

Dispositional Review Hearing Checklist for Juvenile Court Judges/Masters

Dispositional Review Hearing

- ☐ Record or keep full minutes of each hearing.
- ☐ Remove restraints prior to the commencement of the hearing unless the Court determines on the record, after providing the juvenile an opportunity to be heard, that they are necessary to prevent:
 - ☐ Physical harm to the juvenile or another person;
 - 1. Disruptive Courtroom behavior, evidenced by a history of behavior that created potentially harmful situations or presented substantial risk of physical harm; or
 - 2. The juvenile, evidenced by an escape history or other relevant factors, from fleeing the Courtroom.
- ☐ Introduce yourself to everyone in attendance, and ensure that all who are present introduce themselves and the purpose for their attendance at the dispositional review hearing.
- ☐ Ensure that parent(s) or guardian(s) of the juvenile are present. If not, determine the reason for absence and make necessary arrangements for future participation.
- ☐ Ensure the victim has a right to be present at the dispositional review hearing; utilize discretion to maintain confidentiality of mental health, medical, or juvenile institutional documents or juvenile probation reports.
- ☐ Require juvenile probation officers to provide written reports to the Court regarding goals, progress, expectations, and, in cases where a juvenile is in out-of-home placement, plans for returning home.
- ☐ Use a basic set of questions for the juvenile probation officer, service provider staff, the juvenile and the juvenile's parent/guardian in order to assess progress on achieving established goals, the quality of services and the aftercare plan.
- ☐ Ensure that juveniles have the opportunity to respond to all information provided at the hearing.

Service Providers

- ☐ Require that service providers provide comprehensive, written reports to the Court that include summaries regarding the specific interventions being used to address the identified reasons for placement, any medications, discipline, home passes, and treatment remaining.

- ☐ Inquire of service providers about the following (when applicable):
 - education/vocational training;
 - health issues/medication utilization;
 - opportunities for restitution;
 - positive social activities;
 - frequency and type of parental involvement;
 - the type/frequency of counseling and other specific interventions;
 - how interventions target the specific criminogenic needs that have been identified by the Youth Level of Service (YLS) risk/needs assessment instrument;
 - Dispositional Review Hearing Checklist for Juvenile Court Judges/Masters;
 - how the strengths of juveniles and families have been built upon;
 - home pass activities to date and planned;
 - aftercare/transition plans.
- ☐ Ensure that service providers are held accountable for case planning and service delivery, and are made subject to cross-examination.

Juvenile Probation Officers

- ☐ When reviewing probation supervision, ask the juvenile probation officer:
 - to describe progress made in achieving expectations set forth in the case plan;
 - how interventions target the specific criminogenic needs that have been identified by the Youth Level of Service (YLS) risk/needs assessment instrument;
 - how the strengths of juveniles and families are built upon;
 - the extent to which graduated responses (incentives/sanctions) have been utilized;
 - whether there is adequate family structure/support for the child;
 - who is helpful/harmful in the child's life;
 - in cases where the youth is in placement, to describe in detail the frequency and types of contacts with the youth and facility.
- ☐ Ensure that juvenile probation officers are held accountable for case planning and service delivery, and are made subject to cross-examination.

Parent(s)/Guardian

- ☐ Ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) participate fully through input based on inquiry about their engagement, understanding, opinion and support of the juvenile's juvenile justice system involvement.
- ☐ If the juvenile is in placement, inquire about frequency and details of family visitation, telephone contact and other engagement practices with their child and the facility.
- ☐ Inquire as to any specific concerns regarding the placement.

Juvenile

- ☐ Ensure that the juvenile participates in the review hearing. Engage them in discussion about their perception of their involvement. Ask if he/she agrees with the testimony provided by others, and inquire as to differences of opinion.
- ☐ Ensure that the juvenile is asked about any concerns and, where appropriate, inquire as to the juvenile's feelings of safety in their current setting.

Shared Case Responsibility

- ☐ In cases of Shared Case Responsibility, review collaborative case management activities through:
 - assurance that the child welfare caseworker is present for the review hearing;
 - inquiry as to which agency provides lead oversight;
 - clarification of what roles are provided by both juvenile probation and child welfare; and
 - identification of the specific services provided by the child welfare agency and their role in discharge planning

Education

- ☐ Ensure that the juvenile probation officer and service provider provide information necessary for the Court to evaluate the appropriateness of the child's education.
- ☐ When appropriate, appoint an educational decision-maker pursuant to Pa. R.J.C.P. 147.

Concluding the Dispositional Review Hearing

- ☐ Provide the victim, juvenile and parents with the opportunity to ask questions.
- ☐ Summarize the proceeding for all in attendance, confirm what just occurred, explain any next steps and relevant timelines, and ensure that the juvenile understands any expectations prior to the next hearing.
- ☐ Review appeal rights with the juvenile.
- ☐ Schedule the next dispositional review hearing in a timeframe deemed appropriate but in no case to exceed six months.