys practicing before this Court in child welfare cases shall designate, with the Court, their preferred contact email for receipt of notice in the event of a change of placement or other emergency requests.

12. **Filing of Home Studies:** All home studies ordered at the Adversary hearing, or prior to the Adversary hearing, shall be filed with the Court at least two days prior to the Status hearing. If the home study is not filed due to lack of cooperation by the person that the home study is being done on, then a report of that must also be filed two days prior to the Status hearing.

13. **Criminal History:** If the DFPS is in possession of criminal history for any respondent party, said history shall be provided to counsel for said party.

14. **Fee Application Deadlines:** It is Ordered that all itemized fee applications must be submitted the date the attorney appears in Court for the hearing he/she is submitting the fee application for. It is further Ordered all fee applications shall be submitted by itemized fee application within the month the time was incurred. It is further Ordered all fee applications must be received in the fiscal year the time related to the fee application was incurred. The fiscal year for Nueces County is October 1-September 30. Any invoices not submitted by September 30 in any given year risk not being paid. It is further Ordered the Court shall not pay fee applications that are not timely submitted.

15. **Post Termination Adoption Preparations:** Upon the signing of a final Order granting termination of parental rights, the DFPS shall wait *20 days* to allow parties to the suit to appeal the Court's determination before proceeding to transfer the case. During this time period, the DFPS will ensure the HSEGH (Health, Social, Education, Genetic History) and any other needed adoption prerequisite reports, forms, etc., that can be completed are completed regardless of appeal or not. If no appeal is filed, the Department will prepare the case to send to the Adoption Preparation Unit within 10 days after the 20 day appeal time period has expired. If an appeal is filed, the DFPS shall follow time guidelines in this Order upon final resolution by the 13th Court of Appeals.

    If the child(ren) are younger than 15 years of age and determined to have basic needs, the child(ren) will be featured in adoption recruitment activities to include a statewide announcement to adoption agencies. The child(ren)'s picture and brief profile will be utilized to recruit adoptive families. This shall be done no later than 10 working days after receipt of the child(ren) by the adoption unit.

If a possible adoptive family has not been selected by the 60th day post-termination of parental rights, the child(ren) will be featured on TARE (Texas Adoption Resource Exchange) in order to recruit adoptive families.

If the children are older than 15 years and have specialized needs, the DFPS shall discuss the specific plan for that child at the Permanency hearing 90 days post-termination. The written Permanency hearing report for that hearing should detail the DFPS permanency plan for the child(ren).

If a child is placed in a situation where that family is the adoptive placement, then the timelines regarding expedited adoption shall be adhered to. The placement on the TARE network is waived. Further, if the DFPS does not send these placements regularly to the adoption unit, then that is acceptable as long as the adoption is expedited.

16. **Disruption of Adoptive Placements:** The Court orders that no adoptive placement under the jurisdiction of this Court shall be disrupted prior to a hearing in County Court at Law No. 5. If the removal from placement is an emergency, then the requirement for pre-approval is waived. However, upon an emergency placement change, a show cause hearing shall be set within three business days of the placement. If it is possible to have a hearing prior or simultaneously to the emergency placement change, a hearing shall be set. If there is any question by DFPS as to whether the new information constitutes an emergency for purposes of placement, counsel for DFPS may inquire with the Court as to whether the Court agrees that it is an emergency by emailing all parties, the Court Manager, (if applicable) CASA, and the Judge.

17. **Permanency Reporting on Terminated Cases:** DFPS shall provide updates in every permanency report on the "case mining" efforts of all cases of children that rights have been terminated on or the DFPS has Permanent Managing Conservatorship of, but the children are not in their permanent homes. DFPS shall do diligent searches on all relatives and/or family friends to see if the possibility exists of moving these children into permanent placements. A list of relatives and family friends who have been evaluated should be included in the permanency report, along with the dates of inquiry and result. The DFPS shall reconnect with every terminated parent and every parent who still has rights to see if they are a possibility for placement at least once every 8 months. The intent of this Order is to do everything possible to move these children into permanent homes.

18. **Relative and Family Friend Placement Preferences:** The DFPS shall not request the removal of a child to the Court without searching diligently for appropriate relative and/or family friend placement options first. Further, the DFPS shall not put the child(ren) in foster care if there are appropriate relative/family friend options without prior permission of the Court. If there is any question as to appropriateness, the DFPS shall inquire, through counsel, directly with the Court. The Court finds that less trauma will be inflicted on children who have to be removed if they are placed with someone familiar and appropriate. This has been a standing practice with the Court for some time but shall now be a standing order of this Court.

19. **Attorney Compliance with Texas Family Code:** Each attorney representing a child shall read and comply with Texas Family Code Sections 107.003 and 107.004. All Attorney ad Litems representing children shall read and provide to their clients copies of "Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care" and "An Open Letter to Children in Foster Care." Further, the Department shall also be responsible for providing copies of the same documents to children in their care. Said documents are attached and made a part of these standing orders.

20. **PMC Youth Report:** Each attorney who represents a child shall be jointly and severally responsible with the assigned caseworker to fill out, regularly, a PMC Youth Report. The form must be filled out by or with the aid of the child and shall be updated and submitted at least every 6 months.

21. **Extended Jurisdiction Hearing:** All children going into extended jurisdiction may attend the hearing that the Court is asked to extend jurisdiction.

22. **Child's Meeting with the Judge:** Every child in the jurisdiction of the Court shall appear to meet with the Judge at least one time. The child's Attorney ad Litem should work with the Court Manager and Guardian ad Litem to schedule the meeting between the child and the Court. Any exception due to medical reasons or other prohibitive reasons shall be approved by the Court.

23. **Child's Request to Meet the Court:** If a child asks to meet with the Court, the Attorney Ad Litem shall schedule a meeting with the Judge prior to the next hearing scheduled for their case. If an emergency or urgent matter arises, the meeting may be set earlier.

24. **Public Access to DFPS Court Records:** The Court finds that filed documents in suits brought by DFPS through the Texas Family Code are confidential judiciary records, not subject to public disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act or Texas Rules of Civil Procedure due to the sensitive information they contain regarding children and families involved in abuse or neglect cases. It is therefore ordered that public access to pleadings, orders, and documents filed in a suit brought by DFPS pursuant to Chapters 261, 262, and 264 of the Texas Family Code are to be restricted and shall be maintained by the District Clerk of Nueces County as such. The Clerk of the Court shall not allow public access to these pleadings, orders, and documents other than to DFPS, the Nueces County Attorney's Office, the parties, their attorneys, the attorney ad litem, and the guardian ad litem, unless specifically permitted or Court-ordered.

25. **Prohibition on Discussing Legal Case with Child:** All parties, to include relatives and placements, to the case are prohibited from discussing the legal case and its ramifications with the child who is a subject of the case. If a child raises the question about the legal case, the child shall be referred to his or her attorney for discussion and explanation. All parties are specifically prohibited from attempting to influence the child who is the subject of this suit in any way during the pendency of this case. If there is any doubt by any party as to what shall constitute a violation of this section of the Order, the responsibility to inquire with the Court is in the party. who has a question. This Order does not apply to cases where parental rights have been terminated.

26. **Social Media Prohibitions:** Petitioner (through its employees and representatives), Respondents, and the child(ren) who are the subject of the suit are prohibited from posting anything on social media concerning the case or the course of the proceedings. Social media posts that are intended to solicit assistance they may need for the case are allowed but cannot specifically name or identify anyone on the case. There shall be no case specific discussion.

27. **Prohibited Conduct in Front of Children:** Respondents are prohibited from engaging in the following activities in front of the child(ren) made the basis of this suit: (a) communicating with another Respondent, or a member of the child(ren)'s family or household, in a threatening or harassing manner; (b) committing family violence; that is, committing any act against another Respondent or a member of the child(ren)'s family or household intended to result in physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or sexual assault, or that is a threat that reasonably places the person in fear of imminent physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or sexual assault; (c) engaging in

conduct directed specifically to another Respondent, or a member of the child(ren)'s family or household, that is reasonably likely to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, or torment the person; and (d) committing any of the above acts through an agent or by enlisting the assistance or cooperation of another person.

28. **Disparagement of Parties:** Petitioner (through its employees and representatives), Respondents, CASA, all attorneys, and anyone with access to the child(ren) who are the subject of the suit are prohibited from disparaging other Respondents or parties in the presence of the child(ren).

29. **School Placement:** The Court finds it is in the best interests of the child that the child remain in the same school that the child is attending at the time of the removal for the pendency of this suit, and it is so Ordered. Any deviation from this Order shall only be allowed by Order of this Court. The Court finds it is in the best interests of the child(ren) that the school district in which the child(ren) is/are placed shall enroll the child(ren) in accordance with Texas Education Code Section 25.002, regardless of whether all necessary documents concerning immunizations, birth certificates, and other documents are provided, and it is so Ordered.

30. **Filing Reports Prior to Hearings:** All reports from the DFPS, CASA and attorneys for the parents or children shall be e-filed at least five days prior to each hearing. In accordance with the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, all parties and CASA are to be served with copies of the documents.

31. **Home Study Recommendations:** Any contractor hired to conduct home studies to be completed in a SAPCR case filed by the DFPS shall submit their specific placement recommendations directly to the DFPS as soon as completed. Prior to making its own recommendation for placement, the DFPS shall then file the home study and contractor recommendation with the Court and distribute them to all parties and CASA within 3 business days of receipt of the home study from the contractor. The DFPS shall not contact the service provider in an attempt to influence their recommendation in any way. The DFPS may continue to provide its own recommendation, as well.

32. **Local Foster Home List:** The DFPS shall maintain, at all times, a list of foster homes with the school district they live in. When a removal occurs, the DFPS shall go to the foster home list with school districts listed and attempt placement there prior to any placement that is outside of the school district the child currently resides in.

33. **Exigent Removal Placement:** For children exigently removed from their homes prior to a Court Order, the DFPS shall give a placement preference to appropriate family or fictive kin. In the event that a kinship placement is not available, when possible, children under 5 years old shall be placed at the Ark Emergency Shelter in Corpus Christi, unless placed together with their siblings. All efforts to keep sibling groups together shall be made. When possible, placement should remain in Nueces or contiguous counties.

34. **Respondent Contact Information:** Upon appointment of an attorney in any case, the DFPS shall provide said attorney with any contact information of the party they are representing in the possession of the DFPS. This includes phone numbers, e-mail addresses, home addresses, or any other means of contact.

35. **Service:** If service is not accomplished or a party has not appeared by the time of the Status hearing, the DFPS is ordered to explore alternative service. At the Subsequent Permanency hearing or 45 days prior to trial (whichever comes first), the DFPS is to verify whether service on all parties has been accomplished and whether the De-Identified file has been circulated.

Warning to parents

The Court hereby informs each parent whose child is the subject of this suit that their parental and custodial rights and duties may be subject to restriction or to termination unless the parent or parents are willing and able to provide the child with a safe environment.

Enforcement

VIOLATION OF A STANDING ORDER IS PUNISHABLE BY CONTEMPT.

THE COURT FINDS these Orders to be in the best interests of the children under the jurisdiction of this Court.

Signed this 26 day of March, 2025.

Honorable Timothy J. McCoy

COUNTY COURT AT LAW #5

Hon. Timothy J. McCoy, Presiding Judge
Hon. Martha Huerta, Associate Judge

2310 Gollihar Road
Corpus Christi, Texas 78415
Phone (361)-561-6056; Fax (361) 561-6142
county.court5@nuecescountytx.gov

An Open Letter to Children and Youth in Foster Care

Dear Youth in Foster Care,

As the Judge overseeing your case in County Court at Law No. 5, I want you to know that your voice matters. You have rights—not just as a child in Texas, but as a child in the foster care system. Your thoughts, feelings, and opinions are important, and I want to make sure you know how to be heard.

Texas law protects the rights of children in foster care. In fact, Rule 748.1101 of the Texas Administrative Code lists nearly thirty specific rights that are guaranteed to you. These include the right to be treated with dignity and respect, the right to be safe, and the right to express your opinions without fear of punishment. You can learn more about these rights from your caseworker or attorney.

But beyond those rights, it is crucial for you to know that you always have the right to be heard in Court. The decisions I make are based on what is in your best interest, and your input can make a big difference. I value your honesty and want to hear directly from you whenever you feel it is important.

How can your voice be heard?

Speak Directly to the Court: You always have the right to communicate with me directly. If you want to talk to me, you do not need anyone's permission. You can call the court at **(361) 561-6056** or email me at **County.court5@nuecescountytx.gov** to schedule a time to speak.

Talk to Your Attorney: You also have the right to have an attorney who will explain the law to you and represent what you want or need in court. Your attorney is there to support you and make sure your perspective is heard.

I understand that sharing your feelings and opinions can be challenging, but your voice is important. You deserve to be heard, and I am here to listen. Please do not hesitate to reach out whenever you need to.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Judge Timothy McCoy
County Court at Law No. 5

As a child or youth in foster care I have the right to:

Safety and Care

1. Be told:
    - Why I am I in foster care.
    - What will happen to me.
    - What is happening to my family (including brothers and sisters).
    - How CPS is planning for my future.

2. Have good care and treatment that meets my needs in the most family-like setting possible. This means I have the right to live in a safe, healthy, and comfortable place. And I am protected from getting hurt, treated with respect, and have some privacy for personal needs.

3. Be told the rules by a person at the place where I am living.

4. Be free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harassment from any person in the household or facility where I live.

5. Be kept informed about any investigations that involve me.

6. Be treated fairly.

Family and Other Contacts

1. Live with my siblings who are also in foster care, if possible. If I am not living with my siblings, I have the right to know why. If there are no safety or other compelling reasons why I cannot live with my siblings, it is my caseworker's job to try and find a home where I can live with my siblings.

2. Visit and have regular contact with my family, including my brothers and sisters (unless a court order or case plan doesn't allow it) and to have my worker explain any restrictions to me and write them in my record. I have the right to file a court petition to request access to my sibling(s) if I have been separated from my sibling(s) because of an action by DFPS.

3. Visit and have contact with persons outside the foster care system. These visitors can be, but are not limited to teachers, church members, mentors, and friends.

Have a Normal Life

1. Speak and be spoken to in my own language. This includes Braille if I am blind or sign language if I am deaf. If my foster parents or caregiver does not know my language, CPS

will give me a plan to meet my needs to communicate.

2. Go to school and get an education that fits my age and individual needs.

3. Have my religious needs met.
4. Participate in childhood activities that are appropriate for my age and maturity, including youth leadership development, foster family activities, and unsupervised childhood and extracurricular activities (including playing sports, playing in the band, going on field trips, spending time with friends, etc.).

5. Privacy, including sending and receiving unopened mail, making and receiving private phone calls, and keeping a personal journal, unless an appropriate professional or court says that restrictions are necessary for my best interest.

6. Personal care, hygiene, and grooming products and training on how to use them.

7. Comfortable clothing for my age and size and similar to clothing worn by other children in my community. I also have the right to clothing that protects me against the weather. If I'm a teenager, I should have the reasonable opportunity to select my clothing.

8. Have my personal items and gifts at my home and to get additional things within reasonable limits, as planned for and discussed by my caregiver and caseworker, and based on my caregiver's ability.

9. Have my personal belongings transported in luggage (suitcase, duffel bag, backpack, or similar container) when being placed in foster care or changing placements, and the luggage be my personal property.

10. Personal space in my bedroom to store my clothes and belongings.

11. Be informed of search policies (going through my personal items). I have the right to be told if certain items are forbidden (or if I am not allowed to have them) and why. If my belongings are removed, it must be documented.

12. Healthy foods in healthy portions for my age and activity level.

13. Seek employment, get paid for work done at my placement (except for routine chores or work assigned as fair and reasonable discipline), keep my own money, and have my own bank account in my own name, depending on my age or level of maturity.

14. Give my permission in writing before taking part in any publicity or fund raising activity for the place where I live, including the use of my photograph.

15. Refuse to make public statements showing my gratitude to a foster home, child-placing agency, or operation.

Discipline

1. Be free of any harsh, cruel, unusual, unnecessary, demeaning, or humiliating punishment. This means I should never:
    - Be shaken, hit, spanked, or threatened with being shaken, hit, or spanked
    - Be forced to do unproductive work
    - Be denied food, sleep, access to a bathroom, mail, or family visits
    - Have myself or my family made fun of, or
    - Be threatened with losing my placement or shelter
    - Be treated in a way meant to embarrass, control, harm, intimidate, or isolate me by use of physical force, rumors threats, or inappropriate comments.

2. Be disciplined in a manner that is appropriate to how mature I am, my developmental level, and my medical condition. I must be told why I was disciplined. Discipline does not include the use of restraint, seclusion, corporal punishment, or threat of corporal punishment.

3. Be informed of emergency behavioral intervention policies in writing. I have the right to know how they will control me if I cannot control my behavior, and to know how they will keep me and those around me safe.

Plans for Me While in Care

1. See my caseworker at least once a month and in private.

2. Receive a complete plan that addresses my needs and services, including transition activities when I am 14 or older that plans for my life as an adult, to include a career, college or help enrolling in an educational or vocational job training program. I also have the right to a copy or summary of my plan and the right to review it.

3. Actively participate in creating my plan for services and permanent living arrangements. I have the right to ask someone to act on my behalf or to support me in my participation. At age 14, I have the right to invite two or more additional people of my choosing, that are not my foster parent or caseworker, to participate in my case planning meetings.

If I am an older youth:

1. If I am age 14 or older, I have the right to one or more Circle of Support Conferences.

2. If I am age 14 or older, I have the right to be told about services, programs, and benefits available to me when I leave care—Preparation for Adult Living (PAL), Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) Program, college tuition and fee waiver, STAR Health-Medicaid, Extended Foster Care, and others.

3. If I am age 16 or older, I have the right to attend Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) classes and other state and regional activities as required or appropriate to my plan for services.

4. If I am age 16 or older, I have the right to get help in obtaining a place to live and information on the cost of housing when aging out of care, so that I can plan for my future independence.

Medical Care

1. Good medical, dental, and vision care, and mental health and developmental services that adequately meet my needs. I have the right to also request that the care or services be separate from adults (other than young adults) who are receiving services.

2. Not be forced to take unnecessary or too much medication.

3. Be involved in decisions about my medical care:
    - I may consent to my own treatment in some cases if allowed by the health care provider. For example, the law allows me to consent to my own counseling for suicide prevention, drug or alcohol problems, or sexual, physical or emotional abuse, and I can agree to be treated for serious contagious or communicable diseases.
    - If I am pregnant and unmarried, I can agree to hospital, medical or surgical treatment, other than abortion, related to the pregnancy. If I have a child who is in my legal care, I can consent to all medical care for my child.
    - If I am 16 years old or older, I have the right to ask a judge to legally authorize me to make some or all of my own medical decisions, such as which kinds of medications I should take.

Legal Representation or Courts

1. Contact and speak privately to: my caseworker, attorneys, ad litems, probation officer, court appointed special advocate (CASA), and Disability Rights of Texas.

2. Go to court hearings and speak to the judge, including talking to the judge about where I am living and what I like to see happen to me and my family.

Records

1. Expect that my records and personal information will be kept private and will be discussed only when it is about my care.

2. Have a copy of the CPS Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care and that they be explained to me in my primary language or in any means that successfully explains it to me.

3. Have a credit report run annually beginning at age 14, be informed of the results, and receive assistance in interpreting the report and disputing any inaccuracies.

4. Receive help with getting my birth certificate, Social Security card, and personal identification card (State ID, or when appropriate, driver's license) before I turn 16.

5. Get necessary personal information within 30 days of leaving care, including my immunization records, proof of Medicaid enrollment, information about how to set up a Medical Power of Attorney, and information contained in my education portfolio and health passport.

Make Complaints

1. Make calls, reports, or complaints without being punished, threatened with punishment, or retaliated against; and I have the right to make any of these calls privately and anonymously if I choose and the call center permits it. Depending on the nature of the complaint, I have the right to call:
    - The DFPS Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline at 1-800-252-5400.
    - The HHSC Ombudsman for Children and Youth currently in Foster Care at 1-844-286-0769.
    - The DFPS Office of Consumer Affairs at 1-800-720-7777.
    - Disability Rights of Texas at 1-800-252-9108.

2. To get information from my caseworker, attorney, CASA, or any other individual in my case about where I can make my complaint if I have one.

3. Be kept informed about the outcomes of any complaints made to the HHSC Ombudsman for Children and Youth.