



Dependency & Covid 19

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What is happening at court? How are hearings being held?

- ▶ Court is physically closed until May 12th per Judge Brazile's April 14th order
- ▶ Hearings conducted via WebEx
 - ▶ Clients can appear through videoconference or the telephone
- ▶ Only emergency hearings being held (until May 12th)
- ▶ Contact attorney for more information/next court date
- ▶ Attorneys can try and get uncontested orders via stipulation

What is an Emergency Hearing?

- ▶ Detention/arraignments

- ▶ Timelines delayed – 7 days for a detention hearing instead of 3.

- ▶ Restraining Order Hearings

- ▶ Visitation walk ons?

- ▶ Some others (emergency medical requests, medication authorization, warrants)

- ▶ All other matters (trials & status review hearings) are being scheduled for after June 22 (per Judge Brazile's order of April 14)

Can parents have in person visitation?

- ▶ Maybe
- ▶ Timeline:
 - ▶ Visitation as ordered (prior to March 20th)
 - ▶ Judge Greenberg suspended all in person visitation (March 20th)
 - ▶ Judge Greenberg reinstated in person visits (April 7th) / CA state issued new Rules of Court (April 6th) reinstating in person visitation.
 - ▶ Any restriction of visitation must be made by DCFS using a case by case assessment and take into account in the child's best interest
 - ▶ Any change require notice to attorneys
 - ▶ Can bring the visitation issue before a judge within 14 days of the change to contest it

Visitation, cont.

- ▶ What does this mean?
 - ▶ It depends -- lots of factors: social worker, placement, monitor, location, court-ordered visitation restrictions (in DCFS office, public setting, in the caregiver's home, etc.)
- ▶ Contact attorney w/problems, questions, especially if in person visitation has stopped

What about court-ordered Programs?

- ▶ Drug testing still open
- ▶ In person classes are preferable
- ▶ If in person classes stopped, get documentation in writing
- ▶ Online is better than nothing
- ▶ If possible, make sure program is DCFS-approved (Ask the social worker and get it in writing)
- ▶ This will be an issue at hearings when court is back in session

What should I do?

- ▶ Document everything in writing
- ▶ Continue to participate as much as possible in visitation and court-ordered case plan
- ▶ Keep in touch with your dependency attorney and DCFS social worker
- ▶ Continue to provide social worker and attorney with program updates (progress letter, etc.)

LADL Attorneys

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Questions?

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