

# MODULE 5.6

## COMPARE COURT REPORT SAMPLES



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## Example Section 1: Concurrent Planning

This section should express the plan developed by the family and the department to plan for the child's permanency needs if the parents are unable to reunify. It should clearly convey that the social worker has discussed this issue with the family. It should also convey the concurrent plan to identify alternate permanency that the social worker developed with the family.

### **BAD EXAMPLE** *(3 revisions)*

Reunification is the Department's first and foremost goal for long-term permanency for child. However, if the parents are unable to reunite with the child prior to the Juvenile Court ordering termination of Family Reunification Services, the Department would recommend the setting of a hearing per 366.26 to recommend adoption as the best permanent plan for the child.

On May 9, 2014, the mother and father were advised of the option to participate in adoption planning and to voluntarily relinquish the child for adoption if an adoption agency is willing to accept the relinquishment.

### **BETTER EXAMPLE**

Reunification is the Department's first and foremost goal for long-term permanency for Crystal and Craig; however, if the parents are unable to reunite with the children prior to the Juvenile Court ordering termination of Family Reunification Services, the Department would recommend the setting of a hearing per 366.26 to recommend adoption as the best permanent plan for the children.

On May 9, 2014, Ms. Price and Mr. Price met with the social worker and discussed the alternate permanency plan of adoption for Craig and Crystal. Ms. Price and Mr. Price agreed that they would like the children to remain with the maternal grandmother Ramona Pollan if they are unable to reunify. They agreed to meet again and include Ms. Pollan in further discussions about

adoption and guardianship. Ms. Pollan has agreed to be a long term placement for Craig and Crystal. She states she is willing to consider adoption or guardianship and wants to discuss each option with the parents and the social worker. Mr. Smith's whereabouts is unknown, so he has not participated in the concurrent planning discussion. His parents have stated they wish to continue their relationship with Crystal, but they are unable to provide a long term home for her. Crystal states that she wants to be with her brother in the home of their maternal grandmother.

**- END EXAMPLE 1 -**

## Example Section 2: Assessment/Evaluation

The assessment/evaluation section is the place where the social worker describes the progress made by the family. It should be fair and balanced and reflect the strengths exhibited by the parents as well as the areas where they have not made progress. The section should provide the facts and the social worker's assessment of those facts in a way that frames and supports the recommendation the department is making.

### **BAD EXAMPLE** (7 revisions)

Ms. Price and Mr. Price have both had problems during this review period. The father is in jail because of his DUI. The mother relapsed on methamphetamine and is currently refusing to enter residential treatment. Mr. Price is scheduled to be released from jail on December 31, 2014. Ms. Price continues to be a “functional” drug addict in denial about the seriousness of her problem.

Crystal and Craig are in foster care and have therapy to help them deal with their PTSD and the trauma caused by their parents. The current placement is with the maternal grandmother based on the department's decision. This social worker has ongoing concerns about grandmother, and will continue closely monitoring the placement.

Neither parent is ready to resume custody at the time of this hearing and the department is unsure if they will ever be ready to have custody of Craig and Crystal again.

Continue Family Reunification services for both parents, and authorize overnight visits of up to 30 days for both parents.

### **BETTER EXAMPLE**

Ms. Price and Mr. Price have both faced challenges during this review period. Ms. Price experienced a relapse and is currently engaged in outpatient substance abuse treatment. She is moving from a state of active substance abuse and denial to one of commitment to her recovery. She has expressed a positive attitude about the treatment programs and is beginning to take responsibility for her addictions and the consequences of her actions.

Mr. Price is currently incarcerated at the Ocoa County Detention Facility following his conviction for DUI. He is participating in alcohol treatment and anger management classes during his incarceration. His probation officer, Nola Richards, stated on May 13, 2014 that Mr. Price participates fully in the classes and appears to be making an effort to employ the anger management techniques discussed in the class. He is scheduled to be released from jail on December 31, 2014.

Crystal and Craig are living with their maternal grandmother, Ramona Pollan. Both have adjusted to being in placement. Craig is doing well in school and Crystal is showing significant improvements. Both children have therapy appointments scheduled in the coming months to help them process the family changes they have experienced and prepare them for possible reunification or adoption / guardianship in the future.

It is the department's assessment that neither parent is ready to resume custody of the children at the time of this hearing. Although they are both actively engaged in services and making progress toward their case plan goals, Mr. Price is incarcerated and unavailable to care for the children and Ms. Price is in the early stages of treatment. The department recognizes the progress each parent has made and believes there is a strong likelihood of reunification in the next 6 months if the parents continue their efforts.

The department recommends that Family Reunification services be continued for both parents, and that the court grant the department permission to authorize overnight visits of up to 30 days for both parents.

**- END EXAMPLE 2 -**

## Example Section 3: Services Provided

This section should include the reasonable efforts or reasonable services provided by the department to help the family successfully complete their case plan and achieve their case plan goal. It should explain what was provided and how the services provided support the case plan goals.

### **BAD EXAMPLE** (3 revisions)

1. Monitored child's safety and well-being
2. Monitored parents' compliance with their case plans
3. Met with parents and child regularly
4. Maintained contact with service providers, agencies and collateral parties
5. Provided mother and father with referrals to outpatient substance abuse treatment programs.
6. Provided the mother with bus tickets
7. Arranged and provided transportation and supervision for visitation
8. Referred children for therapy
9. Attended Multi-Disciplinary Case Conferences
10. Referred child to holiday gift program

### **BETTER EXAMPLE**

The social worker met with the family in person every month and worked with them to ensure they had access to the services identified (substance abuse treatment, visitation, mental health services) in the case plan and were making progress on their case plan goals (maintain sobriety, visit regularly). The social worker completed the following:

1. Monitored the children's safety and well-being
2. Monitored the parents' progress toward meeting the case plan goals
3. Met with parents and children in person every month
4. Maintained monthly contact with service providers, agencies and collateral parties
5. Provided mother and father with referrals to outpatient and inpatient substance abuse treatment programs
6. Provided the mother with bus tickets
7. Arranged and provided transportation and supervision for visitation
8. Referred children for mental health services
9. Arranged, facilitated and attended Multi-Disciplinary Case Conferences
10. Referred children to holiday gift program

**- END EXAMPLE 3 -**



## Example Section 4: Summary recommendation (REASON FOR HEARING)

This section should provide the department's recommendation to the court about the outcome for the hearing. It is a brief section, so minimal detail is needed, but it should be clear and specific. In some counties, additional information is included here about whether or not children will be attending the hearing.

### **BAD EXAMPLE** *(1 revision)*

Children & Family Services respectfully recommends that Crystal and Craig be returned to their mother.

### **BETTER EXAMPLE**

Children & Family Services respectfully recommends that Crystal and Craig be returned to their mother and Mr. Price with a Family Maintenance plan. The Department continues to recommend no services for Mr. Smith. Crystal is planning to attend the hearing.

**- END EXAMPLE 4 -**