



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

News for Immediate Release

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Pennsylvania courts release video to help parents navigate the dependency process

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania’s Supreme Court today released a comprehensive video for parents whose children have been removed from their care or are under supervision of dependency court, according to Justice Max Baer.

“We believe this is the most comprehensive dependency court resource available in Pennsylvania – and quite possibly in the nation,” said Justice Baer. “This video will help parents – as well as parent attorneys, caseworkers and really anyone wanting to understand dependency court – navigate the dependency process.”

The goals of the video are to help parents learn what to expect in the courtroom, how to prepare for court, how to work with their caseworkers and attorney, what rights they’re entitled to and good questions to ask.

“Parents who come to dependency court are usually going through a difficult time, and it’s understandable that they might feel upset, afraid or even angry,” said Sandra Moore, director for the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Court’s (AOPC) Office of Children and Families in the Courts (OCFC). “We hope to decrease some of that anxiety by breaking things down into manageable bits of information that are engaging and relatable.”

Produced by the OCFC and the AOPC/Communications office, the [*Parent’s Guide to Understanding the Pennsylvania Dependency Process*](#) video is divided into five chapters so that regardless of where parents are in the dependency process, they can watch segments that most pertain to their current situation. The chapters include:

- Courtroom Experience
- Working with your Attorney
- Case Planning
- Visitation
- Permanency

“Parents will hear from judges, caseworkers, parent attorneys, and most importantly, other parents who experienced many of the same circumstances and feelings but came out stronger on the other side,” said Moore. “The issues facing parents are serious – but it is possible to be successful by following the judge’s orders, preparing for and actively participating in court and working through your family’s case plan.”

[Watch the video online](#) or obtain copies by contacting the Office of Children and Families in the Courts at 717-231-3300 ext. 4255 or elke.moyer@pacourts.us.

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Media contact: [Kimberly Bathgate](#), 717-231-3331



Editor's Note:

Since 2006, the Office of Children and Families in the Courts, along with the Department of Human Services and other partners, has reduced the number of dependent and delinquent children in temporary foster care homes by more than 7,000, or 33 percent. Placing these children into a permanent family setting greatly improves their chances to succeed and significantly reduces the cost of institutional care, saving an estimated \$117 million annually.