



Capacity Building
CENTER FOR COURTS

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Judicial, Court, and Attorney Measures of Performance (JCAMP)

Volume III: Implementation Toolbox

Judicial, Court, and Attorney Measures of Performance (JCAMP), Volume III: Implementation Toolbox

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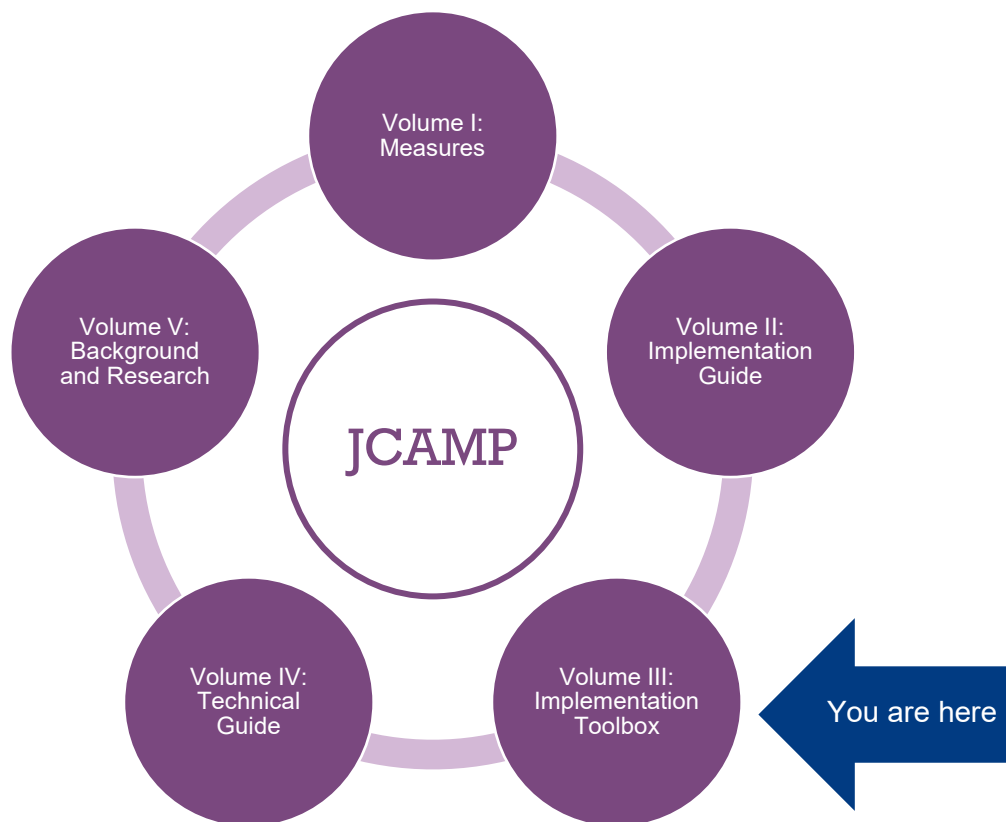


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Introduction

The Judicial, Court, and Attorney Measures of Performance (JCAMP) project developed a Toolbox to support implementation of the measures into practice. This Toolbox supports **Volume II: Implementation Guide** and offers examples of tools for implementation. These tools can and should be modified as needed by the site during implementation to best meet local needs.

Volume III: Implementation Toolbox is organized to align with the steps in **Volume II: Implementation Guide**:

- [Step 1: Form Your Team](#)
- [Step 2: Select and Prioritize Measures](#)
- [Step 3: Visualize Your Path](#)
- [Step 4: Get Your Data](#)
- [Step 5: Use Your Data](#)
- [Step 6: Sustain Your Performance Measurement Efforts](#)

Each step represents a section of the Toolbox. The sections have a brief introduction and overview of the tools within to guide you through use of each tool. You can easily navigate to the section of interest by clicking the hyperlinks above or using the Table of Contents as a starting point.





Tools to Form Your Team

Step 1 includes guidance on getting started in performance measurement work, specifically in forming a team to guide the work. Two tools in the Toolbox are related to teaming.

- **Teaming Checklist.** This tool provides a basic checklist for consideration in teaming. It includes steps identified in the Implementation Guide for successful teaming. It is meant to be used to determine if the steps in forming a team have been met.
- **Teaming Structure Template.** This tool provides a template with the types of information that teams need to discuss to create a structure for future teaming efforts. It includes blank spaces to complete when the team answers the questions.



Teaming Checklist

Potential team members	Check if yes
Have you clearly articulated the team's purpose?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your team include a diversity of roles and perspectives? <i>Consider the following roles:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parents with lived experience	<input type="checkbox"/>
People with lived experience as children or youth in care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Judges/judicial officers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent attorney	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth attorney	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prosecuting (or agency or state) attorney	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agency representative	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tribal partners	<input type="checkbox"/>
Court Improvement Program staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Court administration	<input type="checkbox"/>
Court information technology staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Analysts or researchers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth advocates	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peer mentors/allies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community members	<input type="checkbox"/>
Treatment providers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relative caregivers and foster parents	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you established a teaming structure?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you identified how the team will make decisions?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you identified how the team will get work done (e.g., when, how often)?	<input type="checkbox"/>



Teaming Structure Template

Team purpose	
When will the team meet?	On _____ day(s) for _____ hours
How will the team meet?	<input type="checkbox"/> In person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtually: platform _____ Link to meeting: _____
Who will lead or facilitate the meetings?	
What are the rules for the team?	
How will decisions be made?	
How will information be shared within the team?	
How will the team ensure understanding among team members?	
How will information be shared outside the team?	
How will the team gather feedback from stakeholder groups unable to be represented?	
What is the desired outcome of the team?	
How will the team measure its success?	
How will the team set up internal feedback mechanisms?	





Tools to Select and Prioritize Measures

These tools support Implementation Step 2 to select and prioritize measures.

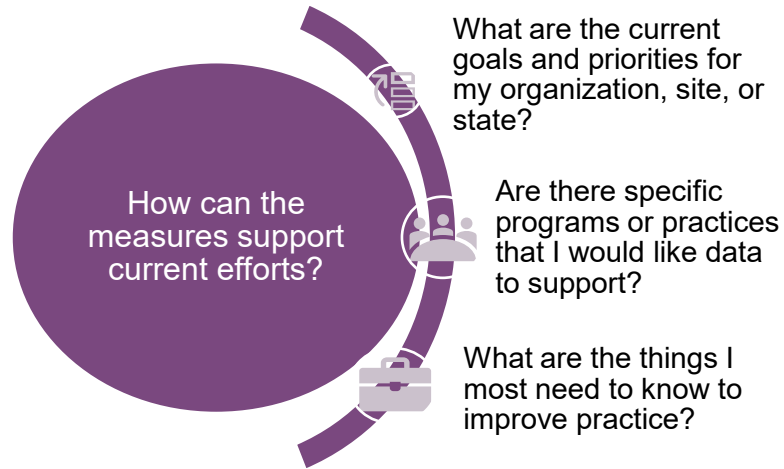
- **Needs Assessment.** Collecting data on all the measures may be too burdensome for all sites. It is important to consider how the measures might be helpful to your organization. This needs assessment will help you prioritize which measures to collect by identifying what you want to know and the resources you have to collect the data. The Needs Assessment includes four steps.
 1. Identify priority topics of interest for your site.
 2. Use information about current goals or projects to help you select and prioritize measures.
 3. Further prioritize among the measures by determining your data capacity for each measure.
 4. Select data collection methods.
- **Excel File to Sort and Prioritize Measures** is available [here](#). Use this form to help you sort selected measures by the recommended data collection method. This tool is useful in planning for data collection.



Needs Assessment Tool

Step 1: Identify topics of interest.

The first step is to think about the priorities of your jurisdiction or organization. Complete the form below as you consider the following:



Identify Priority Topics

Questions	Answers
What are the current goals and priorities for my organization, site, or state?	
What were our Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) findings, and how might court data inform our state's program improvement plan?	
Would I like data to support specific programs or practices?	
What are the things I most need to know to improve practice?	
What is the topic of our Court Improvement Program (CIP) and child welfare agency joint project?	
What are our legislative priorities?	



Based on your responses to the questions above, what do you see as your top priorities for performance measurements?

Top priorities

Step 2: Select measures.

Use the answers from Step 1 to review and prioritize the list of JCAMP performance measures.

Volume II: Implementation Guide includes additional information about prioritizing measures.

1. Individually or as a team, read the list of measures and put a check in the Topics column for any topics that were discussed in the first step.¹
2. For any measures with a check in the Topics column, assign a Priority Score:
 - a. 0 = Not a priority
 - b. 1 = Low priority
 - c. 2 = Medium priority
 - d. 3 = High priority
3. For any measures with a score of 1 to 3, indicate in the last column with which priority or project the measures align. This could be general systems change efforts or a specific project.

Identify Measures

Measure	Topics	Priority score (0–3)	Project alignment
Family engagement			
1.1 Do parents attend hearings?			
1.2 Do children and youth attend hearings?			
1.3 Do tribal representatives attend hearings?			
1.4 Do foster parents and relative caregivers attend hearings?			
1.5 Do courts send orders to parties or provide them at the end of the hearing?			
1.6 What do judges do to engage parents, children, and youth in hearings?			

¹ To simplify this tool, you can check off any measures of interest and then skip straight to administrative data, assuming you wish to capture data on all checked topics.



Measure	Topics	Priority score (0–3)	Project alignment
1.7 What do judges do to engage foster parents and relative caregivers in hearings?			
1.8 How do parent attorneys engage parents in the process?			
1.9 How do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney guardians ad litem (GALs) engage children and youth in the process?			
1.10 How do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys engage parents, children, and youth in the process?			
1.11 Are important issues discussed in hearings?			
1.12 Do parents feel judges engaged them in hearings?			
1.13 Do children and youth feel judges engaged them in hearings?			
1.14 Do foster parents and relative caregivers feel judges engaged them in hearings?			
Due process			
2.1 Do parties to the case receive timely service?			
2.2 Are child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs appointed early in the case?			
2.3 Are parent attorneys appointed early in the case?			
2.4 Do parties to the case receive timely notice of hearings?			
2.5 Are Indian children identified early in the case?			
2.6 What do judges do to ensure fair hearings?			
2.7 How do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys ensure fair hearings?			
2.8 How do parent attorneys ensure fair hearings?			
2.9 How do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs ensure fair hearings?			
2.10 Do parents feel they were treated fairly?			
2.11 Do children and youth feel they were treated fairly?			
High-quality legal representation			
3.1 Do parent attorneys attend hearings?			
3.2 Do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs attend hearings?			
3.3 Do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys attend hearings?			
3.4 Do multidisciplinary members of the legal team attend hearings?			



Measure	Topics	Priority score (0–3)	Project alignment
3.5 How do parent attorneys ensure they provide high-quality legal representation?			
3.5a Does the same parent attorney represent the parent throughout the case?			
3.5b Do parent attorneys advocate for parents in hearings?			
3.5c Do parent attorneys prepare in between hearings?			
3.6 How do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs ensure they provide high-quality legal representation?			
3.6a Does the same child or youth attorney and/or attorney GAL represent the child or youth throughout the case?			
3.6b Do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs advocate for children and youth in hearings?			
3.6c Do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs prepare in between hearings?			
3.7 How do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys ensure they provide high-quality legal representation?			
3.7a Do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys stay on the same case throughout the case?			
3.7b How do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys advocate in hearings?			
3.7c Do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys prepare in between hearings?			
3.8 Are parents satisfied with their attorneys' representation?			
3.9 Are children and youth satisfied with their legal representation?			
3.10 How do parents, children, and youth feel they were treated by prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys?			
Safety			
4.1 How often and at what points in the case do courts make a finding of reasonable or active efforts to prevent removal? How often is the finding that the agency made “no reasonable efforts”?			
4.2 How do courts discuss safety and removal?			
4.3 How do courts discuss the agency's reasonable or active efforts to prevent removal?			
4.4 Do attorneys cross-examine reasonable or active efforts to prevent removal?			



Measure	Topics	Priority score (0–3)	Project alignment
4.5 Do attorneys raise the issue of reasonable or active efforts if not raised?			
4.6 Do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys offer information or evidence about the agency’s reasonable or active efforts to the court?			
4.7 Do judges ask about the agency’s efforts to prevent removal?			
4.8 Do judges make detailed reasonable or active efforts findings that explain how the agency has worked with the family to prevent removal?			
4.9 Do judges consider parents’ protective capacities in determining whether to remove, maintain, or return the child home?			
4.10 Do parents understand the safety threats to the child and how those led to the child’s removal?			
4.11 Do parents understand the conditions for return of the child?			
4.12 Do parents believe judges considered their protective capacities in decision-making regarding removal and return?			
4.13 Do parents feel their voices were heard in safety planning discussions?			
4.14 Do children and youth feel their voices were heard in safety discussions?			
Permanency			
5.1 How much time does it take until the first permanency hearing?			
5.2 How much time does it take to file the termination of parental rights petition?			
5.3 How much time does it take until the termination of parental rights?			
5.4 How often and at what points in the case do courts make a finding of reasonable or active efforts to reunify or finalize permanency?			
5.5 How often and at what points in the case are continuances granted?			
5.6 How many termination of parental rights decisions are appealed?			
5.7 How do courts discuss permanency?			



Measure	Topics	Priority score (0–3)	Project alignment
5.8 Do judges ask about what is preventing the child or youth from safely returning home today?			
5.9 Do judges ask about parents’ access to and receipt of relevant services?			
5.10 Do judges order any relevant services to support reunification/permanency?			
5.11 How do court orders address family time?			
5.12 Do judges make detailed reasonable or active efforts to achieve permanency findings that explain how the agency has worked to reunify the family or achieve permanency?			
5.13 What information or evidence about reasonable or active efforts to reunify or finalize permanency do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys present to the court?			
5.14 Do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys file motions and petitions related to permanency goals in a timely manner?			
5.15 Do parent attorneys advocate for reunification in hearings?			
5.16 Do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs advocate for reunification or other permanency in hearings?			
5.17 Why are continuances granted?			
5.18 Do parents feel their voices were heard in permanency planning discussions?			
5.19 Do parents understand what is required of them and the steps needed to have their child returned?			
5.20 Do parents feel services met their needs and assisted them in reunification?			
5.21 Do parents feel they were able to engage in meaningful family time?			
5.22 Do children and youth feel their voices were heard in permanency decisions?			



Step 3: Assess your data capacity.

After you prioritize measures, complete the checklist below to determine your capacity to collect needed data.

Assessing Data Capacity

Data source	Capacity	Yes or no
<p>Administrative data</p> <p><u>Resource estimate (low to moderate)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative data systems may require few resources to gather data, assuming the data are available in the system and the system can be queried to report on data. If reports already exist for an item, this is typically a low-resource ask and may take minimal staff time to complete. If a report is not already created, it may take more staff resources to create a report of the item of interest. 	A statewide court case management system is in place.	
	The system can be queried to report on specific items.	
	The system can be modified to add items.	
	Resources are available to create new reports from administrative data.	
	Resources are available to run existing reports when needed.	
<p>Court observation</p> <p><u>Resource estimate (moderate to high)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time to gather hearings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No process in place (estimate ~10 hours) Process in place (estimate ~5 hours per site) Staff time to be trained on a court observation instrument (~6 hours) Staff time to conduct the court observations. Court hearings average 20 minutes (vary widely by site). Consider an estimate of at least 10 hearings per hearing type per judge as a minimum for a resource estimate. That means that resources would require at least 8 hours of staff time per site and hearing type for court observation. <p>Estimate: 1 judge, 1 hearing type, process in place = 19 hours of staff time</p> <p>Estimate: Multiple judges, 2 hearing types = 60 hours of staff time</p>	A process is already in place to observe child welfare hearings.	
	If yes, data are available from this process related to the measures.	
	If yes, the process can be leveraged to collect additional data related to these measures.	
	The courts record their child welfare hearings at the site(s) of interest.	
	If yes, it is possible to gain access to these hearings for review.	
	If yes, a process is in place to access recorded hearings.	
	Resources are available to conduct court observation.	



Data source	Capacity	Yes or no
<p>Case file review</p> <p><u>Resource estimate (moderate to high)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time to gain access to case files for review (depends widely on whether a process is already in place to do this) (~10 hours) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Process in place (~5 hours) • Staff time to train on case file review tool (~6 hours) • Staff time to conduct the case file reviews. Reviewing case files can be resource intensive. It depends largely on the number of items you are looking for in the case file. Few items may take only a few minutes per case. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Minimal number of items (fewer than 5) = ~5–10 minutes per case ◦ More robust number of items = ~20–30 minutes per case ◦ Resources depend on number of cases reviewed (sampling strategy) <p>Estimate: 1 site, minimal number of items, minimal sample = 8 hours Estimate: 1 site, robust number of items, robust sampling = 40 hours</p>	<p>The state has a court case management system.</p> <p>If yes, the case management system can be accessed remotely.</p> <p>Sites have their own court case management system.</p> <p>If yes, some or all of these systems can be accessed remotely.</p> <p>A process is already in place to allow access to case files.</p> <p>A process is in place that includes structured review of case files.</p> <p>Resources are available to conduct case file review.</p> <p>Resources are available to conduct case file review.</p>	
<p>Focus groups</p> <p><u>Resource estimate (low)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups work best as meetings of 6–10 persons, separated by role. Consider that multiple stakeholder groups exist for child welfare cases (judges, parents’ attorneys, child attorneys and/or attorney GALs, state and/or agency attorneys) plus parents and youth. Focus groups are typically 1.5–2 hours in length. • For one site, with one group for each role, that would include 6 groups at 2 hours (12 hours of data collection) plus time to prepare. • Time and money to transcribe notes for review. <p>Estimate: 1 focus group per group of persons, with preparation time and time for transcribing notes: 16 hours total (depending on focus group length)</p>	<p>Resources to contact professionals for groups are available.</p> <p>Resources to recruit youth for participation are available.</p> <p>Persons are available who can facilitate focus groups.</p> <p>Resources are available to compensate focus group participants.</p> <p>Resources to conduct focus groups are available.</p>	



Data source	Capacity	Yes or no
<p>Surveys</p> <p><u>Resource estimate (low)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a platform is available, resources to put a survey onto a platform and test it Time for recruitment and dissemination (including surveys and reminders) <p>Estimate: Depending on methods for recruitment and dissemination, range of 6 to 12 hours</p>	Survey software (e.g., Survey Monkey, Qualtrics) is available.	
	A process to disseminate a survey to professionals is available.	
	A way to disseminate a survey to parents is available.	
	A way to disseminate a survey to children and youth is available.	
	Staff who can analyze data are available.	
	Staff who can create reports of findings are available.	
	<p>General capacity</p>	Parent ally (veteran parent, parent mentor) programs in your state could be a resource.
Foster youth alumni groups in your state could be a resource.		
Research staff are available.		
An existing relationship with a local university exists.		
Consultant staff with expertise in data and evaluation could be a resource.		
Other resources:		

Based on your responses to the Data Capacity Assessment, which data collection methods do you think you can integrate into your plan?

Data capacity summary	Yes: large scale (statewide)	Yes: medium scale (multisite, medium sample)	Yes: small scale (single site, small sample)	No
Court observation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Case file review	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administrative data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Focus group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Step 4: Select data collection methods.

Use the information from Steps 2 and 3 to make decisions about which measures you want to assess and your capacity to collect the needed data.

Data for the measures can be collected in a variety of ways, depending on your data capacity. It is important to note that nearly all the items can be collected through survey or focus group procedures.

Additionally, two other JCAMP Volumes offer information and guidance on collecting data for each measure.

- The **JCAMP Volume II: Implementation Guide** offers additional suggestions for using the data from this needs assessment.
- The **JCAMP Volume IV: Technical Guide** offers data collection strategies and calculations for different data collection methods.

Data Collection Options

The table below 4 outlines the measure and three choices for data collection, ranked from best (ideal) to good (will work but not as optimal).

Data collection key: AD = administrative data, CO = court observation, CF = case file review, FG = focus group, and S = survey

Measure	Best	Better	Good
Family engagement			
1.1 Do parents attend hearings?	AD	CF	CO
1.2 Do children and youth attend hearings?	AD	CF	CO
1.3 Do tribal representatives attend hearings?	AD	CF	CO
1.4 Do foster parents and relative caregivers attend hearings?	AD	CF	CO
1.5 Do courts send orders to parties or provide them at the end of the hearing?	S	CF	CO
1.6 What do judges do to engage parents, children, and youth in hearings?	CO	S/FG	
1.7 What do judges do to engage foster parents and relative caregivers in hearings?	CO	S/FG	
1.8 How do parent attorneys engage parents in the process?	S	FC	CO
1.9 How do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs engage children and youth in the process?	S	FC	CO
1.10 How do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys engage parents, children, and youth in the court process?	S	FC	CO
1.11 Are important issues discussed in hearings?	CO	S/FG	CF
1.12 Do parents feel judges engaged them in hearings?	S/FG		
1.13 Do children and youth feel judges engaged them in hearings?	S/FG		



Measure	Best	Better	Good
1.14 Do foster parents and relative caregivers feel judges engaged them in hearings?	S/FG		
Due process			
2.1 Do parties to the case receive timely service?	AD	CF	S/FG
2.2 Are child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs appointed early in the case?	AD	CF	
2.3 Are parent attorneys appointed early in the case?	AD	CF	
2.4 Do parties to the case receive timely notice of hearings?	AD	CF	S/FG
2.5 Are Indian children identified early in the case?	AD	CF	
2.6 What do judges do to ensure fair hearings?	CO	CF	S/FG
2.7 How do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys ensure fair hearings?	S	FG	
2.8 How do parent attorneys ensure fair hearings?	S/FG		
2.9 How do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs ensure fair hearings?	S/FG		
2.10 Do parents feel they were treated fairly?	S/FG		
2.11 Do children and youth feel they were treated fairly?	S/FG		
High-quality legal representation			
3.1 Do parent attorneys attend hearings?	AD	CF	CO
3.2 Do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs attend hearings?	AD	CF	CO
3.3 Do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys attend hearings?	AD	CF	CO
3.4 Do multidisciplinary members of the legal team attend hearings?	AD	CF	CO
3.5 How do parent attorneys ensure they provide high-quality legal representation?	S/FG	CF	CO
3.5a Does the same parent attorney represent the parent throughout the case?	CF	S/FG	
3.5b Do parent attorneys advocate for parents in hearings?	CO	S/FG	
3.5c Do parent attorneys prepare in between hearings?	S/FG		
3.6 How do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs ensure they provide high-quality legal representation?	S/FG	CF	CO
3.6a Does the same child or youth attorney and/or attorney GAL represent the child or youth throughout the case?	CF	S/FG	
3.6b Do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs advocate for children or youth in hearings?	CO	S/FG	
3.6c Do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs prepare in between hearings?	S/FG		



Measure	Best	Better	Good
3.7 How do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys ensure they provide high-quality legal representation?	S/FG	CF	CO
3.7a Do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorney stay on the same case throughout the case?	CF	S/FG	
3.7b How do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys advocate in hearings?	CO	S/FG	
3.7c Do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys prepare in between hearings?	S/FG		
3.8 Are parents satisfied with their attorneys' representation?	S/FG		
3.9 Are children and youth satisfied with their legal representation?	S/FG		
3.10 How do parents, children, and youth feel they were treated by prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys?	S/FG		
Safety			
4.1 How often and at what points in the case do courts make a finding of reasonable or active efforts to prevent removal? How often is the finding that the agency made "no reasonable efforts"?	AD	CF	CO
4.2 How do courts discuss safety and removal?	CO	S/FG	
4.3 How do courts discuss the agency's reasonable or active efforts to prevent removal?	CO	S/FG	
4.4 Do attorneys cross-examine reasonable or active efforts to prevent removal?	CO	S/FG	
4.5 Do attorneys raise the issue of reasonable or active efforts if not raised?	CO	S/FG	
4.6 Do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys offer information or evidence about the agency's reasonable or active efforts to the court?	CO	S/FG	CF
4.7 Do judges ask about the agency's efforts to prevent removal?	CO	S/FG	
4.8 Do judges make detailed reasonable or active efforts findings that explain how the agency has worked with the family to prevent removal?	CF	CO	S/FG
4.9 Do judges consider parents' protective capacities in determining whether to remove, maintain, or return the child home?	S/FG	CF	CO
4.10 Do parents understand the safety threats to the child and how those led to the child's removal?	S/FG		
4.11 Do parents understand the conditions for return of the child?	S/FG		
4.12 Do parents believe judges considered their protective capacities in decision-making regarding removal and return?	S/FG		
4.13 Do parents feel their voices were heard in safety planning discussions?	S/FG		



Measure	Best	Better	Good
4.14 Do children and youth feel their voices were heard in safety discussions?	S/FG		
Permanency			
5.1 How much time does it take until the first permanency hearing?	AD	CF	S/FG
5.2 How much time does it take to file the termination of parental rights petition?	AD	CF	
5.3 How much time does it take until the termination of parental rights?	AD	CF	
5.4 How often and at what points in the case do courts make a finding of reasonable or active efforts to reunify or finalize permanency?	AD	CF	CO
5.5 How often and at what points in the case are continuances granted?	AD	CF	
5.6 How many termination of parental rights decisions are appealed?	AD	CF	
5.7 How do courts discuss permanency?	CO	S/FG	
5.8 Do judges ask about what is preventing the child or youth from safely returning home today?	CO	S/FG	
5.9 Do judges ask about parents' access to and receipt of relevant services?	CO	S/FG	
5.10 Do judges order any relevant services to support reunification/permanency?	CF	CO	S/FG
5.11 How do court orders address family time?	CF	S/FG	
5.12 Do judges make detailed reasonable or active efforts to achieve permanency findings that explain how the agency has worked to reunify the family or achieve permanency?	CF	CO	S/FG
5.13 What information or evidence about reasonable or active efforts to reunify or finalize permanency do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys present to the court?	CO	CF	S/FG
5.14 Do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys file motions and petitions related to permanency goals in a timely manner?	AD	CF	S/FG
5.15 Do parent attorneys advocate for reunification in hearings?	CO	S/FG	
5.16 Do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs advocate for reunification or other permanency in hearings?	CO	S/FG	
5.17 Why are continuances granted?	AD	CF	S/FG S/FC
5.18 Do parents feel their voices were heard in permanency planning discussions?	S/FG		
5.19 Do parents understand what is required of them and the steps needed to have their child returned?	S/FG		
5.20 Do parents feel services met their needs and assisted them in reunification?	S/FG		



Measure	Best	Better	Good
5.21 Do parents feel they were able to engage in meaningful family time?	S/FG		
5.22 Do children and youth feel their voices were heard in permanency decisions?	S/FG		





Tools to Visualize Your Path

Step 3 in the process focuses on implementation action planning. These tools are meant to help sites build a plan for how they will collect the performance measurement data. Two tools can assist your implementation process. The tools work together to help build a plan for data collection activities. In addition, these tools are most effective when used with the Data Capacity tool.

- **Data Collection Guiding Questions.** This tool provides guiding questions to facilitate planning for data collection. The tool includes tables to complete for each type of data collection that sites may choose to use to gather performance measurement data. These questions are meant to help sites think through their data collection needs and available resources.
- **Data Collection Plan Summary Table.** This tool is an example of how to summarize the information from the *Data Collection Guiding Questions* into an action planning template that articulates how, when, where, and who will collect the data. It is meant to illustrate how data collection action planning might look.



Data Collection Guiding Questions

Instructions: Choose the data collection methods you will need to gather data on the selected measures and answer the questions within the table to create a data collection plan. When you have finished responding to the questions, summarize the plan for each measure in the space at the end of the document. Additional guidance about choosing the population or sample for data collection can be found in **Volume II: Implementation Guide**.

Data collection planning is broken down by data collection methods and includes:

- Court observation
- Case file review
- Administrative data
- Survey
- Focus group

Court observation data collection guiding questions	Site response
What hearings are you observing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which hearings will meet your priority needs? • Specific hearing types (e.g., initial, review) or all hearing types? • Specific hearing format? In person or remote? 	
What is the timeframe for hearings to review? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider pre- and post-program implementation, practice during the COVID-19 pandemic, etc.? 	
What is the scope of data collection? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it be one site (one or more courtrooms or judges), multiple sites, or statewide? • Judges only, all child welfare judicial officers? 	
What is your process for selecting hearings? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you pick them? Randomly? Or a set number from each site or judge? 	
How many hearings will you observe? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the number per judge, per hearing type, or both? • How many hearings do you need to glean something meaningful from the data? 	
How will you observe hearings?	



Court observation data collection guiding questions	Site response
<p>How will data collection occur?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it occur live (either in person or remotely) or via recorded hearings? 	
<p>How will you get access to the hearings?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider any forms (confidentiality) that may be needed, data security, or any approval or permission processes that need to occur. • If hearings are recorded, consider software needed to play the hearings. 	
<p>How will you code the hearings?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have an instrument identified? • Does an existing instrument need to be modified to meet your site-specific needs or language? 	
<p>Who will collect the data?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many persons will code hearings? Coding teams or individual? • Do they need to code the same hearings for reliability? • What kind of training will coders need to be able to code reliably? 	
<p>When will data collection occur?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the anticipated start date for data collection? • What is the anticipated end date for data collection? 	



Case file review data collection guiding questions	Site response
<p>What cases are you reviewing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which cases will meet your priority needs? • Specific case types (e.g., problem-solving courts) or all hearing types? • Closed or open cases? 	
<p>What is the timeframe for cases to review?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider pre- and post-program implementation, practice during COVID-19, etc.? 	
<p>What is the scope of data collection?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it be one site (one or more courtrooms or judges), multiple sites, or statewide? • Judges only, all child welfare judicial officers? 	
<p>What is your process for selecting cases?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you pick them? Randomly? Or a set number from each site or judge? 	
<p>How many cases will you review?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the number per judge, per jurisdiction, or both? • How many cases do you need to review to glean something meaningful from the data? 	
<p>How will you review cases?</p>	
<p>How will data collection occur?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it occur at a courthouse (paper or case management system) or can it be done remotely? 	
<p>How will you get access to the cases?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider any forms (confidentiality), approval, or permission processes needed. • How will you access cases in the case management system (if available)? If not through case management, who can pull paper files for review? 	
<p>How will you code the cases?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have an instrument identified? • Does an existing instrument need to be modified to meet your site-specific needs or language? 	
<p>Who will collect the data?</p>	



Case file review data collection guiding questions	Site response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many persons will be coding cases? Coding teams or individual? Do they need to code the same cases for reliability? • What kind of training will coders need to be able to code reliably? 	
<p>When will data collection occur?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the anticipated start date for data collection? • What is the anticipated end date for data collection? 	



Administrative data collection guiding questions	Site response
What data do you need?	
What data points are needed from administrative systems? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which administrative system? Court? Agency? Others? • Which cases will be selected for inclusion? 	
What is the timeframe for sample selection? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider pre- and post-program implementation, practice during COVID-19, etc.? • How many years of data can you run? Would you want to include all years or a specific range? 	
What are your criteria for selecting cases? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will this include open, closed, or both case types? • How will you pick them? Randomly? Or a set number from each site or judge? • How will you pick them? Randomly? Or a set number from each site or judge? • Do you want to look at a point in time? Entry cohort (all those entering in timeframe) or exit cohort (all those exiting in timeframe)? 	
How will you get the data from the administrative system?	
How will you get the data? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you query the system? Are reports available? 	
How will you get access or permissions to obtain the data? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What permissions or approval are required to access the data for this purpose? • Can reports be run for you with your parameters? • How long will it take to get these data? 	
Who can query the system and run reports?	
Who will extract the data? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who can run the reports and/or query the system for you? 	
When will data collection occur? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the anticipated start date for data collection? • What is the anticipated end date for data collection? 	



Survey data collection guiding questions	Site response
What surveys will you implement?	
What are the criteria for participants to be surveyed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which stakeholders or clients can answer your questions? Specific case types (e.g., problem-solving courts) or all child welfare cases? • If parents or youth, for open or closed cases? 	
What is the scope of data collection? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it be one site (one or more courtrooms or judges), multiple sites, or statewide? • Specific professionals or all professionals? 	
What is your process for selecting participants? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you identify individuals for participation? Will it be a random sample or a targeted sample selection? • Consider subgroups of participants needed to answer questions (e.g., race, age) 	
How many individuals will you target for participation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What response rate do you need to glean something meaningful from the data? 	
How will you access participants?	
How will data collection occur? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it be an online, text-based, phone, or paper survey? 	
How will you recruit participants? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider approval processes to recruit professionals. • Consider institutional review board (IRB) or permissions needed. What techniques will you use to gain access to parents or youth? Consider incentives and ways to encourage participation. 	
How will you collect the information? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have an instrument identified? • Does an existing instrument need to be modified to meet your site-specific needs or language? 	
Who will collect the data?	
Who will administer the survey?	
When will data collection occur?	



Survey data collection guiding questions	Site response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the anticipated start date for data collection? • What is the anticipated end date for data collection? 	

Focus group data collection guiding questions	Site response
What focus groups will you implement?	
What are the criteria for participants? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which stakeholders or clients can answer your questions? Specific case types (e.g., problem-solving courts) or all child welfare cases? • If parents or youth, for open or closed cases? 	
What is the scope of data collection? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it be one site (one or more courtrooms or judges), multiple sites, or statewide? • Specific professionals or all professionals? 	
What is your process for selecting participants? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you identify individuals for participation? Will it be a random sample or a targeted sample selection? • Consider subgroups of participants needed to answer questions (e.g., race, age) 	
How many individuals will you target for participation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many people will you target for participation per group? • What response rate do you need to glean something meaningful from the data? 	
How will you access participants?	
How will data collection occur? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it be a virtual or in-person focus group? If in-person, where will that occur? 	
How will you recruit participants? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider IRB or permissions needed to talk with youth or vulnerable populations. • What techniques will you use to gain access to parents or youth? Consider incentives and ways to encourage participation. 	



Focus group data collection guiding questions	Site response
<p>How will you collect the information?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have an instrument identified? The Toolbox – section TBD includes sample JCAMP instruments that align with the measures. • Does an existing instrument need to be modified to meet your site-specific needs or language? 	
<p>Who will collect the data?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who can facilitate the focus group? Will you also have a notetaker, or will you record it? 	
<p>When will data collection occur?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the anticipated start date for data collection? • What is the anticipated end date for data collection? 	



Data Collection Plan Summary Table

Using responses from the *Data Collection Guiding Questions Tool*, create a plan for who will collect the data and how and when the data will be collected. An example is provided in the table to illustrate completion.

JCAMP data collection plan summary					
Data collection method	Measures collected (Nos.)	What (sample)	How	Who	When
<i>Example: court observation</i>	<i>1.1–1.5</i>	<i>6 sites (20 initial hearings at each site)</i>	<i>Review recorded hearings</i>	<i>CIP staff/interns</i>	<i>June 1–25, 2022</i>





Tools to Get Your Data

Tools for Step 4 include instruments and questions that can be used in whole, in part, or as a starting point to modify and meet site needs. Items include the specific measure number that the item is intended to measure. That is meant to help sites identify which items go with the measures they have prioritized. The

document includes six types of tools:

- **Surveys.** A survey is a data collection method that includes asking groups of people a series of questions to gather their perspective. Surveys can include quantitative data (e.g., Likert scale or yes/no responses) or qualitative data (e.g., open-ended responses). Surveys are often a low-resource way to collect data from many people.
- **Focus group questions.** Focus groups are a data collection method that includes asking a small group of individuals (typically 6 to 10) questions. The questions are more qualitative in nature and are meant to gather more in-depth information about a topic.
- **Question banks.** Question banks are collections of questions that can be used to develop survey or focus group instruments. These question banks are organized by measure and include the available items that could be asked.
- **Court observation instruments.** Court observation tools are structured instruments that collect directly observable behavior from watching a court hearing. The instrument in this document is primarily quantitative in nature.
- **Case file review instruments.** Case file review instruments are used in a process to gather structured information from a court case file. The data captured are typically more quantitative but can include qualitative components. Case file review is often used to capture information on dates, orders, and characteristics of the family or case.
- **Codebooks.** Codebooks help persons collecting the data have a shared understanding of how to collect the data in the same way. They provide definitions and examples of items to be coded to increase the reliability, consistency, and accuracy of coding).

Quantitative data

A numerical value is assigned to something to provide summary numbers.

Qualitative data

More narrative and context are included to illustrate themes.

All tools in this section should be modified to meet the unique needs of the site. This includes expanding upon the questions to meet the site's measurement priorities, adding more or different response options, and modifying language to be site specific.

Fourteen examples of tools are provided for the Step 4 Toolbox:

1. **Youth Experience Survey.** This tool offers an example youth survey that includes primarily agreement scale items.



2. **Youth Post-Hearing Short Survey.** This tool offers an example of a short post-hearing youth survey to get some immediate reactions about the youth's experience in court.
3. **Youth Experience Focus Group Questions.** This tool offers example focus group questions. Select questions related to the measures of interest to build a focus group guide modified to meet local site needs and language. This example includes many questions. It will be important for the site to prioritize and organize questions in case there is not time to cover all questions in the meeting.
4. **Youth Court Experience Question Bank.** This tool offers a sample of youth survey and focus group questions aligned with the performance measures. It is divided into categories of performance measures and lists the measure that the questions can help answer. It provides a large list of potential questions. It intends for the user to narrow down the questions by selecting those that make the most sense given priorities and needs.
5. **Parent Experience Survey (Agreement Scale).** This tool offers an example of what a parent survey focused on the user experience might look like. It can be modified to meet the site's individual needs.
6. **Parent Experience Focus Group Questions.** This tool offers an example of parent focus group questions, including probing questions to help gather information about the performance measurement topics. Questions should be modified as needed and prioritized.
7. **Parent Court Experience Question Bank.** This tool offers a sample of parent survey and focus group questions aligned with the performance measures. It is divided into categories of performance measures and lists the measure that the questions can help answer. It provides a large list of potential questions. It intends for the user to narrow down the questions by selecting those that make the most sense given priorities and needs.
8. **Caregiver Experience Survey.** This tool provides an example of a survey for foster parents or relative caregivers. It includes items specific to caregivers and caregiver perspectives on practice measures.
9. **Stakeholder Survey.** This tool provides a survey for systems professionals that addresses many of the performance measures, particularly those that are best answered in survey form. Each item includes a number to reflect which JCAMP measure it can help answer.
10. **Stakeholder Focus Group Questions.** This tool offers suggestions for focus group questions that can be asked of professionals who work in child welfare to better understand current practice specific to the JCAMP measures.
11. **Court Observation Instrument.** This tool offers an example of a court observation instrument that includes all the items best captured in a structured court observation process. Each item includes a number of the corresponding measure. The tool should be formatted for ease of use by the site that intends to use it, and it should be modified to include appropriate site-specific language and selected measures.



- 12. Case File Review Instrument.** This tool provides an example of a structured case file review instrument and includes all the items best captured from this method. The tool should be modified by the site to include site-specific language and to remove items not selected or prioritized as a measure.
- 13. Case File Review Codebook.** This tool provides an example of a case file review codebook, which defines, describes, and provides examples related to accurately coding a child welfare case file. This tool should be modified to meet the site's needs, including adding site-specific language, providing site-specific examples, and removing items that are no longer on the case file review instrument because the site did not select the measure.
- 14. Court Observation Codebook.** This tool provides an example of a court observation codebook, which defines, describes, and provides examples related to accurately coding a court hearing. This tool should be modified to meet the site's needs, including adding site-specific language, providing site-specific examples, and removing items that are no longer on the court observation instrument because the site did not select the measure.



Youth Experience Survey²

<<insert organization name>> is interested in learning more about your experience with the child welfare court system. Your opinion can help us learn more about current practice and ways that we can improve. The survey is voluntary. Your responses are completely anonymous and will not impact your case in any way. This survey should take about <<insert time>> minutes to complete. If you have any questions, you can contact <<provide contact information>>. See **Volume II: Implementation Guide** for guidance on modifying introductory language.

For each sentence below, please mark how much you agree using this scale:

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree
DNA = Does not apply

Family engagement [1.12]; Due process [2.11]	1	2	3	4	5	DNA
I was made aware that I could attend my court hearings. [2.11]						
I attended most of my court dates. [2.11]						
I felt comfortable and safe at the courthouse. [2.11]						
I felt prepared for my court hearings. [2.11]						
I understood what was happening during my court hearings. [2.11]						
I was made aware that I could speak in my court hearings. [2.11]						
I felt that the judge heard and understood what I was saying. [1.12]						
Transportation to court was available to me when I needed it. [2.11]						
There were youth-friendly spaces at the courthouse for me to spend time in outside my hearing. [2.11]						
If someone who had abused me was present at court, I was able to be in a separate waiting room from them before court. [2.11]						
Safety [4.14]	1	2	3	4	5	DNA
My lawyer regularly asked me WITHOUT other adults present whether I felt safe at my current placement. [4.14]						
If I felt unsafe while in foster care, my social worker or lawyer investigated these safety concerns. [4.14]						
Permanency [5.22]	1	2	3	4	5	DNA
I was able to have regular visits (at least monthly) with family members, relatives, and siblings I care about. [5.22]						
I was able to have regular contact (phone, text, video) with people I care about. [5.22]						
My lawyer asked me who the important adults (relatives, neighbors, friends, community or tribal members, etc.) are in my life. [5.22]						
My lawyer or social worker asked me with whom I wanted to live. [5.22]						

² This survey was developed by Lily Colby, Esq., from With Lived Experience, along with the members of the Youth With Lived Experience Perspective Group.



The court took my wishes into account when making placement decisions (where I live or have lived). [5.22]						
The court took my wishes into account when making permanency decisions (who my legal parents or guardians are). [5.22]						
Right now, I have permanent connections to adults who care about me. [5.22]						

Did you have a lawyer for your child welfare case? [2.12]

Yes

No

For each sentence below, please mark how much you agree using this scale:³

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree
DNA = Does not apply

High-quality legal representation [3.6, 3.9]	1	2	3	4	5	DNA
I had a positive relationship with my lawyer. [3.9]						
My lawyer understood and respected my cultural identity. [3.9]						
My lawyer understood and respected my gender identity and sexual orientation. [3.9]						
In general, my lawyer treated me with respect. [3.9]						
I felt that my lawyer cared about me. [3.9]						
My lawyer explained my rights as a foster youth to me. [3.9]						
My lawyer explained BEFORE court what would happen in court in a way I understood. [3.6]						
My lawyer met with me AFTER court to explain what happened during my court hearing in a way I understood. [3.6]						
My lawyer listened to what I had to say. [3.9]						
My lawyer made sure that my wishes were heard in court. [3.9]						
If I had any physical health or mental health needs that I wanted help with, my lawyer brought these up in court. [3.6]						
If I had any school needs, my lawyer brought them up in court. [3.6]						
My lawyer advocated for my needs and wishes (like visitation, services, personal rights). [3.9]						
My lawyer filed paperwork on time for services I needed. [3.9]						
I felt comfortable contacting my lawyer if needed. [3.6, 3.9]						
Overall, I was satisfied with the legal representation from my lawyer that I received while in foster care. [3.6]						

³ This is an example of a youth experience survey using an agreement scale. Agreement scales allow for more nuanced responses and can pick up variations in responses to better understand youth perspective.



What is one thing that would improve the court experience for other children and youth? [1.12]

What are three words to describe your court experience? [1.13]

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Is there anything else you would like us to know? [1.13]

In what county was(is) your case? _____

What is your age? _____

What is your gender?

- Female Male Non-binary Other Prefer not to answer

Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- No Yes

What is your race? (mark all that apply)

- Black/African American White/Caucasian American Indian/Alaska Native
 Asian Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Prefer not to answer
 Other race _____



Youth Post-Hearing Short Survey⁴

<<insert organization name>> is interested in learning more about your experience with the child welfare court system. Your opinion can help us learn more about current practice and ways that we can improve. The survey is voluntary. Your responses are completely anonymous and will not impact your case in any way. This survey should take about <<insert time>> minutes to complete. If you have any questions, you can contact <<provide contact information>>. See **Volume II: Implementation Guide** for guidance on modifying introductory language.

Instructions: Allow child or youth to complete this survey **on their own** AFTER the court hearing. If they need assistance, have a law guardian or adult of their choice assist.

1. How was your experience in court today? [5-point scale] [1.13]
 - Very good
 - Good
 - Neutral [neither good nor bad]
 - Bad
 - Very bad

2. How do you feel about coming to court today? [1.13]
 - Glad I came
 - Neutral [neither glad nor sad]
 - I wish I had not come

3. Did you talk in court today? [yes or no] [1.13]

4. Which issues are most important to you? [Check all that apply.] [1.11]

<input type="checkbox"/> Going to live with parents or relatives	<input type="checkbox"/> Going to live with siblings
<input type="checkbox"/> Visits with parents, relatives, or siblings	<input type="checkbox"/> Placement issues
<input type="checkbox"/> Problems with where I live now, feeling unsafe where I live now	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent living
<input type="checkbox"/> Adoption	<input type="checkbox"/> School or after-school activities
<input type="checkbox"/> My future	<input type="checkbox"/> Finding and connecting with family
<input type="checkbox"/> My cultural identity	<input type="checkbox"/> My sexual orientation and gender identity
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	

⁴ This survey was developed by Lily Colby, Esq., from With Lived Experience, along with the members of the Youth With Lived Experience Perspective Group.



5. Did you talk about issues that are important to you in court today? [Yes or no] [1.11]
6. [If yes] Did you feel that the judge understood what you were saying in court? [1.13]
 - Yes
 - No
 - Do not know
7. [If yes] Do you think the judge will take your needs and wishes into account when making a decision? [1.13]
 - Yes
 - No
 - Do not know
8. How do you think your case outcome changed because you attended court today? [1.13]
 - Got better
 - Stayed about the same
 - Got worse
 - Do not know
9. Would you come to court again? [Yes, no, or other_____] [1.13]
10. In what county was(is) your case? _____
11. What is your age? _____
12. What is your gender?
 - Female
 - Male
 - Non-binary
 - Other
 - Prefer not to answer
13. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?
 - No
 - Yes
14. What is your race? (mark all that apply)
 - Black/African American
 - White/Caucasian
 - American Indian/Alaska Native
 - Asian
 - Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
 - Prefer not to answer
 - Other race _____



Youth Experience Focus Group Questions

Thank you for joining our focus group. My name is <<name >>>, and I am <insert role>. We also have with us <<insert name>>, who will be taking notes to make sure we capture the information provided today. We are interested in hearing more about your experience with the child welfare court system. I just want to remind you that participation in this focus group is voluntary. You can exit the meeting at any time, and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.

Your responses will be confidential – that means that your name will not be connected to anything that you say in this group, and it will not show up in our report. I ask that you also respect the privacy of others in the group and do not share with anyone outside of our group what is said during the focus group.

We have the following rules for this group:

- There are no right or wrong answers to the questions today. Please speak from your experience.
- This is not a support group or a counseling session. If you need those services, we will be happy to connect you to them
- One person speaks at a time.
- Everyone has an opportunity to speak. I may ask someone who is talking a lot to step back and give others a chance to talk. I may also ask a person who isn't talking if they have anything to share. You can say no.

Are you still interested in participating in the group?

[IF NO: Thank you so much for considering participating. Have a great rest of your day!]

IF YES: Thank you! Let's begin ...

We are going to start by talking about your experience with the child welfare court process.

1. Where you ever invited to attend your child welfare court hearings? [1.2, 2.4, 2.6, 2.9]
 - If yes, did you ever attend? [1.2]
 - Did you get to say the things you wanted to say at court? [1.6, 1.9, 1.13, 2.11]
 - Did you feel comfortable and safe at court? [1.6, 1.9]
 - Did you feel prepared for your court hearings? [1.9, 2.11, 3.6c, 3.9]
 - Was transportation available to you to be able to attend your hearings? [1.2, 2.9]
 - Were there youth-friendly spaces available to wait outside your court hearing? [1.6]

Now we would like to talk with you about your attorney. This could be an attorney, lawyer, or a guardian ad litem (GAL).

2. Did you have a lawyer or a GAL?
3. Did you have a positive relationship with your lawyer or GAL? [3.9]



4. Did you feel that your lawyer cared about you? [3.9]
5. Did your lawyer explain BEFORE court what would happen in court in a way you understood? [3.6, 3.6c, 3.9]
6. Did your lawyer meet with you AFTER court to explain what happened during the court hearing in a way you understood? [3.6, 3.6c, 3.9]
7. Did your lawyer listen to what you had to say? [3.6, 3.6c, 3.9]
8. Did your lawyer make sure that your wishes were heard in court? [3.6, 3.6b, 3.9]
9. Did you feel comfortable contacting your lawyer if you needed to? [3.6, 3.6c, 3.9]
10. Did your social worker and lawyer regularly ask you WITHOUT other adults present whether you felt safe at your current placement? [4.14]
11. Have you experienced any trauma or felt unsafe while in foster care? [4.2]
12. Did you have any physical health, mental health, or education needs that you wanted help with? If yes, did the court ensure you got the help you needed? [3.6b, 5.10, 5.16]
13. While in foster care, were you able to have regular visits (at least monthly) with family members, relatives, and siblings that you wanted to see? [5.7, 5.16]

We are almost finished with our questions. Just a few more.

14. What is one thing that would improve the court experience for other children/youth? [1.13, 2.11, 3.9, 4.14, 5.22]
15. What are three words to describe your court experience? [1.13, 2.11, 3.9, 4.14, 5.22]
16. Is there anything else you'd like us to know?

That is all the questions we have for you today. Thank you for participating in this focus group!



Youth Court Experience Question Bank

This question bank was developed to assist sites in designing survey and focus group instruments that will gather information for the JCAMP measures. Questions were developed by youth with lived experience serving as expert consultants for JCAMP.

Using the JCAMP Question Bank

For each category of measurement (i.e., family engagement, due process, high-quality legal representation, safety, and permanency) and associated measures, you will find lists of sample questions, question formats, and suggested response categories that can be used to collect data on the JCAMP measures via survey or focus group methods. Items are divided into response categories depending on your needs. Unless otherwise indicated, response options are as follows:

- Binary response options:
 - 1 = Yes
 - 2 = No
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - 1 = Strongly disagree
 - 2 = Disagree
 - 3 = Neutral
 - 4 = Agree
 - 5 = Strongly agree

Unless otherwise indicated, focus group and open-ended questions do not have response options.

After selecting your JCAMP measures, you can locate your priority measures in the lists below and select among the sample questions to design your survey and focus group data collection instruments.

Family Engagement

1.13 Do children and youth feel judges engaged them in hearings?

- Binary response options:
 - Did you understand what was happening during your court hearings?
 - Were you made aware that you could speak in your court hearings?
 - Did you speak in your court hearings?
 - [If yes to question above] Did you feel that the judge heard and understood what you were saying?



- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I understood what was happening during my court hearings.
 - I was made aware that I could speak in my court hearings.
- Focus group and open-response options:
 - What is one thing that would improve the court experience for other children or youth?
 - What top three issues are most important to you in your court hearing? Why?
 - Rate the issues from most important to least.
 - What specific things helped you feel more prepared for court?
 - Would anything have helped you feel more prepared?
 - What are three words to describe your court experience?
 - Would you like us to know anything else?

Due Process

2.9 How do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALS ensure fair hearings?

- Binary response options:
 - Did your lawyer file paperwork on time for the services you needed?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - My lawyer filed paperwork on time for the services I needed.

2.11 Do children and youth feel they were treated fairly?

- Binary response options:
 - Were you made aware that you could attend your court hearings?
 - Did you attend most of your court dates?
 - Did you feel comfortable and safe at the courthouse?
 - Did you feel prepared for your court hearings?
 - Was transportation to court available to you when you needed it?
 - Were there youth-friendly spaces at the courthouse for you to spend time in outside your hearing?
 - If someone who had abused you was present at court, were you able to be in a separate waiting room from them before court?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I was made aware that I could attend my court hearings.



- I attended most of my court dates.
- I felt comfortable and safe at the courthouse.
- I felt prepared for my court hearings.
- Transportation to court was available to me when I needed it.
- There were youth-friendly spaces at the courthouse for me to spend time in outside my hearing.
- If someone who had abused me was present at court, I was able to be in a separate waiting room from them before court.

High-Quality Legal Representation

3.6 How do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs ensure they provide high-quality legal representation?

- Binary response options:
 - Did your lawyer explain BEFORE court what would happen in court? [3.6c]
 - If yes, did they explain it in a way you understood? [3.6c]
 - Did your lawyer meet with you AFTER court to explain what happened during your court hearing? [3.6c]
 - If yes, did they explain in a way you understood? [3.6c]
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - My lawyer explained BEFORE court what would happen in court in a way I understood. [3.6c]
 - My lawyer met with me AFTER court to explain what happened during my court hearing in a way I understood. [3.6c]
 - Did you want help with any physical health or mental health needs?
 - [If yes] Did your lawyer follow up on health services that you needed?
 - Did you want help with any school needs or after-school activities?
 - [If yes] Did your lawyer bring up your school or after-school needs in court?

3.9 Are children and youth satisfied with their legal representation?

- Binary response options:
 - Did you have a lawyer or a GAL? (aligns with 3.2)
 - Did you have a positive relationship with your lawyer or GAL?
 - Did your lawyer understand and respect your cultural identity?



- Did your lawyer understand and respect your gender identity and sexual orientation?
- In general, did your lawyer treat you with respect?
- Did you feel that your lawyer cared about you?
- Did your lawyer explain your rights as a foster youth to you?
- Did your lawyer listen to what you had to say?
- Did your lawyer make sure that your wishes were heard in court?
- Did your lawyer advocate for your needs and wishes (like visitation, services, personal rights)? (also aligns with 5.16)
- Did you feel comfortable contacting your lawyer if needed?
- Overall, were you satisfied with the legal representation from your lawyer that you received while in foster care?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I had a positive relationship with my lawyer or GAL.
 - My lawyer understood and respected my cultural identity.
 - My lawyer understood and respected my gender identity and sexual orientation.
 - In general, my lawyer treated me with respect.
 - I felt that my lawyer cared about me.
 - My lawyer explained my rights as a foster youth to me.
 - My lawyer listened to what I had to say.
 - My lawyer made sure that my wishes were heard in court.
 - My lawyer advocated for my needs and wishes (like visitation, services, personal rights). (also aligns with 5.16)
 - I felt comfortable contacting my lawyer if needed.
 - Overall, I was satisfied with the legal representation from my lawyer that I received while in foster care.



Safety

4.14. Do children and youth feel their voices were heard in safety discussions?

- Binary response options:
 - Did your attorney or attorney GAL regularly ask you WITHOUT other adults present whether you felt safe at your current placement?
 - Have you felt unsafe while in foster care?
 - [If yes] Did your lawyer or social worker investigate these safety concerns?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - My lawyer regularly asked me WITHOUT other adults present whether I felt safe at my current placement.
 - I have felt unsafe while in foster care.
 - [If agree or strongly agree] My lawyer investigated these safety concerns.



Permanency

General permanency questions

- Binary response options:
 - Did the court place you with your relatives and/or siblings?
 - When you entered foster care, did you get to stay in the same school?
 - Right now, do you have permanent connections to adults who care about you?

5.21 Do parents feel they were able to engage in meaningful family time?

- Binary response options:
 - Have you been able to have regular visits (at least monthly) with family members, relatives, and siblings you care about?
 - Have you been able to have regular contact (phone, text, video) with people you care about?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I was able to have regular visits (at least monthly) with family members, relatives, and siblings I care about. 5.21 (parents)
 - I was able to have regular contact (phone, text, video) with people I care about. 5.21 (for parents)

5.22 Do children and youth feel their voices were heard in permanency decisions?

- Binary response options:
 - Did your lawyer ask you who the important adults (relatives, neighbors, friends, community or tribal members, etc.) are in your life?
 - Did your lawyer ask you with whom you wanted to live?
 - Did the court take your wishes into account when making placement decisions (where you live or have lived)?
 - Did the court take your wishes into account when making your permanency decisions (who your legal parents or guardians are)?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - My lawyer asked me who the important adults (relatives, neighbors, friends, community or tribal members, etc.) are in my life.
 - My lawyer asked me with whom I wanted to live.
 - The court took my wishes into account when making placement decisions (where I live or have lived).
 - The court took my wishes into account when making permanency decisions (who my legal parents or guardians are).



Parent Experience Survey (Agreement Scale)

<<insert organization name>> is interested in learning more about your experience with the child welfare court system. Your opinion can help us learn more about current practice and ways that we can improve. The survey is voluntary. Your responses are completely anonymous and will not impact your case in any way. This survey should take about <<insert time>> minutes to complete. If you have any questions, you can contact <<provide contact information>>. See **Volume II: Implementation Guide** for guidance on modifying introductory language.

For each sentence below, please mark how much you agree using this scale⁵

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree

Family engagement [1.6, 1.12]	1	2	3	4	5
The judge understands my needs and wishes. [1.12]					
I had an opportunity to say the things I wanted to say in my court hearings. [1.6]					
All of my questions were answered. [1.12]					
I understand what must be done to resolve the case. [1.12]					
I understand what happened during the hearing and what comes next. [1.12]					
The judge treated me with respect during the hearing. [1.12]					
I felt that I was part of decision-making for my case. [1.12]					
Due process [2.10]	1	2	3	4	5
I felt that I was treated fairly in court. [2.10]					
The judge treated me fairly at my hearings. [2.10]					
My attorney treated me fairly. [2.10]					
I felt that my voice was heard at court. [2.10]					
I was satisfied with my court experience. [2.10]					
The courthouse was easy to navigate. [2.10]					
I was able to complete my court business in a reasonable time. [2.10]					
I was treated with courtesy and respect while at the courthouse. [2.10]					
Court staff paid attention to my needs. [2.10]					
High-quality legal representation [3.8, 3.10]	1	2	3	4	5
I was satisfied with my attorney's representation. [3.8]					
My attorney understood my perspective. [3.8]					
My attorney listened to me. [3.8]					
My attorney treated me with respect. [3.8]					
I understand the role of my attorney. [3.8]					
My attorney helped prepare me for court. [3.8]					
I was able to talk with my attorney whenever needed. [3.8]					
I understood how my attorney planned to advocate for me in court. [3.8]					
I trust my attorney. [3.8]					

⁵ This is an example of a parent experience survey using an agreement scale. Agreement scales allow for more nuanced responses and can pick up variations in responses to better understand parents' perspectives.



My attorney moved the case forward the way I wanted. [3.8]					
My attorney helped me get the services I needed. [3.8]					
My attorney helped me get enough time to do the things I needed to reunify with my child(ren). [3.8]					
I know what to do if I want to complain about my attorney. [3.8]					
I understand the role of the agency attorney/prosecuting attorney in the case. [3.10]					
Safety [4.10–4.13]	1	2	3	4	5
I understand why the agency thought my child(ren) were unsafe in my home. [4.10]					
I understand the conditions that need to be met to have my child(ren) returned. [4.11]					
The judge considers the things that I do to protect my child in his/her decisions. [4.12]					
I felt that the agency listened to me when we were talking about a plan for the safety of my child(ren). [4.13]					
Permanency [5.18–5.21]	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that others listened to me when we were discussing permanency for my child. [5.18]					
I had an opportunity to share my views during hearings. [5.18]					
I felt that I was involved in making the plan for my case. [5.18]					
I had a say in the outcomes for my child(ren). [5.18]					
I know what I need to do to get my child(ren) back. [5.19]					
The services offered to me were helpful. [5.20]					
I had sufficient time to visit my child(ren). [5.21]					

Would you like to tell us anything else about your experience with the court process? [1.12] _____

What is your relationship to the child(ren)? _____

What is your gender?

- Female Male Non-binary Other Prefer not to answer

Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- No Yes

What is your race? (mark all that apply)

- Black/African American White/Caucasian American Indian/Alaska Native
 Asian Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Prefer not to answer
 Other race _____

What is your age? _____



Parent Experience Focus Group Questions

Thank you for joining our focus group. My name is <<name >>>, and I am <insert role>>. We also have with us <<insert name>>, who will be taking notes to make sure we capture the information provided today. We are interested in hearing more about your experience with the child welfare court system. I just want to remind you that participation in this focus group is voluntary. You can exit the meeting at any time, and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.

Your responses will be confidential – that means that your name will not be connected to anything that you say in this group, and it will not show up in our report. I ask that you also respect the privacy of others in the group and do not share with anyone outside of our group what is said during the focus group.

We have the following rules for this group:

- There are no right or wrong answers to the questions today. Please speak from your experience.
- This is not a support group or a counseling session. If you need those services, we will be happy to connect you to them
- One person speaks at a time.
- Everyone has an opportunity to speak. I may ask someone who is talking a lot to step back and give others a chance to talk. I may also ask a person who isn't talking if they have anything to share. You can say no.

Are you still interested in participating in the group?

[IF NO: Thank you for considering participating. Have a great rest of your day]

[IF YES: That's great! Let's begin ...]

We are going to start by talking about your experience with the child welfare court process.

1. Please tell us about your experience attending child welfare hearings. [1.12]
 - How were you informed about your child welfare hearings? [2.1, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8]
 - Were you given an opportunity to attend hearings virtually or by phone? [1.1, 1.6]
 - Did the court work around your work and school hours? [2.6, 2.10]
 - What were the things that made it easier to attend court hearings? [2.6, 2.8, 2.10]
 - What things made it more difficult to attend? [2.8, 2.10]
2. Were you given the opportunity to explore/discuss issues/topics of importance to you during your hearings? [1.6, 1.12]
3. How soon after a hearing did you get important documents/the court order? [1.5, 1.10, 2.6, 2.7]
4. What kind of support or education were you given to navigate the child welfare court system? [1.6, 1.8, 1.12, 3.8]
5. Is there anything that could have been done that would have improved the court process? [1.12, 2.10, 3.8]
 - Probes: what went well and what could be improved?



We want to talk a little bit about safety.

6. Do you understand the safety issues that led to you being subject to a child welfare case? [4.10]
7. Did you resolve those issues? [4.11]
8. What kind of support were you given to understand the safety issues? Was safety of your child(ren) discussed at court hearings? In what ways? [1.11, 4.2, 4.13]
9. Do you think the judge considered the things you do to protect your child/children in their decision? [4.2, 4.9, 4.12]

Now, we would like to talk about your attorney in the child welfare hearing.

10. Did you have an attorney who represented you for your case?
11. At what point did you get your attorney? Did you have time to talk to your attorney before the first hearing on the case? [2.3]
12. How did your attorney help prepare you for hearings? [2.8, 3.5, 3.5c]
13. What did your attorney do so that you felt heard and respected? [3.5, 3.8]
14. Were you able to meet with your attorney in between court hearings and important meetings? [3.5, 3.5c, 3.8]
15. Did you feel like your attorney asked for the things you wanted in hearings? Why or why not? [3.5, 3.5b, 3.8, 5.15]
16. Were there things that made you feel disrespected or unimportant by your legal representation? [3.8]
17. Do you have thoughts on what attorneys can do to improve practice to be more helpful to parents involved in the system? [3.8]

That is all the questions we have for you today. Is there anything we should have asked about your experience that we didn't or anything else you would like to tell us?

Thank you so much!



Parent Court Experience Question Bank

This question bank was developed to assist sites in designing survey and focus group instruments that will gather information for the JCAMP measures. Questions were developed by the JCAMP research team and by parents with lived experience who were part of the JCAMP expert consultant team.

Using the JCAMP Question Bank

For each category of measurement (i.e., family engagement, due process, high-quality legal representation, safety, and permanency) and associated measures, you will find lists with sample questions, question formats, and suggested response categories that can be used to collect data on the JCAMP measures via survey or focus group methods. Items within a measure are grouped together thematically. For example, several questions under engagement may ask about perception of voice in the process and would be under the *Voice and Involvement* header. Items are divided into response categories depending on your needs. Unless otherwise indicated, response options are as follows:

- Binary response options:
 - 1 = Yes
 - 2 = No
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - 1 = Strongly disagree
 - 2 = Disagree
 - 3 = Neutral
 - 4 = Agree
 - 5 = Strongly agree

Focus group questions do not have response options.

Family Engagement

1.6 What do judges do to engage parents, children, and youth in hearings?

- Binary response options:
 - Did the judge involve you in hearings?
 - Did the judge...
 - speak with you directly?
 - call you by your name?
 - Did you get an opportunity to say what you wanted to say?
 - Did you feel that the judge listened to you?



1.11 Are important issues discussed in hearings?

- Binary response options:
 - Were you given the opportunity to explore or discuss issues of importance to you during hearings?
 - Did hearings discuss issues that were important to you?
- Focus group/open-response options:
 - What issues do you think are appropriate to be discussed at court, and were they discussed?

1.12 Do parents feel judges engaged them in hearings?

Understanding

- Binary response options:
 - Do you feel that the judge understands/understood your needs and wishes?
 - Do you/did you understand what happened during the hearing and what comes next?
 - Do you/did you feel your questions were answered?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - The judge understands/understood my needs and wishes.
 - I understand/understood what happened during the hearing and what comes next.
 - All of my questions were answered.

Voice and Involvement

- Binary response options:
 - Do you/did you feel you had an opportunity to say the things you wanted in your court hearings?
 - Do you/did you feel that your voice was heard in court?
 - Do you/did you feel that you were part of decision-making for your case?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I had an opportunity to say the things I wanted to say in my court hearings.
 - I feel/felt that my voice was heard at court.
 - I feel/felt that I was part of decision-making for my case.

Experience

- Binary response options:
 - Do you/did you feel respected during hearings?



- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I am/was treated with respect during hearings.
- Focus group and open-response options:
 - Please tell us about your experience attending child welfare hearings.
 - Probes: What things made it easier to attend court hearings?
 - What things made it more difficult to attend?
 - Could anything have improved the court process?
 - Probes: What went well, and what could be improved?
 - What kind of support or education were you given to navigate the child welfare court system?

Due Process

2.6–2.8 What do judges (2.6), prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys (2.7), and parent attorneys (2.8) do to ensure fair hearings?

Explanation of Rights and Court Process

- Binary response options:
 - Does your attorney work with you to ensure you understand all of the documents and what they mean for your case? (2.8)
 - Did you receive sufficient information and explanation about your case?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I received sufficient information and explanation about the case.
- Focus group and open-response options:
 - How do you get copies of important documents (e.g., petition, court orders)? (2.7)
 - At what part of your case did you get information about the allegations against you?
 - How soon after a hearing do you get important documents such as a copy of court orders? (2.6 / 2.7)

Voice and Involvement (2.8)

- Binary response options:
 - Were you given the opportunity to object to or challenge the allegations?
 - Were you given an opportunity to respond to the allegations?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I was given the opportunity to object to or challenge the allegations.
 - I was given an opportunity to respond to the allegations.



2.10 Do parents feel they were treated fairly?

Fair Treatment

- Binary response options:
 - Do you/did you think the judge treats/treated you fairly?
 - Do you think your attorney treats/treated you fairly?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - The judge treats/treated me fairly at my hearings.
 - I felt that I was treated fairly in court.
 - My attorney treats/treated me fairly.

Explanation of Rights and Court Process

- Binary response options:
 - Did your attorney explain your rights clearly?
 - Do you/did you understand your rights in hearings?
 - Did your attorney explain the court process clearly?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - My attorney explained my rights clearly.
 - I understand/understood my rights in hearings.
 - My attorney explained the court process clearly.
 - How easy was it to find what you needed in court documents? (easy-to-hard scale)
- Focus group and open-response options:
 - What are/were your rights in hearings?

Access

- Binary response options:
 - Were you able to bring your children to court with you?
 - Were there family-friendly waiting areas?
 - Did the court work around your work and school hours?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - The courthouse was easy to navigate.
- Focus group and open-response options:
 - How were you informed of your hearings during your case? Probe: Were there any challenges?



Experience

- Binary response options:
 - Were you satisfied with your court experience?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - How satisfied were you with your court experience? (extremely, very, moderately/, slightly, or not at all)
 - I was able to complete my court business in a reasonable time.
 - I was treated with courtesy and respect while at the courthouse.
 - Court staff paid attention to my needs.

High-Quality Legal Representation

3.5 How do parent attorneys ensure they provide high-quality legal representation?

Advocacy (3.5b)

- Binary response options:
 - Do you feel that your attorney advocated for the things you wanted or needed?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - My attorney advocated for the things I wanted or needed.

Understanding (3.5c)

- Focus group and open-response options:
 - How does/did your attorney work with you after hearings to discuss what happened in court?
 - After hearings, how does your attorney ensure you understand what happened in court?
 - Did anyone talk with you after court to discuss what happened and next steps?
 - Probes: Who? How did they do that?

Communication and Treatment (3.5c)

- Focus group and open-response options:
 - Did you have time to talk with your attorney before your first court hearing?
 - Probe: If no, why not? What barriers did you face?
 - Were you able to meet with your attorney in between court hearings and important meetings?
 - Probe: If no, why not? What barriers did you face (what were the challenges)?



- Did your attorney attend meetings outside of court?
- Did you meet regularly with your attorney?
 - Probe: If not, what are the barriers to meeting with them?
- Were you able to meet with your child's attorney (or attorney GAL) as much as you would have liked? (3.5c and 3.6c)

3.8 Are parents satisfied with their attorneys' representation?

Understanding

- Binary response options:
 - Do you/did you understand the role of your attorney?
 - Does/did your attorney understand/understood your perspective?
 - Did you understand the role of your child's attorney (or attorney GAL)?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I understand/understood the role of my attorney.
 - My attorney understood my perspective.
 - I understand/understood the role of my child's attorney (or attorney GAL).
- Focus group and open-response options:
 - What is the role of your attorney in your child welfare case?
 - How did your attorney help you understand the allegations against you?
 - At what point in your case did you understand the allegations against you?

Advocacy

- Binary response options:
 - Did your attorney ask what you wanted or needed?
 - Do you/did you understand your attorney's strategy?
 - Do you/did you understand how your attorney planned to advocate for you in court?
 - Do you/did you trust your attorney's judgment?
 - Do you believe your attorney moved the case forward strongly in the direction of your wishes?
 - Did your attorney work with you to ensure the case plan met your needs?
 - Do you believe your attorney helped you access and receive needed services?



- Did your attorney help you get enough time to do the things you needed to reunify with your child(ren)?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - My attorney asked what I wanted or needed.
 - I understand/understood my attorney's strategy.
 - I understand/understood how my attorney planned to advocate for me in court.
 - I trust(ed) my attorney.
 - My attorney moved the case forward the way I wanted.
 - My attorney worked with me to ensure the case plan met my needs.
 - My attorney helps/helped me access and receive the services I need/needed.
 - My attorney helped me get enough time to do the things I needed to reunify with my child(ren).
- Focus group and open-response options:
 - What types of support did you get from your attorney after reunification?
 - How often did you see your child's attorney (or attorney GAL) after reunification?

Communication and Treatment

- Binary response options:
 - Do you/did you feel your attorney listened to you?
 - Do you/did you feel your attorney treated you with respect?
 - Do you/did you feel your attorney prepared you for court?
 - Were you able to talk with your attorney whenever you wanted?
 - Do you believe the amount of communication with your attorney is/was sufficient?
 - Did your attorney connect with you in a compassionate way?
 - Did you feel like your attorney had your back?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - My attorney listens/listened to me.
 - My attorney treats/treated me with respect.
 - My attorney prepares/prepared me for court.
 - I was able to talk with my attorney whenever I wanted.
 - The amount of communication with my attorney is/was sufficient.
 - My attorney connected with me in a compassionate way.



- My attorney had my back.

Satisfaction with Representation

- Binary response options:
 - Were you satisfied with your attorney's representation?
 - Do you know what to do to make a complaint about your attorney?
 - Did your child's attorney (or attorney GAL) have an unbiased approach centered on promoting the child's best interest where the focus is on helping them reunify with their families when possible?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I was satisfied with my attorney's representation.
 - How satisfied were you with your attorney's representation? (extremely, very, moderately, slightly, or not at all)
 - I know what to do if I want to complain about my attorney.

3.10 How do parents, children, and youth feel they were treated by prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys?

Understanding

- Binary response options:
 - Do you feel that prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys treated you fairly?
 - Do you understand the role of the prosecuting (or agency or state) attorney?
 - Do you feel that the prosecuting (or agency or state) attorney was appropriately prepared for court?
 - Do you feel that the prosecuting (or agency or state) attorney made appropriate efforts to advance case goals, including making sure you have access to appropriate family time and services?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I understand/understood the role of the prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) in the case and whom they are representing.
- Focus group and open-response options:
 - What is the role of the prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) in the case and whom are they representing?

Practice and Behavior

- Binary response options:



- Do you/did you feel that the prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) is/was appropriately prepared for court?
- Do you/did you feel that the prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) presents/presented a fair and accurate picture of your family's situation?
- Do you/did you feel that the prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) is/was cooperative in helping you access and receive needed services?
- Do you/did you feel that the prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) is/was cooperative in ensuring you were able to access and receive sufficient family time?
- Do you/did you feel that the prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) assists/assisted in eliminating barriers to permanency?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - The prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) was appropriately prepared for court.
 - The prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) presents/presented a fair and accurate picture of my family's situation.
 - The prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) is/was cooperative in helping me access and receive needed services.
 - The prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) is/was cooperative in ensuring I was able to access and receive sufficient family time.
 - The prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) assists/assisted in eliminating barriers to permanency.

Communication and Treatment

- Binary response options:
 - Do you/did you feel that the prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) treats/treated you with respect?
 - Do you/did you feel that the prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) listens/listened to your attorney (or attorney GAL)?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - The prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) treats/treated me with respect.
 - The prosecuting attorney (or agency or state attorney) listens/listened to my attorney (or attorney GAL).



Safety

4.10 Do parents understand the safety threats to the child and how those led to the child's removal?

- Binary response options:
 - Do you understand why the agency thought your child(ren) were unsafe in your home?
 - Do you understand the safety issues that led to your child welfare case?
 - Was it clear to you why your child was removed from your care?
 - Do you feel that the allegations against you justified the removal?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I understand why the agency thought my child(ren) were unsafe in my home.
 - I understand the safety issues that led to my child welfare case.
 - It was clear to me why my child was removed from my care.
 - I feel the allegations against me justified the removal.

4.11 Do parents understand the conditions for return of the child?

- Binary response options:
 - Do (did) you understand what conditions need to be met for the child to be returned to your care?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I understand (understood) what conditions needed to be met to have my child(ren) returned.
- Focus group and open-response options:
 - What support did you receive to understand the safety issues?

4.12 Do parents believe judges considered their protective capacities in decision-making regarding removal and return?

- Binary response options:
 - Did the judge talk about your parenting strengths?
 - Did the judge consider your capacity or ability to protect your child(ren) in making his/her decisions?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - The judge considers the things that I do to protect my child in his/her decisions.
- Focus group and open-response options:



- How do you define “protective capacity”?

4.13 Do parents feel their voices were heard in safety planning discussions?

- Binary response options:
 - Did the agency listen to you when talking about a plan for the safety of your child(ren)?
 - Were you allowed to provide input in creating your safety plan?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I feel that the agency listened to me when we were talking about a plan for the safety of my child(ren).
 - I was able to provide input in creating the safety plan.
- Focus group and open-response options:
 - What services could have been offered to prevent removal?
 - Before removal, were services available that could have kept your family together?

Permanency

Practice measures

- Were your efforts to resolve safety issues or to reunify your family acknowledged in court? Probe: How?
- Were the services ordered relevant to the safety risks?

Voice and Involvement

- Were the issues important to you discussed at hearings?
- Were you given the opportunity to explore or discuss issues of importance to you during your hearings?
- Were your efforts to resolve safety issues or to reunify your family acknowledged in court? Probe: How? In what ways and by whom?

Process Experience

- Were efforts made at every hearing to move the case forward?
- After the case plan has been established, how is progress discussed in hearings? Probes: Does discussion include barriers to achieving permanency? Concrete steps to achieving permanency?
- Is discussion in hearings helpful in moving toward permanency?
- Do the hearings discuss why the child cannot be returned home right now?



- For TPR cases: Was your child in a permanent placement when a TPR was filed?

5.18 Do parents feel their voices were heard in permanency planning discussions?

Voice and Involvement

- Binary response options:
 - Do you feel your voice is/was heard in permanency decisions?
 - Do you feel you had an opportunity to share your views in permanency planning discussions?
 - Were you able to contribute permanency options for your child? Probe: Were they pursued?
 - Were you asked to identify placements? Probe: Were they pursued?
 - Does your attorney advocate/ask for reunification in hearings?
 - Do you feel you were involved in case planning?
 - Were you given the opportunity to bring up concerns/challenges about your case plan? Probe: Can you tell us more/give examples?
 - Were you allowed input in creating your case plan? Probe: In what ways?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - My voice is/was heard in permanency decisions.
 - I feel that others listened to me when we were discussing permanency for my child.
 - I had an opportunity to share my views during hearings.
 - I had a say in the outcomes for my child(ren).
 - My attorney advocates/asks for reunification in hearings.
 - I felt that I was involved in making the plan for my case.
 - I am/was involved in case planning.
 - I had input in creating my case plan.

Experience of the Process

- Binary response options:
 - Was the strength of the parent–child bond assessed and taken into consideration during the permanency process?
 - For TPR cases: Was the bond with your child considered when a TPR was filed?
 - Probes: Was a bonding study offered? Did you agree with the outcome? Did the court acknowledge the outcome?



- Did being involved in the system help you gain tools to lead a healthier, more stable, and successful life?
 - Probe: Can you tell us more about that? Give us some examples?
- Did being involved in the system help you gain the tools needed to become a better parent?
 - Probe: Can you tell us more about that? Give us some examples?

5.19 Do parents understand what is required of them and the steps needed to have their child returned?

- Binary response options:
 - Did you/do you understand what is required of you and the steps needed to have your child(ren) returned?
 - Do you know what you need to do to get your child(ren) back?
 - Do you understand what you need to do to get your child returned to you?
 - Did you understand the allegations against you and how to resolve them?
 - Do you/did you understand what must be done to resolve the case?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I understand/understood what is/was required of me and the steps needed to have my child(ren) returned.
 - I know what I need to do to get my child(ren) back.
 - I understand what I need to do to get my child(ren) returned to me.
 - I understand/understood the allegations against me and how to resolve them.
 - I understand/understood what must be done to resolve the case.
- Focus group and open-response options:
 - What is your understanding of permanency? Probe: What does that term mean to you?
 - Were the requirements and expectations for reunification discussed at every hearing?

5.20 Do parents feel services met their needs and assisted them in reunification?

- Binary response options:
 - Did you/do you feel the services met your needs and assisted you in reunification?
 - After reunification: Did you ask for any specific services or support after reunification? Probe: If yes, what services or support?



- After reunification: After your child returned home, did additional discussions about safety occur? Probe: If yes, what were those discussions like?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I feel/felt that services meet/met my needs and assist/assisted me in reunification.
 - The services offered to me were helpful.
- Focus group and open-response options:
 - After reunification: What services were offered to you after reunification? Probe: Were you assisted to secure childcare after reunification? Were you offered respite support?

5.21 Do parents feel they were able to engage in meaningful family time?

- Binary response options:
 - Were you allowed community visits?
 - Are you/were you able to engage in meaningful family time?
 - Did you have sufficient time to visit with your child(ren)?
 - Were you satisfied with the amount of visitation ordered?
 - Were the frequency, duration, and restriction level of your visitation conducive to maintain your bond with your child?
 - Does/did your attorney advocate ask for more/better family time?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I am/was able to engage in meaningful family time.
 - I had sufficient time to visit with my children.
 - My attorney advocates/asks for more/better family time.
- Drop-down menu:
 - How often were your court-ordered visits?
 - Examples: one time per week, two times per week
 - What was the restriction level of your court-ordered visits?
 - Examples: unsupervised, supervised
 - What was the duration of your court-ordered visits?
 - Examples: less than 1 hour, 1 to 2 hours.
- Focus group and open-response options:



- What did your visitation look like? Probes: Were they always in the same place? What were the frequency, duration, and level of restriction?



Caregiver Experience Survey (Agreement Scale)⁶

<<insert organization name>> is interested in learning more about your experience with the child welfare court system. Your opinion can help us learn more about current practice and ways that we can improve. The survey is voluntary. Your responses are completely anonymous and will not impact your case in any way. This survey should take about <<insert time>> minutes to complete. If you have any questions, you can contact <<provide contact information>>. See **Volume II: Implementation Guide** for guidance on modifying introductory language.

For each sentence below, please mark how much you agree using this scale:

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree
DNA = Does not apply

Family engagement [1.4, 1.7, 1.14, 2.4, 3.6]	1	2	3	4	5	DNA
I regularly received timely notice of court hearings. [2.4]						
I was made aware that I could submit information to the court. [1.7/1.14]						
I felt like I was a part of the foster child/youth's team preparing for court. [3.6]						
I was made aware that I could attend the foster child/youth's court hearings. [1.4]						
I attended most of the foster child/youth's court dates. [1.4]						
If I submitted written information prior to court, the judge acknowledged my input prior to any ruling. [1.7]						
I understood what was going on during the foster child/youth's court hearings. [1.7]						
I was made aware that I could speak in the foster child/youth's court hearing. [1.7]						
I spoke in court hearings. [1.7]						
I felt like I could ask for additional support I needed to best serve the youth in my home. [1.14]						
I felt like I was included in court. [1.14]						
I felt satisfied with the court experience. [1.14]						
I understood my rights as a caregiver or relative. [1.7/ 3.6]						
I understood the rights of the foster child/youth. [1.7/ 3.6]						
I felt that the judge valued my input. [1.14]						
Safety [4.2]	1	2	3	4	5	DNA
If there were safety concerns, I was able to bring those concerns to the court. [4.2]						
If I brought up safety concerns, I could trust the court would follow up to prevent future harm. [4.2]						
Permanency [1.7, 3.6]	1	2	3	4	5	DNA
The court permanency process was explained to me. [1.7]						
I was informed of my role in the permanency process. [1.7, 3.6]						

⁶ Lily Colby, Esq., from With Lived Experience conducted focus groups with people with lived experience in the child welfare systems as youth, relatives, and parents. Thank you to Dr. Margaret Gorlin for assisting with drafting questions and a special thanks to the subject matter experts Starcia Ague, Margaret Coyne, Erica Hickey, Dorian Gervais, Ariella Stafanson, Cherie Shroeder, and Jennifer Rexroad.



High-quality legal representation [3.6]	1	2	3	4	5	DNA
I was satisfied with the child/youth's representation. [3.6]						
The child/youth's attorney treated me with respect. [3.6]						
I understood the role of the child/youth's attorney. [3.6]						
I was able to bring information to the child/youth's attorney whenever I needed to. [3.6]						
I knew what to do if I wanted to provide feedback about my child/youth's attorney. [3.6]						

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience with the court?

What is your relationship to the child(ren) on the case?

What is your age? _____

What is your gender?

- Female
 Male
 Non-binary
 Other
 Prefer not to answer

Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- No
 Yes

What is your race? (mark all that apply)

- Black/African American
 White/Caucasian
 American Indian/Alaska Native
 Asian
 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
 Prefer not to answer
 Other race _____



Stakeholder Survey

<<insert organization name>> is interested in learning more about your experience with the child welfare court system. Your opinion can help us learn more about current practice and ways that we can improve. The survey is voluntary. Your responses are completely anonymous and will not impact your case in any way. This survey should take about <<insert time>> minutes to complete. If you have any questions, you can contact <<provide contact information>>. See **Volume II: Implementation Guide** for guidance on modifying introductory language.

For each sentence below, please mark how often the following occurs using this scale:

- Never or almost never = (<10% of hearings)
- Rarely = (10%–35% of hearings)
- Sometimes = (36%–65% of hearings)
- Often = (66%–90% of hearings)
- Always or almost always = (90%–100% of hearings)

How often are the following persons present at child welfare court hearings?	Never or almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
Mother [1.1]					
Father [1.1]					
Child or youth [1.2]					
Tribal representative [1.3]					
Foster parents [1.4]					
Mother’s attorney [3.1]					
Father’s attorney [3.1]					
Child’s or youth’s attorney or attorney GAL [3.2]					
State or agency attorney [3.3]					
Multidisciplinary legal team member [3.4]					

Note: This table can be replicated to focus on specific hearing types. For example, you can ask “How often are the following persons present at the [insert hearing type]?” The table can be repeated as many times as necessary to answer your questions of interest.



How often do judges (use “you” for judge survey) engage parents with the following strategies?	Never or almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
Explain hearing purpose and process. [1.6]					
Ask which language they are most comfortable speaking. [1.6]					
Speak directly to the person. [1.6]					
Address the person by name (first, last, and salutation). [1.6]					
Ask if parents have questions. [1.6]					
Ask if parents understand. [1.6]					
Encourage active participation in the hearing or case. [1.6]					
Give persons an opportunity to be heard. [1.6]					
Identify next steps. [1.6]					
Interrupt or talk over the person. [1.6]					
Use the preferred pronoun for the parents. [1.6]					

Note: This table can be replicated to focus on specific hearing types. For example, you can ask “How often do judges engage parents with the following strategies in [insert hearing type]?” The table can be repeated as many times as necessary to answer your questions of interest.



How often do judges (use “you” for judge survey) engage children or youth with the following strategies?	Never or almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
Explain hearing purpose and process. [1.6]					
Ask which language they are most comfortable speaking. [1.6]					
Speak directly to the person. [1.6]					
Address the person by name (first, last, and salutation). [1.6]					
Ask if the child or youth has questions. [1.6]					
Ask if the child or youth understands. [1.6]					
Encourage active participation in the hearing or case. [1.6]					
Give persons an opportunity to be heard. [1.6]					
Identify next steps. [1.6]					
Interrupt or talk over the person. [1.6]					
Ask about the preferred pronouns of the parties. [1.6]					

Note: This table can be replicated to focus on specific hearing types.

How often do judges (use “you” for judge survey) engage foster parents or relative caregivers with the following strategies?	Never or almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
Explain hearing purpose and process. [1.7]					
Ask which language they are most comfortable speaking. [1.7]					
Speak directly to the person. [1.7]					
Address the person by name (first, last, and salutation). [1.7]					
Ask if the person has questions. [1.7]					
Ask if the caregiver understands. [1.7]					
Encourage active participation in the hearing or case. [1.7]					
Give persons an opportunity to be heard. [1.7]					
Identify next steps. [1.7]					
Interrupt or talk over the person. [1.7]					
Ask for the caregivers input about the youth [1.7]					



Parent Attorney Practice

How often do you...? (for parent attorneys) How often do parent attorneys...? (for other professionals)	Never or almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
Meet with parents before the court day to prepare them for the hearing. [1.8]					
Meet with the parents after the hearing to discuss what happened and next steps. [1.8]					
Use the parents' preferred pronouns. [1.8]					
Meaningfully discuss the parents' right to a hearing before the settlement . [2.8]					
Ensure the parent understands the court documents. [2.8]					
Request accommodations for incarcerated parents, non-English-speaking parents, and parents with disabilities to participate in hearings. [2.8]					
Raise notice and service objections. [2.8]					
Call witnesses, present evidence, and cross-examine opposing witnesses. [3.5b]					
Present favorable evidence on the record. [3.5b]					
Maintain regular contact with parents between hearings. [3.5c]					
[Attorneys] communicate with other parties between hearings. [3.5c]					
Attend nonhearing case events for parents. [3.5c]					
Cross-examine reasonable efforts evidence at initial hearings. [4.4]					
Raise the issue of reasonable or active efforts if not raised at initial hearings. [4.5]					
Advocate for tailored services to support reunification in hearings. [5.15]					
Advocate for family time and visitation in hearings. [5.15]					
Advocate for placement in hearings. [5.15]					



Child Attorney Practice

How often do you...? (for child attorneys) How often do child attorneys...? (for all other professionals)	Never or almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
Meet with the child before the court day to prepare them for the hearing. [1.9]					
Meet with the youth after the hearing to discuss what happened and next steps. [1.9]					
Use the child's preferred pronouns. [1.9]					
Meaningfully discuss the child's right to a hearing before settlement. [2.9]					
Request discovery. [2.9]					
Share court documents with the child and make sure they understand the content. [2.9]					
Arrange for the child to attend court if they wish to do so. [2.9]					
Request a placement option that is supportive of the child's sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression. [2.9]					
Call witnesses, present evidence, and cross-examine opposing witnesses. [3.6b]					
Argue for or request services to address the child's needs. [3.6b]					
Share their wishes with the court. [3.6b]					
Maintain regular contact with child between hearings. [3.6c]					
Visit with children in their placement between court appearances. [3.6c]					
Communicate with other parties between hearings. [3.6c]					
Meet with parents and their counsel. [3.6c]					
Attend nonhearing case events for children or youth. [3.6c]					
Cross-examine reasonable efforts evidence at initial hearings. [4.4]					
Raise the issue of reasonable or active efforts if not raised at initial hearings. [4.5]					
Advocate for tailored services to support reunification in hearings. [5.16]					
Advocate for family time and visitation in hearings, including with siblings. [5.16]					
Advocate for placement in hearings. [5.16]					
GAL advocate for exploration of relative resources for permanency. [5.16]					



How often do you...? (for child attorneys) How often do child attorneys...? (for all other professionals)	Never or almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
Advocate for guardianship or adoption and not for another planned permanent living arrangement (APPLA; aging out of foster care). [5.16]					

[3.6c] On average, how often would you say you meet with (either virtually or in person) your client?

- More than once a month
 Once a month
 Once every other month
 Quarterly
 Less than quarterly
 Other _____

[3.6c] On average, how often would you say you meet with (either virtually or in person) other professionals about cases?

- More than once a month
 Once a month
 Once every other month
 Quarterly
 Less than quarterly
 Other _____

Prosecuting (or Agency or State) Attorney Practice

How often do you...? (for state attorneys) How often do state or agency attorneys (for other professionals) ...?	Never or almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
Directly provide parents copies of the petition, court reports, and service plans. [1.10]					
Use parents' preferred pronouns. [1.10]					
Refer to parents by their formal name. [1.10]					
Routinely provide discovery to counsel for parents and children. [2.7]					
Identify and locate parents who are incarcerated at the earliest stage of the proceeding. [2.7]					
Call witness and present evidence on the record. [3.7b]					
Include favorable evidence about parents on the record when appropriate. [3.7b]					
Talk with caseworkers after the hearing to discuss what occurred in court. [3.7c]					



How often do you...? (for state attorneys) How often do state or agency attorneys (for other professionals) ...?	Never or almost never	Rarel y	Sometimes	Ofte n	Always or almost always
Communicate with other parties between hearings. [3.7c]					
Encourage resolution of issues by attending non-hearing case events. [3.7c]					
Offer information about the agency's reasonable or active efforts to prevent removal to the court. [4.6]					
File motions or petitions in support of permanency in a timely manner. [5.14]					
File termination of parental rights petitions in relation to permanency goal changes in a timely manner. [5.14]					

Think about typical court practice in your jurisdiction. How often does the following occur?	Never or almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
Timely notice is provided to parents. [2.4]					
Notice is provided to parents in their primary language. [2.4]					
Court hearings include robust discussion of key topics. [1.11]					
Timely service of process occurs. [2.1]					
Parent attorneys are appointed before the first hearing on the case. [2.3]					
Child attorneys are appointed before the first hearing on the case. [2.2]					
Indian children are identified early in the case. [2.5]					
Advance notice of hearings is provided to tribes in Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) es. [2.4]					
The judge ensures parents and youth can be present at the next scheduled hearing. [2.6]					
The judge orders accommodations for parents who are incarcerated, institutionalized, or remote to participate in hearings. [2.6]					



Think about typical court practice in your jurisdiction. How often does the following occur?	Never or almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
The judge ensures interpreters and documents written in a parents' primary language are provided. [2.6]					
The court provides parents and youth copies of court orders. [2.6]					
The same attorney represents the parent across the life of the case. [3.5a]					
The same advocate represents the child or youth across the life of the case. [3.6a]					
The judge makes a finding that the agency did <u>not</u> make reasonable or active efforts. [4.1]					
Safety threats leading to removal are discussed at the first hearing. [4.2]					
Parent protective capacities are discussed at the first hearing. [4.2]					
Child vulnerabilities are discussed at the first hearing. [4.2]					
There is discussion of what is preventing the child from returning home today. [4.2]					
The agency's reasonable or active efforts to prevent removal are discussed at the initial hearing [4.2]					
The judge asks about the agency's efforts to prevent removal at the initial hearing. [4.3]					
The judge makes detailed reasonable or active efforts findings that explain how the agency worked with the family to prevent removal. [4.8]					
Judge orders unsupervised visits for parents. [5.11]					
Judge orders visits in family-like settings for parents. [5.11]					
Reasonable or active efforts to reunify or finalize permanency are discussed. [5.7]					
Concrete steps to achieve permanency are discussed. [5.7]					
Barriers to finalize permanency are discussed. [5.7]					



Think about typical court practice in your jurisdiction. How often does the following occur?	Never or almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
The timeline to achieve permanency is discussed. [5.7]					
Parents' involvement in the case plan is discussed. [5.7]					
Youths' involvement in permanency planning is discussed. [5.7]					
The nature, extent, and quality of family time, including family time with siblings, are discussed. [5.7]					
The judge asks about parents' access to and receipt of relevant services. [5.9]					
The judge orders any relevant services to support reunification or permanency. [5.10]					
The judge makes a detailed written visitation order. [5.11]					
The judge makes detailed reasonable or active efforts to achieve permanency findings that explain how the agency has worked to reunify the family or to achieve permanency. [5.4]					

[2.3] When are parents' attorneys typically appointed? _____
 What are the challenges to early appointment? What things facilitate early appointment?

[2.2] When are child's attorneys typically appointed? _____
 What are the challenges to early appointment? What things facilitate early appointment?

[4.1] At which hearing do judges make reasonable efforts to prevent removal findings? (check all that apply)

Initial Adjudication Disposition Review Permanency

Think about timeliness of case processing and respond to the following statements about frequency.	Never or almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
First permanency hearings are held within 12 months of the child's entry into care. [5.1]					



Think about timeliness of case processing and respond to the following statements about frequency.	Never or almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
Termination of parental rights petitions are filed in a timely manner. [5.2]					
Termination of parental rights orders are made in a timely manner after filing. [5.3]					
A case is continued. [5.5]					
TPRs are appealed. [5.6]					



Stakeholder Focus Group Questions

These focus group questions explore stakeholders' perceptions of the child welfare court process. They are arranged by topic area and are color coded so that you can select the ones that are most appropriate for the measure of interest.

Note: Insert introductory language to fit your survey administration. See **Volume II: Implementation Guide** for guidance.

Family Engagement

Let's talk about how families are engaged in the process.

- How often do parents attend their court hearings? Are they more likely to attend certain hearings? [1.1]
- How often are tribal representatives present at court for ICWA cases? [1.3]
- Are orders provided to parties at the end of the hearing? [1.5]
- How do judges ["you" for judge group] engage parents in the court hearing? [1.6]
- How do parents' attorneys ["you" for parents' attorney group] help engage parents in the child welfare court process? Probe: Do you prepare them for court? Debrief with them after court? Consult with them during the process? [1.8]
- How do child's advocates ["you" for child's advocate focus group] engage children and youth in the court process? [1.9]
- How do prosecuting (or agency or state) attorneys engage parents, children, and youth in the court process? [1.10]
- What do judges do to engage foster parents and relative caregivers in hearings? [1.7]
- What topics are regularly discussed at court hearings? [1.11]

Due Process

We would like to talk about ensuring all families get equal access to fair court hearings.

- Do parties receive timely service? What are some of the barriers to timely service? [2.1]
- What about notice of hearings? How is notice provided to parties? Are there challenges with timely notice to parties? [2.4]
- When are attorneys for parents and youth appointed in the case? Is this early enough for them to have high-quality legal representation at the first hearing in the case? [2.2-2.3]



- How do judges ensure fair hearings? Do they explain the hearing purpose? Do they discuss parents' rights? Do they ensure parents and youth can be present at the next scheduled hearing? What are other ways the judges ensure fair hearings? [2.6]
- How do judges ensure accommodations for incarcerated parents? What about parents who do not speak English? [2.6]
- How do parents' attorneys ensure fair hearings? Probe: Do they explain the parents' rights to them? Advocate for accessibility needs? [2.8]
- What about child advocates? [2.9]

High-Quality Legal Representation

Let's focus on the quality of legal representation for parents and youth.

- Do parent attorneys attend all hearings? If not, which hearings do they attend? [3.1]
- What about child's advocates? Do they attend all hearings? If not, what are the barriers to attendance? [3.2]
- What does the model of representation look like for the agency or state attorney? Whom does the prosecutor represent? Do parents and youth understand the role of the agency or state attorney? [3.10]
- How do parents' attorneys ensure high-quality legal representation? [3.5]
- How do youths' attorneys provide high-quality legal representation? [3.6]
- For parents' attorney groups, do you prepare parents for court? [1.8, 2.8, and 3.5]
 - Do you debrief with them after court? [1.8 and 3.5c]
 - Do you provide them copies with the orders and discuss the implications with them? [2.8]
 - How often are you able to meet with your client before the court day? [3.5c]
 - Do you meet with other professionals on the case? What does that look like? [3.5c]
 - How often do you advocate in court for something for your client? [3.5b]
- For youth attorney-centered focus groups: [1.9, 2.8, and 3.6]
 - Do you prepare youth for court? If so, how? [1.9 and 3.6c]
 - Do you debrief with them after court? If so, what does that look like? Are you able to do this after every hearing? Why or why not? [1.9 and 3.6c]
 - Do you provide them copies with the orders and discuss the implications with them? [2.8]



- How often are you able to meet with your client before the court day? [3.6c]
- Do you meet with other professionals on the case? What does that look like? [3.6c]
- How often do you advocate in court for something for your client? [3.6b]
- How do ensure you are using the youth's preferred pronoun? [3.6b]

Safety

Let's talk about safety decision-making.

- How are the agency's efforts to prevent removal discussed in court hearings? What type of information is discussed? Probe: Is a current safety threat preventing the child from returning home today? How will the agency prevent removal (if not removed) or how does the agency work with families to prevent removal? [4.2 and 4.3]
- Do agency attorneys present the reasonable efforts information to the court at initial hearings? What is the level of detail of that information? [4.6]
- Do parent and youth attorneys cross-examine reasonable efforts evidence? [4.4]
- Do judges [you] consider parents' protective capacities when making removal decisions? [4.9]
- How often do judges make detailed reasonable efforts findings that include how the agency has worked with the family? [4.1 and 5.12]

Permanency

We will discuss permanency for the family.

- How long does it typically take to get to the first permanency hearing? What about termination of parental rights? What are common delays related to these events? [5.1–5.3]
- At what points in the case does a court make a reasonable or active effort to reunify or finalize permanency findings? Probe: Specific hearings? Points in time? [4.1 and 5.4]
- How often do cases have delays (continuances)? What are the most common reasons for continuances? Probe: Are the continuances more likely to be productive or unproductive? Explain. When are cases most likely to be delayed (at what point)? [5.5 and 5.17]
- How often are TPRs appealed? How often is the appeal successful? How long does this process take? [5.6]
- How is permanency discussed at hearings? [5.7]



- Does the judge ask about what is preventing the child or youth from safely returning home today?
- Does the judge ask about parents' access to and receipt of relevant services?
- Does the judge order any relevant services to support reunification or permanency? Can you elaborate? [5.10]
- Does the judge make a detailed written visitation order? What kind of family time is ordered for families? Is it presumed unsupervised unless there is a safety reason? How does the judge ensure visitation is frequent and meaningful? [5.11]
- Does the judge make detailed reasonable or active efforts to achieve permanency findings that explain how the agency has worked to reunify the family or achieve permanency? [5.12]
- What information about reasonable or active efforts to reunify or finalize permanency does the attorney representing the agency or state present to the court? [5.13]
- Do attorneys who represent the agency or state file termination of parental rights petitions in a timely manner in relation to permanency goal changes? What are the barriers to timely filing of the TPR petition? What about motions for other forms of permanency? [5.14]
- Do parents' attorneys advocate for reunification in hearings? In what ways? [5.15]
- Does the child's attorney or GAL advocate for reunification or other permanency in hearings? [5.16]



Court Observation Instrument

Hearing date ___/___/___ Case # _____ Coder _____ Date coded ___/___/___

Judge _____ Site _____ Hearing type: SC Adj Disp Review Perm TPR

Engagement/QLR: Attendance of Parties

- Parent 1 [1.1] Parent 1 attorney [3.1] Tribal representative [1.3]
 Parent 2 [1.1] Parent 2 attorney [3.1] State or agency attorney [3.3]
 Child or youth [1.2] Child advocate (type: A G C) [3.2] Caseworker
 Member of multidisciplinary legal team [3.4] Other: _____

Engagement Items: Judicial Engagement Strategies

Does the judge...	Parent 1 <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Parent 2 <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Youth <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Caregiver <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Explain hearing purpose and process? [1.6, 1.7 and 2.6]				
Ask which language most comfortable speaking? [1.6 & 1.7]				
Speak directly to the person? [1.6 & 1.7]				
Address the person by name (first, last, and salutation)? [1.6 & 1.7]				
Address the person by last name? [1.6 & 1.7]				
Use salutation (e.g., Mr., Ms., Dr.) [1.6 & 1.7]				
Ask if parents or youth have questions? [1.6 & 1.7]				
Ask if parents or youth understand? [1.6 & 1.7]				
Encourage active participation in hearing or case? [1.6 & 1.7]				
Give persons an opportunity to be heard? [1.6 & 1.7]				
Identify next steps? [1.6 & 1.7]				
Not interrupt or talk over the person? [1.6 & 1.7]				
Use the preferred pronoun for the parents and youth? [1.6 & 1.7]				
Discuss parents' rights with them during the hearing? [2.6]				

Discussion *Level of discussion: 0 = no discussion, 1 = one or two statements, 2 = more than two statements*

	Level of discussion			Judicial inquiry of topic?	
Child's current placement [1.11]	N/A	0	1	2	Y N
Child's educational needs and placement [1.11]	N/A	0	1	2	Y N
Child's physical health and development [1.11]	N/A	0	1	2	Y N
Child's mental health [1.11]	N/A	0	1	2	Y N
Nature, extent, and quality of family time [1.11 & 5.7]	N/A	0	1	2	Y N
Paternity or locating parents [1.11]	N/A	0	1	2	Y N
Relative resources [1.11]	N/A	0	1	2	Y N
Child's cultural needs [1.11]	N/A	0	1	2	Y N



Needs related to aspects of the child's identity [1.11]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N
Parents' rights, process, and permanency timelines [1.11 and 2.6]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N
ICWA applicability [1.11]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N
Safety threats leading to removal [4.2]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N
Discuss parent protective capacity [4.2]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N
Child's vulnerabilities [4.2]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N
What is preventing the child from returning home today [4.2]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N
Agency's efforts to prevent removal [4.3]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N
Agency's efforts to reunify or finalize permanency [5.7]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N
Concrete steps to achieve permanency [5.7]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N
Barriers to finalize permanency [5.7]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N
Timeline to achieve permanency [5.7]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N
Parents' involvement in the case plan [5.7]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N
Youth's involvement in permanency planning [5.7]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N
Parents' access to and receipt of relevant services [5.9]	N/A	0	1	2	Y	N

Judge's Practice

Does the judge...	Yes	No	N/A	UD
Inquire about Native American heritage? [2.6]				
Make a finding that ICWA does or does not apply? [2.6]				
Order accommodations for incarcerated parents to participate in hearings? [2.6]				
Ensure interpreters and documents written in parents' primary language are provided? [2.6]				
Ask about parents' availability to attend the next hearing? [2.6]				
Discuss reasonable efforts or active efforts to reunify or finalize permanency verbally on the record? [5.7]				
Ask about what is preventing the child or youth from safely returning home today? [4.2]				

Attorney Practice

Does the parent attorney...	Parent 1 attorney			Parent 2 attorney		
	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	No	N/A
Request accommodations for incarcerated parents to participate in hearings? [2.8]						
Call witnesses? [3.5b]						
Cross-examine witnesses? [3.5b]						
Present evidence on the record? [3.5b]						
Argue for or request services to address parents' needs? [3.5b]						
Make efforts to ensure the service plan is reasonable, achievable, and relevant? [3.5b]						



Advocate for family time or visitation? [5.15]						
Advocate for placement? [5.15]						
Advocate for tailored services to support reunification? [5.15]						
Cross-examine reasonable or active efforts to prevent removal? [4.4]						
Raise the issue of reasonable or active efforts if not raised? [4.5]						

Does the child or youth attorney or GAL...	Yes	No	N/A
Request a placement option that is supportive of the child’s sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression? [2.9]			
Call witnesses? [3.6b]			
Advocate for the child or youth in hearings? [3.6b]			
Cross-examine witnesses? [3.6b]			
Present evidence on the record? [3.6b]			
Argue for or request services to address the parents’ needs? [3.6b]			
Share the child or youth’s wishes with the court? [3.6b]			
Cross-examine reasonable or active efforts to prevent removal? [4.4]			
Raise the issue of reasonable or active efforts if not raised? [4.5]			
Advocate for family time or visitation? [5.16]			
Advocate for placement? [5.16]			
Advocate for tailored services to support reunification? [5.16]			
Advocate for exploration of relative resources for permanency? [5.16]			
Advocate for guardianship or adoption and not for APPLA (aging out of foster care) [5.16]			

Does the state or agency attorney...	Yes	No	N/A
Offer information about the agency’s reasonable or active efforts to prevent removal? [4.6]			
If yes, what information does the agency attorney present? [4.6]_____			
Offer information about the agency’s reasonable or active efforts to reunify or finalize permanency? [4.6]			
If yes, what information does the agency attorney present? [4.6]_____			
Call witnesses? [3.7b]			
Cross-examine witnesses? [3.7b]			
Present evidence on the record? [3.7b]			
Include favorable evidence about the family on the record? [3.7c]			



Judicial Discussion of Reasonable Efforts or Active Efforts and Findings on the Record

Does the judge make a reasonable or active efforts finding? Yes No [5.4]

If yes, specify the finding:

- The agency made active efforts.
- Reasonable efforts were made to prevent removal.
- Reasonable efforts were made to reunify or finalize permanency.
- The agency did not make reasonable efforts.
- Reasonable or active efforts were not required.

Is the reasonable efforts finding detailed? Yes No [4.8]

Is the reasonable efforts finding case specific? Yes No [4.8]

Does the judge order services to support reunification or permanency? Yes No [5.10]

Are orders provided to parents at the conclusion of the hearing? Yes No UD [1.5]

Coder notes:



Demographics retrieved from court case files or child welfare agency records.

	Gender	Ethnicity	Race (select one or more)
Child	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender <input type="checkbox"/> None of these	<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown or unreported	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown or Unreported
Parent 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender <input type="checkbox"/> None of these	<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown or unreported	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown or Unreported
Parent 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender <input type="checkbox"/> None of these	<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown or unreported	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown or Unreported

Child ICWA Status: Eligible Ineligible Unknown

Child age: ____ years ____ months



Case File Review Instrument

CODER: _____ DATE CASE CODED: ___/___/___ CASE NO: _____
 JUDGE: _____ SITE: _____

Parent 1
 Relationship to child _____ Primary language _____
 Race or ethnicity: White African American Hispanic American Indian
 Asian or Pacific Islander Other Unknown or unreported

Parent 2
 Relationship to child _____ Primary language _____
 Race or Ethnicity: White African American Hispanic American Indian
 Asian/Pacific Islander Other Unknown or unreported

Child 1
 Date of birth: ___/___/___ Gender: Male Female Transgender
 None of these
 Race or ethnicity: White African American Hispanic American Indian
 Asian/Pacific Islander Other Unknown or unreported

ICWA case? Yes No Date identified as ICWA ___/___/___ [2.5]

Date of appointment of attorney for parent 1 ___/___/___ Date of appointment of attorney for parent 2 ___/___/___ [2.3]

Date of appointment of child attorney or GAL ___/___/___ Type of advocate: Attorney Attorney GAL GAL [2.2]

Did attorney for parent 1 change? Y N If yes, date: ___/___/___ [3.5a] If yes, number of attorneys P1 _____ [3.5a]

Did attorney for parent 2 change? Y N If yes, date: ___/___/___ [3.5a] If yes, number of attorneys P2 _____ [3.5a]

Did attorney for child change? Y N If yes, date: ___/___/___ [3.6a] If yes, number of attorney for child _____ [3.6a]

Did attorney for the state change? Y N If yes, date: ___/___/___ [3.7a] If yes, number of state attorneys _____ [3.7a]



Case Flow

Point in case (date)	Check all parties present	Notice or service	Reasonable efforts (REs) or active efforts (AEs)
<p>Initial hearing</p> <p>____/____/____</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 1 [1.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 2 [1.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Child or youth [1.2]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 1 attorney [3.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 2 attorney [3.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Child attorney or GAL [3.2]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> State attorney [3.3]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Multidisciplinary legal team members [3.4]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Tribal representative [1.3]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Foster parent/relative caregiver [1.4]</p>	<p>Evidence of service</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> P1 was served</p> <p>Date: ____/____/____ [2.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> P2 was served</p> <p>Date: ____/____/____ [2.1]</p> <p>P1 <input type="checkbox"/> was <input type="checkbox"/> was not notified</p> <p>Date: ____/____/____ [2.4]</p> <p>Provided in parent's primary language <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> UD [2.6]</p> <p>P2 <input type="checkbox"/> was <input type="checkbox"/> was not notified</p> <p>Date: ____/____/____ [2.4]</p> <p>Provided in parent's primary language <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> UD [2.6]</p>	<p>REs Finding made <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.1] [5.4]</p> <p>Is it <input type="checkbox"/> REs or <input type="checkbox"/> AEs Finding?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were made</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were not made</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were not possible</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prevent removal</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reunify or finalize permanency</p> <p>Does the finding include details on how the agency worked with the family? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.8] [5.12]</p>
<p>Includes a detailed visitation order? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [5.11]</p> <p>P1 visits <input type="checkbox"/> Supervised <input type="checkbox"/> Monitored <input type="checkbox"/> Unsupervised</p> <p>Family-like setting? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> UD [5.11]</p> <p>P2 visits <input type="checkbox"/> Supervised <input type="checkbox"/> Monitored <input type="checkbox"/> Unsupervised</p> <p>Family-like setting? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> UD [5.11]</p>			<p>Does the order discuss how protective [4.9] capacities were considered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>



Point in case (date)	Check all parties present	Notice or service	Reasonable efforts (REs) or active efforts (AEs)
<p>First adjudication hearing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Parent 2</p> <p>____/____/____</p> <p>Adjudication hearing date for other parent ____/____/____</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 1 [1.1] <input type="checkbox"/> Parent 2 [1.1] <input type="checkbox"/> Child or youth [1.2] <input type="checkbox"/> Parent 1 attorney [3.1] <input type="checkbox"/> Parent 2 attorney [3.1] <input type="checkbox"/> Child attorney or GAL [3.2] <input type="checkbox"/> State attorney [3.3] <input type="checkbox"/> Multidisciplinary legal team members [3.4] <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal representative [1.3] <input type="checkbox"/> Foster parent/relative caregiver [1.4]</p>	<p>Evidence of notification</p> <p>P1 <input type="checkbox"/> was <input type="checkbox"/> was not notified Date: ____/____/____ [2.4]</p> <p>Provided in parent's primary language <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> UD [2.6]</p> <p>P2 <input type="checkbox"/> was <input type="checkbox"/> was not notified Date: ____/____/____ [2.4]</p> <p>Provided in parent's primary language <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> UD [2.6]</p>	<p>REs Finding made <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.1] [5.4]</p> <p>Is it <input type="checkbox"/> REs or <input type="checkbox"/> AEs Finding? <input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were made <input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were not made <input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were not possible <input type="checkbox"/> Prevent removal <input type="checkbox"/> Reunify or finalize permanency</p> <p>Does the finding include details on how the agency worked with the family? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.8] [5.12]</p> <p>Does the order discuss how protective capacities were considered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.9]</p>
<p>Includes a detailed visitation order? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [5.11]</p> <p>P1 visits <input type="checkbox"/> Supervised <input type="checkbox"/> Monitored <input type="checkbox"/> Unsupervised Family-like setting? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> UD [5.11]</p> <p>P2 visits <input type="checkbox"/> Supervised <input type="checkbox"/> Monitored <input type="checkbox"/> Unsupervised Family-like setting? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> UD [5.11]</p>			



Point in case (date)	Check off all parties present	Notice or service	Reasonable efforts (REs) or active efforts (AEs)
<p>Disposition hearing ___/___/___</p> <p>Does the judge order any relevant services to support reunification or permanency? [5.10] P1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No P2 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 1 [1.1] <input type="checkbox"/> Parent 2 [1.1] <input type="checkbox"/> Child or youth [1.2] <input type="checkbox"/> Parent 1 attorney [3.1] <input type="checkbox"/> Parent 2 attorney [3.1] <input type="checkbox"/> Child attorney or GAL [3.2] <input type="checkbox"/> State attorney [3.3] <input type="checkbox"/> Multidisciplinary legal team members [3.4] <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal representative [1.3] <input type="checkbox"/> Foster parent/relative caregiver [1.4]</p>	<p>Evidence of notification P1 <input type="checkbox"/> was <input type="checkbox"/> was not notified Date: ___/___/___ [2.4]</p> <p>Provided in parent's primary language <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> UD 2.6]</p> <p>P2 <input type="checkbox"/> was <input type="checkbox"/> was not notified Date: ___/___/___ [2.4]</p>	<p>REs Finding made <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.1] [5.4]</p> <p>Is it <input type="checkbox"/> REs or <input type="checkbox"/> AEs Finding? <input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were made <input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were not made <input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were not possible <input type="checkbox"/> Prevent removal <input type="checkbox"/> Reunify or finalize permanency</p> <p>Does the finding include details on how the agency worked with the family? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.8] [5.12]</p>
<p>Includes a detailed visitation order? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [5.11] P1 visits <input type="checkbox"/> Supervised <input type="checkbox"/> Monitored <input type="checkbox"/> Unsupervised Family-like setting? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> UD [5.11]</p> <p>P2 visits <input type="checkbox"/> Supervised <input type="checkbox"/> Monitored <input type="checkbox"/> Unsupervised Family-like setting? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> UD [5.11]</p>		<p>Provided in parent's primary language <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> UD [2.6]</p>	<p>Does the order discuss how protective capacities were considered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.9]</p>



Point in case (date)	Check all parties present	Notice or service	Reasonable efforts (REs) or active efforts (AEs)
<p>First judicial review hearing</p> <p>___/___/___</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 1 [1.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 2 [1.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Child or youth [1.2]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 1 attorney [3.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 2 attorney [3.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Child attorney or GAL [3.2]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> State attorney [3.3]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Multidisciplinary legal team members [3.4]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Tribal representative [1.3]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Foster parent/relative caregiver [1.4]</p>	<p>Evidence of notification</p> <p>P1 <input type="checkbox"/> was <input type="checkbox"/> was not notified Date: ___/___/___ [2.4]</p> <p>Provided in parent's primary language <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> UD [2.6]</p> <p>P2 <input type="checkbox"/> was <input type="checkbox"/> was not notified Date: ___/___/___ [2.4]</p> <p>Provided in parent's primary language <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> UD [2.6]</p>	<p>REs Finding made <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.1] [5.4]</p> <p>Is it <input type="checkbox"/> REs or <input type="checkbox"/> AEs Finding?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were made</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were not made</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were not possible</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prevent removal</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reunify or finalize permanency</p> <p>Does the finding include details on how the agency worked with the family?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.8] [5.12]</p> <p>Does the order discuss how protective capacities were considered?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.9]</p>
<p>Includes a detailed visitation order?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [5.11]</p> <p>P1 visits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Supervised <input type="checkbox"/> Monitored <input type="checkbox"/> Unsupervised</p> <p>Family-like setting? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> UD [5.11]</p> <p>P2 visits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Supervised <input type="checkbox"/> Monitored <input type="checkbox"/> Unsupervised</p> <p>Family-like setting? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> UD [5.11]</p>			



Point in case (date)	Check all parties present	Notice or service	Reasonable efforts (REs) or active efforts (AEs)
<p>First permanency hearing</p> <p>___/___/___</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 1 [1.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 2 [1.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Child or youth [1.2]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 1 attorney [3.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 2 attorney [3.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Child attorney or GAL [3.2]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> State attorney [3.3]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Multidisciplinary legal team members [3.4]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Tribal representative [1.3]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Foster parent/relative caregiver [1.4]</p>	<p>Evidence of notification</p> <p>P1 <input type="checkbox"/> was <input type="checkbox"/> was not notified Date: ___/___/___ [2.4]</p> <p>Provided in parent's primary language <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> UD [2.6]</p> <p>P2 <input type="checkbox"/> was <input type="checkbox"/> was not notified Date: ___/___/___ [2.4]</p> <p>Provided in parent's primary language <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> UD [2.6]</p>	<p>REs Finding made <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.1] [5.4]</p> <p>Is it <input type="checkbox"/> REs or <input type="checkbox"/> AEs Finding?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were made <input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were not made</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were not possible</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prevent removal</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reunify or finalize permanency</p> <p>Does the finding include details on how the agency worked with the family? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.8] [5.12]</p> <p>Does the order discuss how protective capacities were considered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.9]</p>
<p>Includes a detailed visitation order? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [5.11]</p> <p>P1 visits <input type="checkbox"/> Supervised <input type="checkbox"/> Monitored <input type="checkbox"/> Unsupervised Family-like setting? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> UD [5.11]</p> <p>P2 visits <input type="checkbox"/> Supervised <input type="checkbox"/> Monitored <input type="checkbox"/> Unsupervised Family-like setting? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> UD [5.11]</p>			



Point in case (date)	Check all parties present	Notice or service	Reasonable efforts (REs) or active efforts (AEs)
<p>TPR motion or petition filed</p> <p>___/___/___</p> <p>TPR first hearing ___/___/___</p> <p>TPR order P1: ___/___/___</p> <p>Relinquished? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Appealed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [5.6]</p> <p>TPR order P2: ___/___/___</p> <p>Relinquished? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Appealed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [5.6]</p> <p>Did any permanency goals change? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If yes, when? ___/___/___ [5.14]</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 1 [1.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 2 [1.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Child or youth [1.2]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 1 attorney [3.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent 2 attorney [3.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Child attorney or GAL [3.2]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> State attorney [3.3]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Multidisciplinary legal team members [3.4]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Tribal representative [1.3]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Foster parent/relative caregiver [1.4]</p>	<p>Evidence of service:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> P1 was served date: ___/___/___ [2.1]</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> P2 was served date: ___/___/___ [2.1]</p> <p>Evidence of notification:</p> <p>P1 <input type="checkbox"/> was <input type="checkbox"/> was not notified</p> <p>Date: ___/___/___ [2.4]</p> <p>Provided in parent's primary language <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> UD [2.6]</p> <p>P2 <input type="checkbox"/> was <input type="checkbox"/> was not notified</p> <p>Date: ___/___/___ [2.4]</p> <p>Provided in parent's primary language <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> UD [2.6]</p>	<p>REs Finding made</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.1] [5.4]</p> <p>Is it <input type="checkbox"/> REs or <input type="checkbox"/> AEs Finding?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were made</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were not made</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> REs or AEs were not possible</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prevent removal</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reunify or finalize permanency</p> <p>Does the finding include details on how the agency worked with the family?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.8] [5.12]</p> <p>Does the order discuss how protective capacities were considered?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [4.9]</p>



Continuances Tracking Form [5.5 and 5.17]: *The site should update these items to include the most common reasons for continuances. If continuance reasons are unknown, it may be beneficial to leave the continuance reason blank and to have the coder write in the information.*

Hearing	Requester and reason	Hearing	Requester and reason
<input type="checkbox"/> Initial hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Adjudication <input type="checkbox"/> Disposition <input type="checkbox"/> Judicial review <input type="checkbox"/> Permanency hearing <input type="checkbox"/> TPR hearing	Party: <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> GAL <input type="checkbox"/> Court <input type="checkbox"/> Needs attorney or new attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Service not perfected <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney time to prepare <input type="checkbox"/> Witness or party not present <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney unavailable <input type="checkbox"/> Court rescheduling or conflict <input type="checkbox"/> Report missing <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Adjudication <input type="checkbox"/> Disposition <input type="checkbox"/> Judicial review <input type="checkbox"/> Permanency hearing <input type="checkbox"/> TPR hearing	Party: <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> GAL <input type="checkbox"/> Court <input type="checkbox"/> Needs attorney or new attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Service not perfected <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney time to prepare <input type="checkbox"/> Witness or party not present <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney unavailable <input type="checkbox"/> Court rescheduling or conflict <input type="checkbox"/> Report missing <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Initial hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Adjudication <input type="checkbox"/> Disposition <input type="checkbox"/> Judicial review <input type="checkbox"/> Permanency hearing <input type="checkbox"/> TPR hearing	Party: <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> GAL <input type="checkbox"/> Court <input type="checkbox"/> Needs attorney or new attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Service not perfected <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney time to prepare <input type="checkbox"/> Witness or party not present <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney unavailable <input type="checkbox"/> Court rescheduling or conflict <input type="checkbox"/> Report missing <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Adjudication <input type="checkbox"/> Disposition <input type="checkbox"/> Judicial review <input type="checkbox"/> Permanency hearing <input type="checkbox"/> TPR hearing	Party: <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> GAL <input type="checkbox"/> Court <input type="checkbox"/> Needs attorney or new attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Service not perfected <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney time to prepare <input type="checkbox"/> Witness or party not present <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney unavailable <input type="checkbox"/> Court rescheduling or conflict <input type="checkbox"/> Report missing <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Initial hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Adjudication <input type="checkbox"/> Disposition <input type="checkbox"/> Judicial review <input type="checkbox"/> Permanency hearing <input type="checkbox"/> TPR hearing	Party: <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> GAL <input type="checkbox"/> Court <input type="checkbox"/> Needs attorney or new attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Service not perfected <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney time to prepare <input type="checkbox"/> Witness or party not present <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney unavailable <input type="checkbox"/> Court rescheduling or conflict <input type="checkbox"/> Report missing <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Adjudication <input type="checkbox"/> Disposition <input type="checkbox"/> Judicial review <input type="checkbox"/> Permanency hearing <input type="checkbox"/> TPR hearing	Party: <input type="checkbox"/> PA <input type="checkbox"/> P1 <input type="checkbox"/> P2 <input type="checkbox"/> GAL <input type="checkbox"/> Court <input type="checkbox"/> Needs attorney or new attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Service not perfected <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney time to prepare <input type="checkbox"/> Witness or party not present <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney unavailable <input type="checkbox"/> Court rescheduling or conflict <input type="checkbox"/> Report missing <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____



Case File Review Codebook⁷

Code the entire case file (start to finish). Additional information may need to be obtained from the child welfare data system.

General Coding Conventions

- **N/A:** Items that do not apply given the facts and circumstances of the case should be coded as N/A (examples are provided for specific items that might be coded as N/A below).
- **UD:** Items that the coder is not able to make a decision about, or that are unclear, should be coded as UD (unable to determine based on the information in the case file).
- **Other:** Any item coded as “other” should include a narrative explanation in the space provided (unless directed otherwise).
- Hearings may start and then continue to a future date. Multiple hearings, one for each parent, may also be held. Code only the hearing that pertains to the child that has been randomly selected for the file review (see instructions below) and the child’s parents. Further, code **ONLY** the first completed (noncontinued) hearing of each hearing type, such as the first completed initial hearing or first completed adjudication hearing. Some hearings may be scheduled or begin and then get continued or adjourned to a future date. Continued hearings may not have all the findings of interest.
- **Code the first completed hearing of the hearing type. Hearing types of interest may include:**
 - Initial
 - Adjudication
 - Disposition
 - Judicial review
 - Permanency hearing
 - TPR hearing

Case Identification	
Coder	Person who codes the case file.
Date coded	Date the case was coded. Month/Day/Year Example: 03/12/21
Case	Case number

⁷ This child welfare case file review codebook is adapted from original material developed by Summers, A., Gatowski, S., & Fromknecht, A. (2021) for the [Understanding Judicial Decision-Making and Hearing Quality in Child Welfare](#) project.



Parent and Child Demographic Information	
Parent(s)	<p>Demographic information about the parents [look for this in the petition, affidavit of removal, or reports to the court].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship to child: Code for the mother and father of the child you selected (not all children). If the child has more than one mother or father, <u>code for the parent who is specifically named in the petition</u>. If two mothers (or two fathers) are both named in the petition, code one as the mother (or father) and code one as “other.” Note the role of the person coded as other (e.g., additional mother or additional father). If someone who is not a mother or father is named in the petition, code as “other” and note who that person is (e.g., relative guardian). Anyone not named in the petition need not be coded (e.g., stepparents or a parent’s significant other not named on the petition need not be added). • Primary language: Indicate the parent’s primary language. Do not make assumptions. It must be clearly stated in the documentation. If language cannot be found in the case file, code as Unknown or unreported. • Race and ethnicity: Indicate the parent’s race and ethnicity. Select all that are appropriate. Do not make assumptions. It must be clearly stated in the documentation. If the parent’s race and ethnicity cannot be found in the case file, code as Unknown or unreported.
Child demographic information	<p>First, select a child or children to code in the case:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is only one child in this case, code the case file for this child (Child 1). • If the case involves more than one child (all children are subjects of the abuse or neglect petition), coders must select a child based on the site’s sampling decision. For example, a random number generator could be used to select which child to code. <p>Child demographics: For the child selected, complete the demographic section of the code sheet. Sources for this information may be the petition, affidavit of removal, or caseworker report to the court.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date of birth: Month/Day/Year Example: 03/12/21 • Gender: Male Female • Race and ethnicity: Indicate the child’s race and ethnicity. Do not make assumptions. It must be clearly stated in the documentation. For example, if it says mother is Hispanic, we cannot assume the child is Hispanic. Select all that are appropriate or note as Unknown or unreported in the file. • ICWA case: Yes or no • Date identified as ICWA: Month/Day/Year Example: 03/12/21
Judge	Enter judge’s name here. If more than one judge presides over this case, note each judge’s name. Identification numbers can be used in place of names.
Site	Enter study site name here. Identification numbers can be used in place of site names.



Appointment of Parent and Child Attorney or GAL	
Date attorney was appointed	<p>Parents' attorney: Note dates that attorneys were appointed for parent 1 and parent 2. [Month/Day/Year]. <i>If the file has no information about appointment date, but the attorney is present at the first hearing, then count the first hearing as a proxy for appointment date.</i> Enter UD if information about the appointment date is not included in the case file.</p> <p>Child's attorney or advocate: Note the dates a primary advocate was appointed for the selected child and the type of advocate (attorney, attorney GAL, or GAL). Enter UD if any appointment dates cannot be determined from the case file.</p>
Change of attorney	<p>Attorney for parent change: Yes or no for both parents</p> <p>Date of change: [Month/Day/Year]</p> <p>Number of attorneys: Enter total number of attorneys for each parent</p> <p>Attorney for child change: Yes or no</p> <p>Date of change: [Month/Day/Year]</p> <p>Number of attorneys: Enter total number of attorneys for child</p>
Qualitative Impressions of Visitation Orders	
Visitation orders	<p>Did the judge order visitation that was meaningful and frequent for the family? Please describe.</p>

Case Flow	
<p>Follow the instructions below to enter information about each of these hearings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial (There may be two initial hearings, or the hearing may be continued. Code only the first full [noncontinued] hearing). • Adjudication • Disposition (if the disposition is held with the adjudication, duplicate the adjudication hearing coding here) • First judicial review hearing • First permanency hearing (the 12-month annual review hearing) • First TPR hearing <p>If any of these hearings do not happen in the case, mark N/A.</p>	

Point in Case (Date) Initial Hearing	
<p>Date of initial hearing: Enter the date the hearing took place [Month/Day/Year]. If the hearing did not take place, mark N/A.</p> <p>Parties present: Note the individuals present at the hearing.</p> <p>Notice or service: Check if there was evidence of service for parent 1 and parent 2 and enter the date of service. Enter if parent 1 and parent 2 were notified or were not notified and enter date of notification. Enter whether parents were notified in their primary language [yes, no, or UD].</p> <p>Possible sources for information on the hearing: Document that summarizes what happened at the hearing or the scheduling order, clerk's minute entry, and court orders generated at the conclusion of the hearing.</p>	



Reasonable Efforts Findings—Initial Hearing

Was a reasonable efforts (REs) finding made at this hearing? Yes or no

Select whether it was a **REs** or **active efforts (AEs)** finding.

Select if REs or AEs were made or not made.

Check if REs or AEs were not possible.

Note the specific REs finding made at this hearing.

- Prevent removal
- Reunify or finalize permanency (applies to hearings after disposition)

Does the finding include details on how the agency worked with the family? Yes or no

Does the order discuss how protective capacities were considered? Yes or no

Visitation—Initial Hearing

Includes a detailed visitation order? Yes or no

Note whether parent 1 visitation is supervised, monitored, or unsupervised.

Is visitation in a family-like setting? Yes, no, or UD

Note whether parent 2 visitation is supervised, monitored, or unsupervised.

Is visitation in a family-like setting? Yes, no, or UD

Point in Case (Date)—First Adjudication Hearing

Date of first adjudication hearing: Enter the date the hearing took place [Month/Day/Year] for each parent.

Parties present: Note the individuals present at the hearing.

Evidence of notice: Enter if parent 1 and parent 2 were notified or were not notified and enter the date of notification [Month/Day/Year]. Enter whether parents were notified in their primary language [yes, no, or UD]

Possible sources for info on the hearing: Document that summarizes what happened at the hearing or the scheduling order, clerk’s minute entry, and court orders generated at the conclusion of the hearing.

Reasonable Efforts Findings—Adjudication

Was a reasonable efforts (REs) finding made at this hearing? Yes or no

Select whether it was a **REs** or **active efforts (AEs)** finding.

Select if REs or AEs were made or not made.

Check if REs or AEs were not possible.

Note the specific REs finding made at this hearing.

- Prevent removal
- Reunify or finalize permanency (applies to hearings after disposition)



Does the finding include details on how the agency worked with the family? Yes or no

Does the order discuss how protective capacities were considered? Yes or no

Visitation—Adjudication

Includes a detailed visitation order? Yes or no

Note whether parent 1 visitation is supervised, monitored, or unsupervised.

Is visitation in a family-like setting? Yes, no, or UD

Note whether parent 2 visitation is supervised, monitored, or unsupervised.

Is visitation in a family-like setting? Yes, no, or UD

Point in Case (Date)—Disposition Hearing

Date of disposition hearing: Enter the date the hearing took place [Month/Day/Year]. If the hearing did not take place, mark N/A.

Indicate if the judge ordered any relevant services to support reunification or permanency [yes or no] for parent 1 and parent 2.

Parties present: Note the individuals present at the hearing.

Evidence of notice: Enter if parent 1 and parent 2 were notified or were not notified and enter the date of notification [Month/Day/Year]. Enter whether parents were notified in their primary language [yes, no, or UD].

Possible sources for info on the hearing: Document that summarizes what happened at the hearing or the scheduling order, clerk’s minute entry, and court orders generated at the conclusion of the hearing.

Reasonable Efforts Findings—Disposition

Was a reasonable efforts (REs) finding made at this hearing? Yes or no

Select whether it was a **REs** or **active efforts (AEs)** finding.

Select if REs or AEs were made or not made.

Check if REs or AEs were not possible.

Note the specific REs finding made at this hearing.

- Prevent removal
- Reunify or finalize permanency (applies to hearings after disposition)

Does the finding include details on how the agency worked with the family? Yes or no

Does the order discuss how protective capacities were considered? Yes or no

Visitation—Disposition

Includes a detailed visitation order? Yes or no

Note whether parent 1 visitation is supervised, monitored, or unsupervised.



Is visitation in a family-like setting? Yes, no, or UD

Note whether parent 2 visitation is supervised, monitored, or unsupervised.

Is visitation in a family-like setting? Yes, no, or UD

Point in Case (Date)—First Judicial Review Hearing

Date of first judicial review hearing: Enter the date the hearing took place [Month/Day/Year]. If the hearing did not take place, mark N/A.

Parties present: Note the individuals present at the hearing.

Evidence of notice: Enter if parent 1 and parent 2 were notified or were not notified and enter the date of notification [Month/Day/Year]. Enter whether parents were notified in their primary language [yes, no, or UD].

Possible sources for info on the hearing: Document that summarizes what happened at the hearing or the scheduling order, clerk’s minute entry, and court orders generated at the conclusion of the hearing.

Reasonable Efforts Findings—First Judicial Review Hearing

Was a reasonable efforts (REs) finding made at this hearing? Yes or no

Select whether it was a REs or active efforts (AEs) finding.

Select if REs or AEs were made or not made.

Check if REs or AEs were not possible.

Note the specific REs finding made at this hearing.

- Prevent removal
- Reunify or finalize permanency (applies to hearings after disposition)

Does the finding include details on how the agency worked with the family? Yes or no

Does the order discuss how protective capacities were considered? Yes or no

Visitation—First Judicial Review Hearing

Includes a detailed visitation order? Yes or no

Note whether parent 1 visitation is supervised, monitored, or unsupervised.

Is visitation in a family-like setting? Yes, no, or UD

Note whether parent 2 visitation is supervised, monitored, or unsupervised.

Is visitation in a family-like setting? Yes, no, or UD



Point in Case (Date)—First Permanency Hearing

Date of first permanency hearing: Enter the date the hearing took place [Month/Day/Year]. If the hearing did not take place, mark N/A.

Parties present: Note the individuals present at the hearing.

Evidence of notification: Enter if parent 1 and parent 2 were notified or were not notified and enter the date of notification [Month/Day/Year]. Enter whether parents were notified in their primary language [yes, no, or UD]

Possible sources for info on the hearing: Document that summarizes what happened at the hearing or the scheduling order, clerk’s minute entry, and court orders generated at the conclusion of the hearing.

Reasonable Efforts Findings—First Permanency Hearing

Was a reasonable efforts (REs) finding made at this hearing? Yes or no

Select whether it was a REs or active efforts (AEs) finding.

Select if REs or AEs were made or not made.

Check if REs or AEs were not possible.

Note the specific REs finding made at this hearing.

- Prevent removal
- Reunify or finalize permanency (applies to hearings after disposition)

Does the finding include details on how the agency worked with the family? Yes or no

Does the order discuss how protective capacities were considered? Yes or no

Visitation—First Permanency Hearing

Includes a detailed visitation order? Yes or no

Note whether parent 1 visitation is supervised, monitored, or unsupervised.

Is visitation in a family-like setting? Yes, no, or UD

Note whether parent 2 visitation is supervised, monitored, or unsupervised.

Is visitation in a family-like setting? Yes, no, or UD



Point in Case (Date)—TPR Motion or Hearing

Date TPR motion or petition filed: [Month/Day/Year].

Date of first TPR hearing: Enter the date the hearing took place [Month/Day/Year]. If the hearing did not take place, mark N/A.

TPR order parent 1: Enter date of order for parent 1: [Month/Day/Year].

Parent 1 relinquished? Yes or no

TPR order parent 2: Enter date of order for parent 1: [Month/Day/Year].

Parent 2 relinquished? Yes or no

Parties present: Note the individuals present at the hearing.

Notice or service: Check if there was **evidence of service** for parent 1 and parent 2 and enter the date of service. Enter if parent 1 and parent 2 were **notified** or were not notified and enter date of notification. Enter whether parents were notified in their primary language [yes, no, or UD].

Possible sources for info on the hearing: Document that summarizes what happened at the hearing or the scheduling order, clerk’s minute entry, and court orders generated at the conclusion of the hearing.

Reasonable Efforts Findings—TPR Motion or Hearing

Was a reasonable efforts (REs) finding made at this hearing? Yes or no

Select whether it was a REs or active efforts (AEs) finding.

Select if REs or AEs were made or not made.

Check if REs or AEs were not possible

Note the specific REs finding made at this hearing.

- Prevent removal
- Reunify or finalize permanency
- Finalize the permanent plan (applies to hearings after disposition)

Does the finding include details on how the agency worked with the family? Yes or no

Does the order discuss how protective capacities were considered? Yes or no



Continuances Tracking Form

The site should update these items to include the most common reasons for continuances. If continuance reasons are unknown, it may be beneficial to leave the continuance reason blank and to have the coder enter the information.

Continuances	
For each hearing where a continuance occurred, code the hearing type, party requesting the continuance, and the reason given.	
Hearing type	Select one: <input type="checkbox"/> Initial hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Adjudication <input type="checkbox"/> Disposition <input type="checkbox"/> Judicial review <input type="checkbox"/> Permanency hearing <input type="checkbox"/> TPR hearing
Requester	Select party that requested hearing: <input type="checkbox"/> PA (prosecuting attorney) <input type="checkbox"/> P1 (attorney for parent 1 or parent 1) <input type="checkbox"/> P2 (attorney for parent 2 or parent 2) <input type="checkbox"/> GAL (child's attorney) <input type="checkbox"/> Court
Reason	Select reason for hearing: <input type="checkbox"/> Needs attorney or new attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Service not perfected <input type="checkbox"/> More time to prepare <input type="checkbox"/> Witness or party not present <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney unavailable <input type="checkbox"/> Court rescheduling or conflict <input type="checkbox"/> Report missing <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ (Specify "other" reason for the hearing.)



Court Observation Instrument Codebook⁸

Identify the Child to Code

Select the child to code according to your data collection procedure. For example, a random number generator can be used to select which child to code. For discussion topics addressed, code for any time it comes up regardless of whether it pertains to the child selected.

General Coding Conventions

- N/A: Items that do not apply given the facts and circumstances of the case should be coded as N/A (examples are provided for specific items that might be coded as N/A below).
- UD: Items that the coder is not able to make a decision about, or that are unclear, should be coded as UD (such as unable to determine).
- Other: Any item coded as “other” should include a narrative explanation in the space provided (unless directed otherwise).
- Rating scales for discussion items: To code discussion items, see coding conventions in discussion items section.

Hearing Date, Hearing Type, Case ID, and Site ID	
Hearing	Date the hearing was held [MM/DD/YYYY]
Case #	Enter the case number
Coder	Person completing the observation coding
Date	Date the hearing was coded [MM/DD/YYYY]
Judge	Enter judge name or ID here
Site	Enter site name or ID here
Hearing type	Enter the type of hearing. SC: shelter care; Adj: adjudication hearing; Disp: disposition hearing; Review: review hearing; Perm: permanency hearing; TPR: termination of parental rights hearing

Engagement/Quality Legal Representation: Attendance of Parties	
Check all individuals who appear in the hearing	
Parent 1	Biological or adoptive parent 1
Parent 2	Biological or adoptive parent 2
Child/youth	Child/youth who is subject of petition/hearing
Parent 1 attorney	Legal representative for parent 1
Parent 2 attorney	Legal representative for parent 2

⁸ This child welfare hearing observation codebook is adapted from original material developed by Summers, A., Gatowski, S., & Fromknecht, A. (2021) for the [Understanding Judicial Decision-Making and Hearing Quality in Child Welfare](#) project.



Engagement/Quality Legal Representation: Attendance of Parties	
Child's advocate A G C	<p>Advocacy for the child. Check all types of advocates present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A = Attorney • G = Guardian ad litem (GAL) • C = Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) <p>The child in the case may have an attorney and a CASA, for example.</p>
Tribal representative	Tribal representative for child
State or agency attorney	The government attorney bringing the case before the court (depending on the jurisdiction, may be referred to as the county attorney, the district attorney, the attorney general, the attorney representing the child welfare agency, or the state's attorney)
Caseworker	Child welfare agency caseworker
Other	Use this space to note any other individuals present who do not fit in the coding categories above (e.g., probation officers, family members, therapists, GAL for a parent with competency issues).

Judicial Engagement of Parents and Youth: Judicial engagement in the hearing refers to specific interactions that the judge has with the parents and the child who are present.
<p>Parent 1; parent 2; youth = youth or child</p> <p>Check the box if it is clear the judge is talking to or interacting with a specific person in that way (e.g., check the box beside "Explain hearing purpose" if the judge clearly makes comments or has a discussion with the parent or youth that explains the hearing purpose).</p> <p>Coding N/A Indicate N/A at the top of the column if the party is not present or if youth is present but nonverbal (infant or toddler). These items do not apply if those individuals are not present (i.e., engagement cannot happen if the party is not present) or if the child is too young for a verbal interaction to take place.</p> <p>See specific instructions for each engagement item below.</p>
<p>Explain the hearing purpose and process?</p> <p>Check the box if the judge provides an explanation of the hearing purpose and process. The judge explains the type of hearing (e.g., what it is ["We are here today for a disposition hearing"]), the goals and purpose of the hearing, and what will occur in the hearing ("A disposition hearing is the hearing to ..."). Code this as taking place even if the judge does not address the individual directly (e.g., the judge may generally describe the purpose of the hearing without first addressing the parents). If that happens, check the boxes next to all individuals who heard the judge's remarks.</p>
<p>Ask language most comfortable speaking?</p> <p>The judge asks what language the person is most comfortable speaking or the language they would prefer to speak. It may also involve asking if they would prefer to have an interpreter. Code this as taking place even if the judge does not directly ask the individual the question (e.g., judge may ask the caseworker or attorney about the language the mother is most comfortable speaking; if that happens, check the box for each person who was asked the question).</p>
<p>Speak directly to the person?</p> <p>Judge addresses individuals directly (e.g., speaks directly to them, directs comments to them and not just through their attorney or representative).</p>



<p>Judicial Engagement of Parents and Youth: Judicial engagement in the hearing refers to specific interactions that the judge has with the parents and the child who are present.</p>
<p>Address the person by first name? If the judge speaks directly to the person, check the box if the judge also uses the person’s first name (e.g., does not merely refer to the person by role, such as “mother” or “father” but calls mother “Mary”).</p>
<p>Address the person by their last name? If the judge speaks directly to the person, check the box if the judge also uses the person’s last name and does not refer to the person’s role (e.g., “Ms. Jones” and not “mother”).</p>
<p>Uses salutation (Mr. Ms., Dr.)? If the judge speaks directly to the person, check the box if the judge also refers to parents and/or youth using an honorific such as Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr.</p>
<p>Ask if parents or youth have questions? If the judge speaks directly to the person, check the box if the judge specifically asks if the individual has any questions. For example, if the judge specifically asks the mother, “Do you have any questions for the court?” code as the judge asked the mother if she had questions. If the judge specifically asks the father, “Do you have any questions for the court?” code as the judge asked the father if he had questions. Do not code if the judge broadly addresses the courtroom by making a general statement such as “Are there any questions for the court? Does anyone have any questions?” Check the box only if the judge is directing remarks to a specific individual.</p>
<p>Ask if parents or youth understand? If the judge speaks directly to the person, check the box if the judge asks if they understand (e.g., if they understand what just happened in the hearing, the implications of the petition or why the person is there, the safety concerns, the hearing purpose, what is expected of the person). For example, “Do you understand what is required of you?” “Do you understand what will happen next?” “Do you understand what may happen if you ...?”</p>
<p>Encourage active participation in hearing or case? If the judge speaks directly to the person, code this if the judge also encourages the individual to actively engage or participate in the case. The judge may comment, for example, about the importance of the individual’s participation in services, attendance and participation in hearings, following through on any expectations or tasks identified for them, working with the caseworker. The judge may conclude the hearing by reminding parents of the importance of engaging in all services offered, working on their case plan, and appearing for all hearings (e.g., importance of engaging in services can be stressed by the judge by noting permanency timelines and the consequences for parents if they do not start working on the case plan). The judge may encourage the child to stay in touch with the GAL, work with the social worker, or engage in educational services.</p>
<p>Give persons an opportunity to be heard? Check the box if the judge clearly offers the individual an opportunity to be heard in the hearing that is different than responding to the other judicial engagement codes listed above (i.e., check this if the judge provides the person an opportunity to be heard that is different from asking if they have a question or if they understand what happened). Check the box if the judge permits individuals to make a statement, provide or share information or clarify or explain something, or share how they are doing. To code this item, it must be clear that the judge is giving the person an opportunity to be heard but is not asking any of the specific questions that are already coded under other judicial engagement codes. The judge is not just hearing from the person’s attorney on an issue.</p>



Judicial Engagement of Parents and Youth: Judicial engagement in the hearing refers to specific interactions that the judge has with the parents and the child who are present.
<p>Identify next steps? The judge describes what will happen next in the hearing and court process. For example, the judge explains what happens after the hearing, when things will occur, timeframes for achieving permanency, what parties should do after the hearing, and the judge’s expectations for parties before the next hearing. The judge may do this without specifically directing comments to an individual. If the judge does not address this to a specific person but identifies next steps more broadly or generally, check the boxes next to all individuals who heard the judge’s remarks.</p>
<p>Not interrupt or talk over the person? Check the box if the judge does not interrupt or talk over the mother, father, or child or youth when those individuals are speaking.</p>
<p>Use the preferred pronoun for the parents and youth? Check the box if the judge uses the parents’ and youth’s preferred pronouns.</p>
<p>Discuss parents’ rights during the hearing? Check the box if the judge discusses parents’ rights during the hearing (e.g., right to counsel).</p>

Discussion
<p>In this section, you are (1) noting which specific topics or issues were discussed, (2) rating the level or depth of discussion of that topic, and (3) indicating whether the judge inquired about the issue (asked a question about that topic). See the instructions below.</p>
<p>Code N/A = Item not applicable to the case. Use this code when it would not be relevant to engage in a discussion of this issue or topic given the facts of the case or characteristics of parties (e.g., if the father is deceased, mark N/A by a discussion of paternity/locating fathers).</p>
<p>Level of Discussion Use the following rating scale:</p> <p>Circle 0: If the topic was not raised, there was no discussion.</p> <p>Circle 1: Code a topic as “1” if one to two statements are made, the topic is merely addressed or briefly raised with one or two sentences, and little information is shared.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, the child’s advocate says, “The child is currently placed with her aunt.” No one else says anything in the hearing about the child’s placement, and the child’s advocate also does not add any information beyond this statement about placement. Code the level of discussion of child’s placement as “1.” <p>Circle 2: Code a topic as “2” if more than two statements are made and if more detail is provided or new information is added to the original statement (either by the same person or by someone else). A mere repetition of something someone else has said does not elevate the code from “1” to “2.” New information or more information must be added to the topic to code as “2.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, after the advocate’s initial statement, “The child is currently placed with her aunt” (one statement), the child’s advocate eventually says, “The aunt is willing to serve as a foster care placement in the case for the child moving forward while the parents work on their issues” (a second statement that provides new information), and “The agency is



Discussion
<p>currently in the process of conducting background checks on the aunt” (a third statement that adds even more information). Code the level of discussion of child’s placement as “2.”</p> <p>Judicial Inquiry of Topic? Yes or No Circle Y or N. If the answer is yes, the judge asked a specific question on that topic. Code “Yes” only if the judge asks a question about the item. It is not a “yes” if the judge is just making a statement or repeating something that someone else already stated. For example, the agency says the child is placed with her aunt. The judge merely repeats that statement by saying, “The child is currently placed with her aunt.” This would be coded as “No” under judicial inquiry about child placement. However, if the judge asks, “How long has the child been placed with her aunt?” this would be coded as “Yes” under judicial inquiry about child placement.</p>

Discussion Topic Definitions	
Discussion topic	Example
Child’s current placement	<p>In the hearing, someone indicates what the child’s current placement is (e.g., home with parent, with relative, or foster care). Other issues that may be discussed about the child’s placement may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether placement is appropriate (e.g., suitability of the placement and whether it meets the child’s needs) • whether (and/or how) the placement is the most family-like setting consistent with the child’s best interests and needs • the number of placements the child has had • suitability of the placement as an option moving forward in the case <p>If the discussion is about whether relative placements might exist for the child (potential for relative placement), do not code that here—that should be coded under Relative Resources below and not the child’s current placement. If a relative is the current placement and there is a discussion about that current relative placement, code that here.</p>
Child’s educational needs and placement	<p>Someone in the hearing raises the topic of the child’s educational needs or educational placement. Possible examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • educational progress • learning needs assessments • school attendance or enrollment • timely enrollment in new school • timely records transfer • transportation arrangements • need for early intervention services screening for children ages 3 years and younger • whether placement of the child has allowed the child to go to the same school or if the child must now change schools
Child’s physical health and development	<p>Someone in the hearing raises the topic of the child’s physical health. Possible examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • medical needs (e.g., deficits or challenges, medications)



Discussion Topic Definitions	
Discussion topic	Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical development (e.g., developmental milestones for younger children being met or delayed such as rolling over on belly, sitting up, talking, feeding themselves) • vision, hearing, dental health • physical disabilities • medical assessments and check-ups needed • services in place to promote the child’s physical health
Child's mental health	<p>Someone in the hearing raises the topic of the child’s mental health. Possible examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emotional or behavioral problems • psychological assessment and evaluations • timely behavioral health services • psychological or psychiatric evaluations and testing, treatment needed • psychotropic medications • attachment and bonding • child trauma or adverse experiences
Nature, extent, and quality of family time	<p>Someone raises topic of visitation with parent(s) and/or siblings. May also be referred to as “family time.” Discussion may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need for visit schedule, length, and quality (how well the visits are going) or progress. • details regarding child’s visits with parents and/or siblings, including the potential for changing the visitation schedule <p><u>N/A may be coded here if the child is already placed with a parent</u> (and other parent is not part of the case plan, so visitation is not an issue for that parent), parent(s) are deceased, or parental rights have been terminated.</p>
Paternity and locating parents	<p>Someone in the hearing raises issues with respect to paternity, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether paternity has been legally established and, if not, identifying actions to determine paternity • asking parties about their knowledge of paternity • addressing efforts to identify and locate father (e.g., whether there is a discussion of outstanding question of paternity, paternity testing results, the need to establish paternity) • agency or other stakeholder efforts to locate fathers
Relative resources	<p>Someone in the hearing asks if relatives might be available to serve as temporary or permanent placements for the child. This does not refer to the current placement but to the potential for a relative to serve as a placement resource for the child in the future. Examples might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • efforts to identify and locate relatives to serve as placements for the child • efforts to assess the viability of specific relatives as possible placements • what relative resources exist



Discussion Topic Definitions	
Discussion topic	Example
	If the discussion is about the child’s current placement with a relative, do not code that here. That should be coded as part of the child’s current placement discussion.
Child’s cultural needs	Someone raises issues with respect to the child’s cultural needs (e.g., language, attending religious services, maintaining contact with members of their community).
Needs related to aspects of the child’s identity	Someone raises issues with respect to the child’s identity (e.g., sexual orientation, gender identity, cultural identity)
Parents’ rights, process, and/or permanency timelines	Someone raises the topic of parental rights, the case process, and/or permanency timelines. Discussion may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents’ right to representation, process for obtaining an attorney, and right to counsel • advisement of parents’ rights in the case • description of process moving forward such as what parents might expect after this hearing and the timelines for achieving reunification or other type of permanency in the case • whether notice of the hearing and petition was completed • whether service was achieved or notice was attempted on missing parents • the challenges of or barriers to serving and notifying parents of court hearings • efforts to locate missing parties and timeliness for the case process
ICWA applicability	Someone raises the topic of whether the child is eligible for ICWA, including discussion about efforts made to identify ICWA eligibility.
Safety threats leading to removal	To code this, there must be a discussion of safety and specific threats of danger within the family from which the parents were unable to protect the child leading to the need for removal. This discussion needs to be related to the current and specific circumstances, situation, or events. For example, if the caseworker says the mother has a history of substance use, this would not qualify as a discussion of the “specific safety threats preventing reunification.” However, if the caseworkers says, “The mother has a history of substance use, has currently been using, and, when she uses, leaves the children unattended without any adult supervision,” this would be a discussion of the specific safety threats (leaving children unattended when mother is using drugs) that led to the need for removal. Other examples of a discussion that identifies a specific safety risk that led to removal might be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The child’s living arrangements seriously endanger the child’s physical health.” • “Parent refuses and/or has failed to meet the child’s medical needs, and that can result in severe consequences for the child.” • “One or both parents’ behavior is dangerously impulsive, and they cannot or will not control their behavior.”



Discussion Topic Definitions	
Discussion topic	Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The parents lack the parenting knowledge, skills, and motivation necessary to assure the child’s basic needs are met, thus putting the child at risk of imminent harm.” <p>Code N/A if the child is not removed from the home.</p>
Discuss parent protective capacity	<p>Code if there is a discussion about protective capacities exhibited by one or both parents. Protective capacities are cognitive, behavioral, and emotional qualities of parents that ensure the safety of their child. These are parents’ responses to threats (or potential threats) that keep the child safe from harm and reduce risk of harm. Discussion of parental protective capacity may include a description of events and experiences where parents have protected their children in the past (demonstrating their protective capacity) or how they were not able to protect their children and keep them safe (demonstrating their lack of protective capacity). Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The mother separated the child from the dangerous situation and immediately sought assistance from others.” • “The parents were able to put a plan in place to keep their child safe.” • “The father does not recognize the need to place his child’s needs as a priority and does not set aside his own needs in favor of his child’s, resulting in the child being exposed to danger on regular occasions.”
Child vulnerabilities	<p>Code if there is a discussion about the child’s vulnerabilities. This discussion addresses how or whether the child is able to protect himself or herself from safety threats and to care for himself or herself. This may include a discussion of how the child’s age, cognitive ability, developmental status, mental health, emotional security, or family loyalties make them more vulnerable or susceptible to dangers or to further neglect or abuse.</p>
What is preventing the child from returning home today	<p>Code if someone raises the issue or discusses why the child cannot return home at the conclusion of the hearing. The child may have been removed before the hearing, but someone may share why it is still not possible for the child to safely return home now. For example, “We removed Caleb because of imminent safety concerns three days ago. Since that time, the parents have done nothing asked of them to make their home safe for Caleb’s return, such as go to detox, arrange for childcare for him, or follow up with their assessment referrals. So, at this time, return home would not be safe for Caleb.” Or someone, often the judge, may ask why the child cannot return home today, which will result in a discussion about why or why not.</p> <p>Code N/A if the child is not removed from the home.</p>
Agency's efforts to prevent removal	<p>Discussion of the specific efforts that the child welfare agency and caseworkers made to prevent having to remove the child from the home. For example, the specific steps the agency took to maintain the child safely in the parental home, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determining if relatives could care for the child



Discussion Topic Definitions	
Discussion topic	Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conducting a risk assessment to determine the current safety threat to maintaining the child in the home identifying available suitable housing assessing parental protective capacity (ability to keep the child safe) determining or identifying child vulnerabilities (whether the child is able to protect self) identifying family supports that can be put in place rather than remove the child assessing overall family needs and identifying and obtaining services to address those needs to maintain children in the home.
Agency's effort to reunify or finalize permanency	Discussion about the agency's efforts (activities and services) to achieve permanency for the child. Discussion of efforts aimed at achieving the permanency goal identified in the case. This should include efforts to ensure parents have access to needed services in reunification cases or that efforts are made to identify an adoptive placement in adoption cases.
Concrete steps to achieve permanency	Code this if the discussion of agency efforts to reunify or finalize permanency (see above) also included a detailed description or listing of the specific steps undertaken to achieve the permanency goal (details about the agency's efforts). For example, the specific things the department is doing to help the parent engage in or access services in the case to support their reunification; the specific steps taken to support relative placements in a guardianship case or to support an adoption resource in a case where adoption is the goal; or in an APPLA case, the specific services given in an effort to achieve the goal of "independent living/APPLA."
Barriers to finalize permanency	Specific obstacles that prevent permanency goal achievement and case closure. What challenges are faced in achievement of permanency (e.g., delays with Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), missing parties, placement that was disrupted).
Timeline to achieve permanency	Case processing benchmarks and timelines to achieve and finalize permanency. Description of the process moving forward such as after this hearing, the timelines for achieving reunification or other type of permanency in the case. Code N/A if final permanency has been achieved (e.g., this is the last hearing in the case).
Parents' involvement in the case plan	Discussion of the parents were involved in the case plan. This may include the type of planning (e.g., family team meetings), frequency, and quality of that involvement.
Youth's involvement in permanency planning	Discussion of how the child or youth was involved in case planning. For example, a discussion about how the child's voice was included (in what ways) and what the child wants for permanency. Code N/A if the child is too young to have been involved or to voice an opinion.
Parents' access to and receipt of relevant services	The services offered by the child welfare agency and caseworker aimed at maintaining the child safely in the parental home. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mental health assessments and evaluations substance use disorder referrals and treatment assistance with housing



Discussion Topic Definitions	
Discussion topic	Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assistance with transportation • referral to parenting classes • anger management, domestic violence counseling, or other services • engaging in-home safety planning services such as family group conferencing or family team meetings

Judge's Practice	
Select the appropriate response based on the judge's actions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: Place a check in this column if the answer is yes, the judge engaged in the specific activity noted. • No: Place a check in this column if the answer is no, the judge did not engage in the specific activity noted. • N/A: Place a check in this column if the item does not apply given the facts and circumstances of the case (e.g., neither parent is incarcerated, neither parent speaks a language other than English). • UD: Items that the coder is unable to make a decision about, or that are unclear, should be coded as UD (such as unable to determine). 	
Inquire about Indian heritage?	
Make a finding that ICWA does or does not apply?	
Order accommodations for incarcerated parents to participate in hearings?	Code as N/A if the parents are not incarcerated.
Ensure interpreters and documents written in a parent's primary language are provided?	Code as N/A if both parents' primary language is English.
Ask about parents' availability to attend the next hearing?	Code as N/A if parents are deceased, have parental rights terminated, or are not part of the case plan.
Discuss reasonable efforts or active efforts to reunify or finalize permanency verbally on the record?	Code as N/A if child has not been removed from the home.
Ask what is preventing the child or youth from safely returning home today?	Code as N/A if child has not been removed from home.



Parents' Attorney Practice	
<p>Select the appropriate response based on the attorney's actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: Place a check in this column if the answer is yes, the attorney engaged in the specific activity noted. • No: Place a check in this column if the answer is no, the attorney did not engage in the specific activity noted. <p>N/A: Place a check in this column if the item does not apply given the facts and circumstances of the case (e.g., no witnesses were called, so cross-examination was not necessary; advocacy for family time and visitation is not applicable because the child is living with parents, parents are deceased, or parental rights were previously terminated).</p>	
Request accommodations for incarcerated parents to participate in hearings	Code as N/A if the parents are not incarcerated.
Call witnesses	
Cross-examine witnesses	Code as N/A if no witnesses were called.
Present evidence on the record	
Argue for or request services to address parents' needs	Code as N/A if the parent is deceased or not identified.
Make efforts to ensure the service plan is reasonable, achievable, and relevant	Code as N/A if the parent is deceased or not identified.
Advocate for family time and visitation	Code as N/A if the child is placed with the parent.
Advocate for placement	Code as N/A if the child is placed at home.
Advocate for tailored services to support reunification	Code as N/A if the child is living with the parent.
Cross-examine reasonable or active efforts to prevent removal	Code as N/A if no evidence was presented about reasonable efforts.
Raise the issue of reasonable or active efforts if not raised	Code as N/A if reasonable efforts were raised by someone else.



Child's Attorney or GAL Practice	
<p>Select the appropriate response based on the actions of the child's attorney or GAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: Place a check in this column if the answer is yes, the child's attorney or GAL engaged in the specific activity noted. • No: Place a check in this column if the answer is no, the child's attorney or GAL did not engage in the specific activity noted. <p>N/A: Place a check in this column if the item does not apply the given facts and circumstances of the case (e.g., no witnesses were called, so cross-examination was not necessary).</p>	
Request a placement option that is supportive of the child's sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression (SOGIE)?	
Call witnesses	
Advocate for the child or youth in hearings	
Cross-examine witnesses	Code as N/A if no witnesses were called.
Present evidence on the record	
Argue for or request services to address the child's needs?	Code as N/A if there are no parents on the case (e.g., post-TPR).
Argue for or request services to address parents' needs	Code as N/A if the child is too young to express their wishes.
Share the child's wishes with the court	Code as N/A if the child is too young to express their wishes.
Cross-examine reasonable efforts or active efforts to prevent removal	Code as N/A if no information about reasonable efforts is presented.
Raise the issue of reasonable efforts or active efforts if not raised	Code as N/A if the issue is raised.
Advocate for family time and visitation	Code as N/A if the child is placed at home.
Advocate for placement	Code as N/A if the child is placed at home.
Advocate for tailored services to support reunification	Code as N/A if the child is living with the parent.
Advocate for exploration of relative resources for permanency	
Advocate for guardianship or adoption and not for APPLA (aging out of foster care)	Code as N/A if the goal is reunification.



State or Agency Attorney Practice	
<p>Select the appropriate response based on the state or agency attorney's actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: Place a check in this column if the answer is yes, the state or agency attorney engaged in the specific activity noted. • No: Place a check in this column if the answer is no, the child's or youth's attorney or GAL did not engage in the specific activity noted. <p>N/A: Place a check in this column if the item does not apply given the facts and circumstances of the case (e.g., no witnesses were called, so cross-examination was not necessary).</p>	
Offer information about the agency's reasonable or active efforts to prevent removal?	
What information does the agency attorney present?	Describe what information or evidence was provided. For example, caseworker report on the record, caseworker testimony, expert testimony (indicate who), or other testimony or evidence.
Offer information about the agency's reasonable efforts or active efforts to reunify or finalize permanency?	
What information does the agency attorney present?	Describe what information or evidence was provided. For example, caseworker report on the record, caseworker testimony, expert testimony (indicate who), or other testimony or evidence.
Call witnesses?	
Cross-examine witnesses?	Code as N/A if no witnesses were called.
Present evidence on the record?	
Include favorable evidence about the family on the record?	Code as N/A if there is no state attorney.
Judicial Discussion of Reasonable Efforts or Active Efforts and Findings on the Record	
Does the judge make a reasonable efforts finding?	
If yes, what is the finding?	<p>Check one of the following options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agency made active efforts. • Reasonable efforts were made to prevent removal. Check this box if the judge states that the child welfare agency made reasonable efforts to prevent removal. • Reasonable efforts were made to reunify or finalize permanency. Check this box if the judge states that the child welfare agency made reasonable efforts to reunify or finalize permanency. • The agency did not make reasonable efforts. Check this box if the judge states the child welfare agency did not make reasonable efforts. This is the equivalent of finding "no reasonable efforts." • Reasonable efforts were not required. Check this



State or Agency Attorney Practice	
	<p>box if the judge states that reasonable efforts were not required because of aggravated circumstances.</p> <p>No: Code “no” if no such finding was made.</p>
Is the reasonable efforts finding detailed?	<p>Yes: Check “yes” if the judge provides some explanation or justification for the verbal finding. Examples of a detailed reasonable efforts or active efforts finding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I find the agency made reasonable efforts to prevent removal, including safety planning and referrals to services, and that these efforts were unsuccessful to maintaining the child safely in the home.” • “I find the agency made reasonable efforts to prevent removal as outlined in the petition and affidavit.” <p>No: Check “no” if it is a mere statement of finding with no explanation or justification (e.g., “I find that reasonable efforts have been made”).</p>
Does the judge order services to support reunification or permanency?	<p>Yes: Check “yes” if the judge orders specific services for the family at the hearing.</p> <p>No: Check “no” if the judge does not specifically order services for the family.</p>
Are orders provided to parents at the conclusion of the hearing?	<p>Yes: Check “yes” if parents receive orders at the conclusion of the hearing.</p> <p>No: Check “no” if parents do not receive orders at the conclusion of the hearing.</p> <p>UD: Check “UD” if it is unclear or if you are unable to determine whether parents received orders at the conclusion of the hearing.</p>
Is the reasonable efforts finding specific?	<p>Yes: Check “yes” if the judge provides an explanation that is case specific as a justification for the reasonable efforts finding. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I find the agency made reasonable efforts to prevent removal, including working to identify family members who could care for and supervise the children in the home in the event that the mother continues to use drugs in the home.” <p>No: Check “no” if no information that is specific to the case is stated.</p>



State or Agency Attorney Practice	
Demographics are retrieved from court case files or child welfare agency records. Complete the demographic information for child, parent 1, and parent 2 using data from another data source. These data cannot be coded during the observed hearing. They will need to be pulled from either court case files or child welfare agency records.	
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender <input type="checkbox"/> None of these
Ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown or unreported
Race	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown or unreported
Child ICWA status	Indicate whether the child is eligible or ineligible for ICWA. Code as unknown if a determination has not been made.
Child age	Enter the child's age at the time of the hearing in years and months.

Coder notes: Use remaining space on the page to record any additional comments about the hearing that you think would be important to know to assess the hearing's quality (or to explain why you coded something the way you did).





Tools to Use Your Data

Implementation guidance for Step 5 focuses on using the collected performance measurement data effectively. One tool is offered to support Step 5 of the implementation process.

- **Considerations for Using Your Data Effectively.** This tool provides a space for sites to reflect on how they will use the data. The tool includes a series of considerations for the site regarding how the data may be useful in current efforts and a space to document responses. This tool can be completed as a multidisciplinary team to best identify ways to use data in a meaningful way.



Considerations for Using Your Data Effectively

Considerations for using the data

What contextual considerations are important in best understanding and using your data?

- Consider the contextual considerations for each JCAMP category. Is contextual information available to you to best understand your findings?

For example, for the high-quality legal representation measures, consider whether a jurisdiction has a multidisciplinary legal representation. Are performance measures different in counties that include this?

How do the data need to be broken down to be most useful in interpreting and using findings?

- Should the data be broken down by site (e.g., jurisdiction, judicial district, county)?
- Should the data be broken down by role (e.g., judge, parent attorney)?
- Should the data be broken down by measurement category (e.g., engagement, due process)?
- Should the data be broken down by race and ethnicity of families or ICWA status?
- Should the data be broken down by stage of the case process (e.g., by specific hearings)?
- What combinations would be most effective in your work?

How will you use the data for continuous quality improvement efforts?

- Can the data be useful in root cause analysis to help identify needs?
- Can the data be useful in setting benchmarks for desired practice?

How can you use the findings to move current systems change efforts forward?

- Can the data serve as baseline data for a project?
- Can the data be used as a needs assessment to identify priorities, training needs, etc.?
- Can the data contribute to program evaluation on a given project to explore effectiveness?

How can the data be useful for your state's CFSR process?

- Can the data help inform the statewide assessment?
- How can court practice measures help you understand statewide performance?

How can the findings from your performance measurement efforts be used to explore and improve equity in your site?

- Can you explore data by race and ethnicity?
- How else can you examine the data to work toward equity in your site?

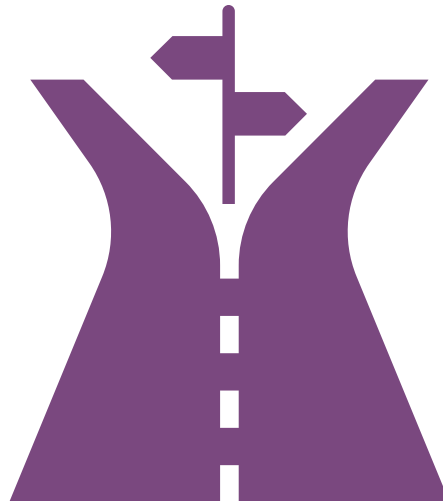




Tools to Sustain Your Performance Measurement Efforts

Step 6 of the Implementation Guide focuses on sustaining performance measurement efforts. The tools in this section will help you think through and plan sustainability. Two tools are offered for Step 6:

- **Sustainability Capacity Assessment.** This tool is designed for a site to reflect on its capacity to continue performance measurement efforts. It includes sustainability considerations for various resources (e.g., personnel).
- **Sustainability Plan.** This tool is designed to help a site build a concrete plan for sustainability.



Sustainability Capacity Assessment

What is your capacity to sustain performance measurement efforts?

Topic	Low	Medium	High
Personnel	Little or no staff time or resources to engage in performance measurement efforts	Some staff time and resources to engage in performance measurement efforts	Sufficient staff time and resources to engage in performance measurement efforts
Interest and buy-in	No interest or buy-in from administration	Some interest and buy-in from administration	High levels of interest and buy-in from administration
Resources	No funding to support hiring assistance for performance measures	Little or some funding to support hiring assistance for performance measurement	Funding available to support performance measurement
Data capacity	No administrative or other readily available data	Some administrative data (but not items of interest) or little other readily available data	Administrative data that include items of interest; readily available data
Organization structure	No structure in place to support this	Some structure in place to support performance measurement	A solid structure in place to support performance measurement

Consider where you fall on the sustainability assessment. The table below provides some ideas on sustainability.

Capacity	Ideas for sustainability
Low	Most if not all measures can be collected in a survey (resource light). Consider an annual survey to collect priority measures.
Medium	Consider if you identified specific measures in your first assessment that are of high interest (either because of low performance or alignment with priorities). Focus intensive data collection efforts on ensuring these measures can be collected regularly (you can define what this means). Surveys can also be put into place to supplement other data collection efforts for performance measurement. Opportunities may exist to build performance measurement data collection into existing program design, implementation, and evaluation efforts.
High	Consider an annual process that allows for rigorous data collection of all performance measures of interest. Annual data review allows for an exploration of trends in performance over time and can be most helpful for continuous quality improvement (CQI). Consider if case management information systems can be modified to produce data on priority measures. Build regular report functions in case management systems to produce quarterly, semiannual, or annual reports of findings.



Sustainability Plan

	Question	Response
Who	Who (team, role, individual) will be responsible for leading the performance measurement efforts (ensuring that they occur as planned)?	
What	Which measures will be collected on an ongoing basis?	
When	How often will your site collect and review performance measurement data?	
How	How will data be collected? Which data collection methods will work best to ensure your goals?	
Why	How will the collected performance measurement findings be shared and used in ongoing systems change efforts?	

Sustainability Action Plan Statement

_____ will be responsible for coordinating and sustaining performance
(who)

measurement efforts. _____ will be collected _____ using
(list of measures) (when or how often)

_____ and _____. The findings from the performance
(data collection methods) (data collection methods)

measurement assessment will be used to _____.
(why)

