



Guide to writing Court Reports

INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION

CHILD: Betty Smith (d.o.b. 1/1/2010)

CASE NO: This is the FN, FG, or FC number. Please make sure it is accurate!

DATE OF HEARING: Write out the month.

- October 4, 2019 NOT 10/4/2019

TYPE OF HEARING: If you do not know, leave blank.

CASA REPORT DATE: The date of the last information you entered.

CASA VOLUNTEER: Your name!

DATE OF CASA APPOINTMENT: This stays the same

PLACEMENTS: Double check this and make sure it is correct and there have been no changes since the last report.

BACKGROUND

Comes from the FN Complaint.

Should be BRIEF, 2-3 paragraphs

Include:

- Placement date(s)
- Reason for placement
 - It is okay to condense the previous referrals.
 - Ex: Since 2008, there have been 12 referrals regarding the Smith family and concerns of: neglect, substance abuse, homelessness, and domestic violence.
- Current Placement
 - Ex: “On October 2, 2019, Betty was placed in an unrelated resource home with Ms. D., which is where she remains.
- Changes in Placement:
 - Ex: On October 14, 2019, Betty was moved to the home of her maternal grandmother, Ms. P., which is where she remains.

Use the full name of the biological parents first, followed by Mr. Last Name and Ms. Last Name. Do not refer to them as “mom” and “dad.”

CONTACTS CHART

CONTACTS	In-person	Telephone	Written
Betty Smith, CASA Child, Age X	8/9/23, 9/11/23, 10/6/23		
Mr. and Ms. D., Resource Parents	8/9/23, 10/6/23	8/2/23, 8/15/23, 9/2/23, 9/10/23, 9/24/23, 10/2/23	8/20/23, 9/19/23, 10/10/23
Ms. Tara Moore, DCP&P Caseworker		8/3/23, 8/29/23, 9/7/23, 9/28/23, 10/2/23, 10/14/23	8/4/23, 9/7/23, 10/2/23, 10/4/23
Ms. Karen McGee, Betty's Teacher, School 22; Mr. Ben Thompson, Betty's School Counselor	9/11/23	9/6/23, 9/11/23	9/7/23, 10/3/23
Ms. Nila Smith, Biological Mother		8/31/23, 9/16/23, 10/10/23	
Ms. Thomas, Visitation Supervisor, O'Neill Center		8/31/23, 9/16/23, 10/10/23, 10/14/23	9/12/23, 10/12/23
Ms. Anne Taylor, Ms. Smith's Case Manager, Straight and Narrow		8/31/23, 9/16/23, 10/10/23	8/31/23, 9/16/23, 10/10/23
Ms. Lee, Betty's Therapist.		8/28/23, 9/16/23	8/29/23, 10/6/23

- Please make sure to obtain everyone's title and last name.
- If you are at a large meeting, and you notice that someone has not contributed, it is not essential you include them in the chart. To conserve space, you can group people by organization.
 - Ex: School 10 Personnel: Mr. Tom Bunn, School Principal; Mr. Ben Thompson, School Counselor; Ms. Karen McGee, Third Grade Teacher
- Be consistent with dates and titles. Use either Ms. or Mrs. throughout.
- Even if you are visiting the child in school every other month, be sure to reach out to the RP at least monthly and find out if they have any concerns.
- You cannot exclude the Division. If you are writing the report and notice you have not contacted the Division recently, stop what you are doing and contact them right away.

CONTACTING THE DIVISION

- Monthly attempts
- Call first, email second. CC the supervisor if you have trouble reaching the caseworker.
- Keep in mind the info you need for the court report:
 - Number of visits missed
 - Status of court ordered services for children and parents (early intervention, evaluations, therapies)
 - Medical appointments
 - Contact information for service providers
- Do not send emails with numbered questions
- Try to provide them with some information, too!

CURRENT STATUS

- It is arranged by person first. Each person listed in the contacts chart should have their own subsection in “Current Status”.
- The child or children come first.
- Everyone else comes in the same order as in the chart.
- In each subsection, maintain chronological order.
- Please specify dates and do not be vague.
 - YES: “On October 3, 2019, Ms. Mendoza reported that the children had missed all of their recent visits with Ms. Smith.”
 - NO: Ms. Mendoza said that mom missed all of her visits.
- Always use professional titles, not first names or “mom” or “RP.”
- Be fact based. Do not share your opinion.
- You can include the opinions of the service providers.
 - Ex.: “On October 7, 2019, Ms. Lee shared that she believes that the visits between Betty and Ms. Smith are “harmful.” She informed this CASA that she is concerned that Ms. Smith is using drugs again.
 - Do not say, “It is this CASA’s opinion that the visits between Ms. Smith and Betty are harmful.”
- Do seek out professional opinions that can support your recommendations.

EDUCATIONAL STATUS

This information can be obtained from:

- The school: teacher, case manager, social worker, guidance counselor
- The Division caseworker
- The resource parent
- The IEP, if it is in the file.

Does this child have an educational plan?

- Type (504, IEP, EIP, etc): [If none put N/A] What is his/her classification?
- Is the plan fully implemented?
- Current educational performance or change in performance: This CASA was told by the Division caseworker that Tyus has been evaluated and is ineligible for early intervention services.

MEDICAL STATUS

You should obtain this information from:

- The Division (the caseworker and/or the file)
- The resource parent
- The medical providers
- The Division nurse

Has the child received a CHEC/CME Exam? Yes.

Have the recommendations made been followed? Yes.

If no, what follow-up is required? **Please find out.**

Medications authorized/prescribed? **Ask the RP**

Current Medical/Mental Health Concerns? **Must ask this.**

VISITATION STATUS

- Can be found on the last court order.
- You can find out which visits were missed by asking:
 - The Division
 - The resource parent
 - The visitation provider (FIS, O'Neill, Reconnections, etc.)

Is there a visitation plan? Yes.

What is the court ordered amount/times of visitation? Twice per week with Ms. Smith. One unsupervised, one supervised.

How many visits have been missed since last hearing? **Please ask.**

By who?

Reason?

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations should be numbered.
- They have to begin with "That"
- They must be supported by the Current Status section.
- The first recommendation is about placement/permanency.

MORE TIPS

- If information is removed from your Court Report and you don't know why, ask your supervisor.
- Use active voice and do not use first person! "This CASA visited John at school." NOT "This CASA entered the school, where the child greeted me."
- Do not use contractions in the report.
- Spell dates out in the body of the report.
- Refer to adults by Mr. or Ms.
- Do not use resource parents' full names.