

Child Welfare Services Petition for Intra-agency Exchange of Information

Santa Barbara County

Child Welfare Services hereby petitions this court for authorization to communicate verbally with some or all of the branches of the Department of Social Services marked below for the sole purpose of developing a coordinated case plan and service delivery system and to reduce the incidence of duplicated and/or conflicting services among the various branches of the Department of Social Services.

- CalWorks (California Work Opportunity & Responsibility to Kids Program) is California's version of the federal TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) program which provides temporary financial assistance such as cash aid, food stamps and case management services to eligible families. Most eligible adults are required to participate in work activities such as work experience, job club, vocational training and assessment. Support services including transportation, childcare, mental health and substance abuse treatment are available as part of the CalWorks case plan.
- General Relief is a county funded financial assistance program for adults who do not qualify for any other program. It is a program of last resort and the assistance payments are considered loans. Clients who are not disabled must participate in a work program to pay back the assistance. There are strict property and income eligibility guidelines.
- MediCal is California's medical assistance program.
- Food Stamps is a federally funded program that helps low-income people buy the food they need for good health. For most households, Food Stamps are only part of their food budget; they must spend some of their own cash along with their Food Stamps in order to buy enough food for a month.
- Adult Protective Services provides response to reports of elder and dependent adult abuse occurring outside of licensed residential facilities. APS investigates, assesses and prepares a case plan and, if appropriate, coordinates services to meet identified needs. When necessary, criminal activities are cross-reported to law enforcement agencies. APS services are strictly voluntary.

FINDINGS

1. Notice of this hearing has been given as required by law.
2. The contemplated exchange of information described in the Petition is not detrimental to the safety, protection or physical well-being of the children.

ORDERS

The court, having read and considered the Petition for Intra-agency Exchange of Information, and for good cause shown, makes the following orders:

1. In order to prevent conflicting case plans and maximize access to service resources, the Child Welfare Services social worker is authorized to communicate verbally and exchange the following information with the assigned worker of the specific agency branches identified in this Petition including, but not limited to:

(a) identified areas of concern and strengths within the family;

(b) procedural status of the juvenile case; and

(c) compliance with, and progress in meeting, the requirements of the agencies named and the goals of the Child Welfare Services case plan. This information may include attendance, participation in, efficacy and appropriateness of agency-required or court-ordered programs as well as information necessary to

respond to changed circumstances which might necessitate a case plan modification.

2. The Child Welfare Services worker shall verbally inform the assigned worker(s) of the agency branches identified in this Petition of the confidential nature of and the legal protections accorded to the information provided to them by CWS.

3. In each case, the CWS worker shall document any and all intra-agency conversation(s) (including that regarding the confidential nature of CWS information) in the Delivered Service Log contact notes kept by CWS in each dependency matter.

4. CWS shall not exchange written information (including, but not limited to, case plans, court reports or Child Welfare Services abuse and neglect referral information) with or allow direct inspection of its records or files by employees of the departments listed in this Petition without further order of the juvenile court on noticed hearing to all affected parties.

5. Where appropriate in light of the age of the subject child(ren), the Child Welfare Services case worker shall inform the child(ren) that the case worker may communicate verbally with the branches of the Department of Social Services set forth in this Petition for the purposes set forth herein. In all cases, the attorney for the child(ren) shall, and by way of this Petition appended to the CWS Report, does have notice of the proposed information exchange.

6. This order authorizing the contemplated exchange of information shall remain in effect until the *Welfare & Institutions Code* section 300 petition is dismissed and dependency is terminated or until further order of the juvenile court upon a noticed hearing to all affected parties.

Date: _____

Judge of the Superior Court