

The Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: The described collection of information is voluntary and will be used to help us understand JCAMP implementation. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 60 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number and expiration date for the described collection are OMB #: xxxx-xxxx, Exp: xx/xx/20xx. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Dr. Alicia Summers; alicia.d.summers@gmail.com and Dr. Sophia Gatwoski; sgatowski@ymail.com.

Stakeholder Focus Group Guide

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.

[optional] Your responses will be kept private – 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. [optional]

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]
 - o Do you debrief with them after court? [1.8 and 3.5c]
 - o Do you provide them copies with the orders and discuss the implications with them? [2.8]

- o How often are you able to meet with your client before the court day? [3.5c]
- o Do you meet with other professionals on the case? What does that look like? [3.5c]
- o 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]
 - o Do you prepare youth for court? If so, how? [1.9 and 3.6c]
 - o 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]
 - o Do you provide them copies with the orders and discuss the implications with them? [2.8]
 - o How often are you able to meet with your client before the court day? [3.6c]
 - o Do you meet with other professionals on the case? What does that look like? [3.6c]
 - o How often do you advocate in court for something for your client? [3.6b]
 - o 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]