



FAMILY COURT CALENDAR

January 2012 – December 2012

Superior Court of the District of Columbia
Family Court

Presiding Judge of the Family Court
The Honorable Zoe Bush

Deputy Presiding Judge of the Family Court
The Honorable Hiram Puig-Lugo

Table of Contents

Important Names and Phone Numbers.....	Page 4
About the Family Court Calendar.....	5
Calendars.....	6, 12, 14, 18, 22, 24, 26, 30, 32, 34, 38, 40, 42
My Children and Me.....	8
The Court Process (Chart).....	9
More about the Court Process (Court Hearings).....	10
Who Will Be Involved in Your Case.....	11
Child Abuse and Neglect (The Law).....	16
Court Hearings.....	17
Your Relationship with Your Lawyer.....	20
The Guardian <i>ad litem</i>	21
Is Your Child Ready for School?.....	28
General Help and Information	29
Resources	36
What is Domestic Violence?.....	37
Deadlines.....	44
Words to Know	45

This Calendar Belongs to:

Name _____

Address _____

IMPORTANT NAMES
AND
PHONE NUMBERS

My Lawyer's Name _____

My Lawyer's Phone Number _____

Guardian *ad litem*'s Name _____

Guardian *ad litem*'s Phone Number _____

Social Worker's Name _____

Social Worker's Phone Number _____

Judge's Name _____

Courtroom Number _____

Daycare _____ Phone No. _____

Children's School _____ Phone No. _____

Doctor _____ Phone No. _____

Police (Non-Emergency) _____

Courthouse Address:
D.C. Superior Court, 500 Indiana Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C., 20001
(202) 879-1010 – Court Information
www.dccourts.gov



About the Family Court Calendar

This calendar was developed to help you understand the court process while offering you a tool to help you keep track of court hearings, appointments with your social worker and attorney, medical & mental health appointments for you and your children, and other important dates.

We hope that this calendar will be a useful tool to help you complete all of the tasks required by the court over the next year. We also hope it will help you as you complete all of the tasks necessary to keep your children safe so that you can be successful in meeting your goals.

We wish you every success.



January 2012

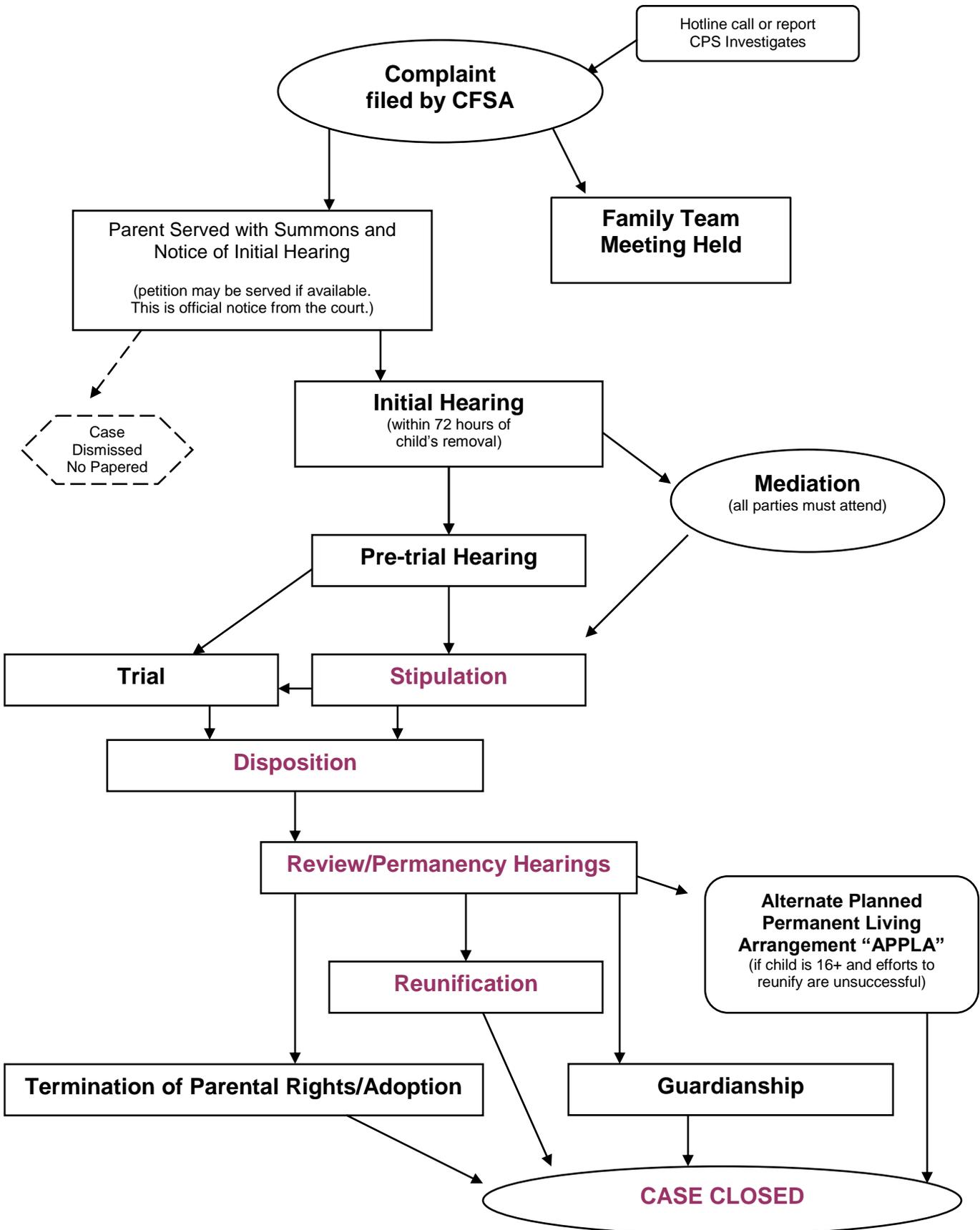
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 NEW YEAR'S DAY	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

My Children and Me

Use this space for pictures of you with your children.



The Court Process



More about the Court Process

INITIAL HEARING

This is the first hearing in your case. You will get a copy of the government's petition saying why it thinks your child is neglected or abused. The judge will decide where your child will live until the court can decide if your child is neglected or abused. You may be able to reach an agreement about where your child will live, but the judge will make the final decision.

MEDIATION

You and the other parties and attorneys meet with a mediator to talk about the case in a setting that is less formal than the courtroom. Everyone tries to arrive at an agreement. Discussions during mediation are confidential and cannot be repeated to the judge so parties can speak freely. If you agree that your child was neglected or abused, you can appear before a judge to sign a stipulation admitting neglect or abuse.

PRE-TRIAL HEARING

If you don't sign a paper, called a stipulation, admitting that your child was neglected or abused the court will hold a trial. The pre-trial hearing comes before the trial. The purpose of the pre-trial is to find out if everyone is ready for the trial.

TRIAL

The purpose of the trial is to decide whether your child was neglected or abused. If the judge decides that your child was not neglected or abused, the case will be dropped (dismissed). Your child will return to your home without any court supervision. If the judge decides your child was neglected or abused, the judge has the right to decide where and with whom your child should live.

DISPOSITION

If the judge finds that your child was neglected or abused he or she will hold a disposition hearing. The judge will decide where your child will be placed and the plan for returning your child to your care.

REVIEW / PERMANENCY

After disposition, the court will schedule another hearing called a "Review" or "Permanency Hearing." Permanency hearings will then take place about every six months or possibly more often. The goal for most cases is to reunite the family if possible. If reunification is not possible, the judge will look at other plans. If you want to regain custody of your child, you must comply with the case plan and all court orders.

Who Will Be Involved in Your Case?

Your Lawyer: You will get a lawyer on the first day your case is in court. To continue receiving free legal services after the initial hearing, you must have a financial eligibility interview in the Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect Office (CCAN) to find out if you qualify for a free lawyer. The CCAN Office is in Room 4415 on the fourth floor of the courthouse. The hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Government Lawyer: The Assistant Attorney General (AAG) is the lawyer for the District of Columbia government. The AAG presents evidence in support of the claim that your child is abused or neglected. You should not speak with the AAG without your attorney present.

Your Child's Guardian Ad Litem: The court appoints a lawyer called a guardian *ad litem* for your child. Your child's guardian *ad litem* will talk to and visit your child, explain to your child what is happening in the case, and tell the judge what your child wants. He or she tells the judge what he or she believes would be best for your child. Talk to your lawyer about what you can discuss with the guardian *ad litem*.

The Social Worker: Part of the social worker's job is to provide services to you and your child and to help you and your family. The social worker also tells the court what he or she thinks should happen in your case and where your child should live. Whatever you tell the social worker can be passed on to the judge. While your case is in Family Court, you will most likely have more than one social worker.

The Judge: Your case will be assigned to a Family Court judge before the first hearing. This judge will usually handle your case until it is completed. The judge makes decisions in your case based on the law and the evidence he or she hears. Although the judge listens to everyone's input, the judge makes the final decision.



February 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 PRESIDENTS' DAY	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			



March 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Child Abuse & Neglect

There are many reasons why the government decides it is necessary to remove children from the home. Preventing child abuse and neglect is important to all of us. Knowing what is child abuse and neglect helps parents make sure that their children are safe and protected.

You may consult your attorney for more information about the law. The most common reasons for a child to be considered neglected under D.C. Code Section 16-2301 are:

- ✓ (9)(A)(i): A child who has been abandoned or abused by his or her parent, guardian or custodian, or whose parent, guardian or custodian has failed to make reasonable efforts to prevent the infliction of abuse upon the child. [A reasonable effort to protect the child may be filing a petition for a civil protection order due to violence by another member of the family].
- ✓ (9)(A)(ii): A child who is without parental care or control, subsistence, education as required by law, or other care or control necessary for his or her physical, mental, or emotional health, and the deprivation is not due to lack of financial means of his parent, guardian, or custodian.
- ✓ (9)(A) (iii): A child whose parent, guardian, or custodian is unable to discharge his or her responsibilities to and for the child because of incarceration, hospitalization, or other physical or mental incapacity (this section includes substance abuse).
- ✓ (9)(A)(iv): A child whose parent, guardian, or custodian refuses or is unable to assume the responsibility for the child's care, control, or subsistence and the person or institution which is providing for the child states an intention to discontinue such care.
- ✓ (9)(A)(v): A child who is in imminent danger of being abused and another child living in the same household or under the care of the same parent, guardian, or custodian has been abused.

Court Hearings

Have you marked your court dates and times on your calendar?

Court Room Basics

- ✓ **ARRIVE ON TIME.** You should plan to arrive at the courthouse at least 30 minutes before your scheduled hearing in order to clear security screening. If you are late or fail to attend, the judge may decide your case in your absence.
- ✓ **DRESS APPROPRIATELY.** When preparing for your hearing, please remember to dress appropriately. Do not wear halter tops, torn jeans, short skirts, T-shirts with printing and/or logos, or hats to your hearing.
- ✓ **LOCATION OF COURTROOM.** If you do not know where your hearing is being held, you can get the information from the Central Intake Center located near the entry door on the JM level.
- ✓ **TURN OFF ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES.** When entering the courtroom remove all hats and turn off cell phones and pagers.
- ✓ **DO NOT BRING FOOD OR BEVERAGES INTO THE COURTROOM.**
- ✓ **USE APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE.** Address all parties involved as Ms. or Mr. and the judge as “judge” or “Your Honor”. Answer yes or no questions out loud, instead of nodding or shaking your head.
- ✓ **DO NOT INTERRUPT OTHERS.** You should not interrupt while they are speaking.
- ✓ **CHILDREN IN COURT.** If you have children not involved in the neglect case, please arrange for someone to care for them during the hearing. The court has a free day care center where children from the ages of 2 to 12 can be watched. The center, open from 8:30am to 5:00pm, is located in Room C-185.
- ✓ **WAIT FOR A COPY OF THE COURT ORDER.** After each party has presented his or her side, the judge will make a decision and issue an order. The order will contain important information about your case, including the services that CFSA must provide and the tasks that you must complete.



April 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 EMANCIPATION DAY	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR LAWYER

Your relationship with your lawyer is very important. You should make every effort to make the relationship with your attorney work to your advantage.

1. **BE HONEST WITH YOUR LAWYER.** Keep your lawyer fully informed of your case and your progress. Remember that the conversations you have with your lawyer are **confidential**.
2. **SHOW ALL DOCUMENTS TO YOUR LAWYER.** Share any documents that are relevant to your case (evaluations, case plans, visitation schedule) with your lawyer.
3. **REVIEW COURT DOCUMENTS WITH YOUR LAWYER.** Take time to discuss and review the complaint filed in your case and any orders with your lawyer.
4. **MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH YOUR LAWYER.** Make sure that your lawyer has your current contact information. Return calls from your lawyer as soon as possible.
5. **ASK YOUR LAWYER TO EXPLAIN.** If you have any questions about your case ask your lawyer to explain.
6. **DISCUSS YOUR CASE WITH YOUR LAWYER.** Talk to your lawyer about how you would like your case to be resolved.
7. **ALWAYS TALK TO YOUR LAWYER.** Before signing any documents, make sure you have discussed the papers with your lawyer.
8. **IF YOU NEED HELP.** Call the CCAN Office, (202) 879-1406, if you need your lawyer's name or telephone number. You can also call this office if you have a complaint about your lawyer.

My Lawyer: _____

Phone Number: _____



The Guardian ad litem

The Court appoints a lawyer called a guardian *ad litem* (GAL) to represent the best interests of your child. That lawyer will talk to and visit each child (in the foster home, school or in your home). The GAL will explain to each child what is happening in the case. The GAL will answer each child's questions about the case. The GAL's job is to tell the judge what each child wants. The GAL also tells the judge what he or she believes would be best for each child.

When children are placed with you, the judge expects you to cooperate with the GAL and assist in arranging visits between the GAL and your children in your home, at school or other places in the community.

Talk to your lawyer about what you can discuss with the guardian *ad litem*.

The GAL is: _____

The GAL's phone number is: _____

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May 2012

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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28 MEMORIAL DAY	29	30	31		



June 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30



July 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Is Your Child Ready for School?

Getting your child ready for school takes time and attention. Start early so that you can be sure all tasks have been completed before the first day of school. You must complete the following for your child before the start of school:

- Doctor's appointments for annual examinations including a screening for lead.
- Dental appointment and follow-up on any recommended treatment.
- Updated immunizations for all children.
- Provide Authorization for Administration of Medication.
- Provide Authorization for Medical Procedures.

When you register your child for school you will need:

- Proof of child's birth date (birth certificate or passport).
- Proof of residency documents (utility bills, driver's license, lease, documentation of public benefits).
- Your child's immunization records that include dates of required vaccines completed by a health care provider *The District of Columbia Department of Health "DC Child Health Certificate Assessment Form" and "Oral Health Assessment Form"* are available at your local school. For additional information about these forms, contact (202) 671-5000.

Questions regarding the Department of Health School Health Program and nursing services, call:

Department of Health
Maternal and Family Health Administration
899 North Capitol Street, NE, 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 442-5925

Questions regarding District of Columbia immunization laws, policies and requirements, call:

Jacquelyn Campbell, RN, MSN, CPNP
Nurse Specialist, DC Department of Health Immunization Program
(202) 576-9324

Have you marked the dates and times of your children's medical, dental and other appointments and the date that they will begin school on your calendar?

Free Immunizations

DOH Immunization Program
6323 Georgia Avenue, NW, Suite 305
Washington, DC 20011
Monday & Tuesdays, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

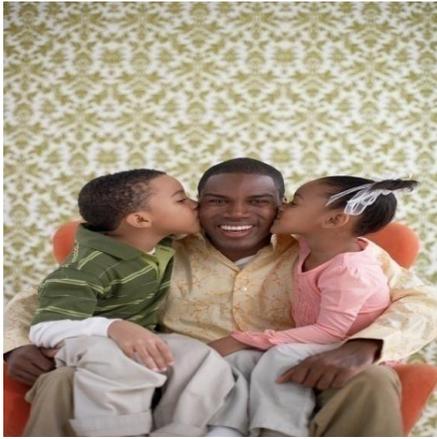
General Help and Information

Addiction Prevention & Recovery Administration (APRA, for substance abuse help).....	202-727-8857
Answers Please! (Information).....	202-463-6211
Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) (For social worker information).....	202-442-6020, 6161
Child Protection Hotline..... (To report suspected abuse and neglect)	202- 671-7233 (SAFE)
D.C. Housing Authority..... (For subsidized housing)	202-535-1706
D.C. Public Schools..... (For questions about education)	202-442-5635
Family Court Central Intake Center..... (For Family Court information)	202-879-1212
Income Maintenance Administration..... (For TANF, Food Stamps, Medicaid)	202-724-5506
Mayor's Services Liaison Office..... (For referrals and information)	202-879-1904



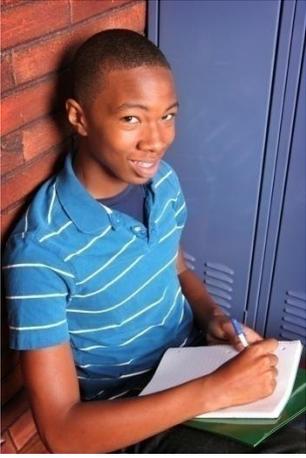
August 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



September 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 LABOR DAY	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						



October 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 COLUMBUS DAY	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Other Resources

Emergency Numbers

DC Emergency Management Agency	202-727-6161
Poison Control (DC/MD/VA)	1-800-222-1222
Gas Leaks (DC/MD/VA)	703-750-1400
Power Emergencies (DC/MD)	202-872-3432
Water Emergencies (DC)	202-612-3400

Consumer Help

Better Business Bureau	202-393-8000
Bread for the City	202-265-2400

Education/Social Opportunities

Community Preservation and Development Corp. (CPRC)	202-832-0500
Georgetown University Law Center DC Family Literacy Program	202-662-9615

Possible Financial Assistance

Shiloh Baptist Church	202-232-4288
Antioch Baptist Church	202-399-8118
Bread for the City	202-265-2400

Legal Help

Washington College of Law	202-274-4140
Bar Association of DC	202-296-7845
Bread for the City	202-265-2400
DC Law Students in Court	202-638-4798
UDC School of Law Legal Clinic	202-274-7312
Neighborhood Legal Services	202-269-5100
Legal Aid Society	202-628-1161

What is Domestic Violence?

- ✓ **Physical Abuse:** Hitting, Slapping, Pushing, Punching, Kicking, Choking, or Beating.
- ✓ **Verbal Abuse:** Degrading Remarks, Insults, Constant Criticism, Name-Calling, Yelling, Mocking, Swearing, and Threatening.
- ✓ **Sexual Abuse:** Forcing sex on an unwilling partner – by physical or verbal threats, demanding sexual acts that victim does not want to perform, degrading treatment.
- ✓ **Harassment:** Following, embarrassing victim in public, refusing to leave when asked.
- ✓ **Economic:** Not paying bills, refusing to give victim money, taking victim's money (pay check/benefits), or not letting victim work.
- ✓ **Isolation:** Making it hard for victim to have friends, not letting victim visit family, monitoring where victim goes and placing limits on time victim may be out of the house, and monitoring phone calls.

Developing a Safety Plan

If your partner has been violent in the past, chances are very good it will happen again even if your partner promised it wouldn't. For you and your children's safety, it's not safe to remain in a violent relationship. Safe shelter is available to all victims of violence 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Remember, you do not have control over your partner's violence, but you do have control over how you prepare for it and respond to it. Protect yourself and your children through the following:

- Know how to leave your home, the location of the police department, the address and phone number of where you will go if violence occurs.
- Keep all assistance numbers in one location for easy access in an emergency situation and have your purse, car keys, phone numbers, important documents and some cash in a place where you can reach them easily. Keep an extra set of these items with a trusted friend or relative.
- Teach your children how to contact 911 for any unsafe situation, so that if you need to tell them to do so they will know how.
- Do not attempt to stop a violent person from leaving. Attempting to stop the batterer from leaving can be dangerous.
- Press charges for physical violence or threats of violence and follow through with a court order to ensure safety.
- Temporary protection orders and civil protection orders are available through the domestic violence court.
- If you have a protection order, keep a copy with you and let your employer know of any such order.



November 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6 ELECTION DAY	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22 THANKSGIVING	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	



December 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26	27	28	29
30	31					



January 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 NEW YEAR'S DAY	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Deadlines

The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) is a law that sets deadlines for parents who want to reunify with their children. The purpose of these deadlines is to make sure that children do not stay in foster care for long periods of time. Children should grow up in permanent and stable families. If you do not meet the court's requirements for reunification by the deadlines, the court may decide you cannot reunify with your child. The judge may decide that your child should be adopted or in the legal custody of someone else. The government or the child's guardian *ad litem* may file a motion to terminate your parental rights if your child is in foster care beyond the deadlines.

Termination of Parental Rights

If the court finds that your child is abused or neglected, a motion to terminate your parental rights may be filed immediately by the government lawyer or the guardian *ad litem*. The law requires that a motion to **terminate your parental rights must be filed** if your child is in foster care for **15 months** of the most recent 22 months, unless an exception applies. If the court grants this motion, you will lose all rights to your child.

Your Child's Permanent Placement

The court must set a **permanency goal** for your child **within 14 months of removal from you**. If you are not making progress toward reunification, the goal is likely to be permanent placement outside your home through adoption, guardianship, custody or another planned permanent living arrangement. A permanency goal may be set **within 30 days** if your case falls within an exception involving unusually serious abuse or neglect.

Words to Know

Adoption – Is when the court decides that your child(ren) will be placed permanently with another family and gives all legal rights and responsibilities for the child to a new parent(s). An adoption may occur by the birth parents' agreeing to give up legal rights to the child and consenting to the adoption by the new parent, or the court can terminate the parents' rights.

Alternate Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) – APPLA is a permanency goal for a child when reunification with the parent, adoption or guardianship is not available options for the young person.

Attorney/Lawyer – A person licensed to practice law and appointed to represent you your child(ren), and the government.

C.A.S.A. or Court Appointed Special Advocate – A specially trained volunteer from the community appointed to speak to the court on behalf of your child(ren). A CASA volunteer meets with the child(ren) talks to her about what the child wants and needs and how the child is feeling about her situation and reports to the court. A CASA may file a written report or come to the court hearing and report directly to the judge.

Case Plan – A case plan is a written report prepared by the social worker along with the parent(s) that explains what the problems the family has experienced, the reason the parent(s) and your children are involved in court and what services are needed to help you fix the problems and get the children back home when the goal is reunification.

Disposition – A hearing to determine the resolution of the abuse or neglect case. At that hearing the parties discuss what services are needed for the children and parents to help to safely return the children home.

Guardian *ad Litem* or GAL – A GAL is a lawyer appointed to represent your child(ren). The GAL helps the court decide what is in your children's best interest and also monitors your children in their foster home (and in your home if the children are reunified) to ensure that they are being well cared for and that their needs are being met.

Government Attorney/Lawyer – A person working for the DC government assigned to the case to explain to the court what happen to the child and why the child was removed from your care.

Guardianship – Occurs when the court creates a temporary parental relationship between a child and relative (grandparent, aunt, uncle or god parent) that allows the relative to take care of the child, provide for all of her needs and make decisions for her until the parent is able to regain custody of the child.

Reasonable Efforts – Attempts made by Child and Family Services Agency (or contract agency) to help parents fix the problems that caused the children to be removed from the home. These efforts may also include services provided directly to the children.

Review Hearing/Permanency Hearing – A hearing to provide the judge with information concerning the progress being made by the parents (or others) to achieve permanency for the child. At that hearing information is provided about every aspect of the child's life and how well he/she is doing in her current placement.

Social Worker – The person working for Child and Family Services Agency (or a contract agency working for CFSA) responsible for making certain that your children are well cared for in their placement, that they have proper clothing and receive appropriate medical care and education. The social worker also works with you to ensure that you receive services you need to reunify with your children (such as parenting classes, drug treatment, and therapy).

Stipulation – A document signed by the parent(s) acknowledging that they did something that constitutes neglect or abuse of a child.

Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) – When the court takes away all of a parent’s rights to a child and ends the relationship between the parent and the child.

Trial or Fact Finding Hearing – A hearing to determine whether the parent or guardian abused or neglected a child.

**This calendar was developed by the
Abuse and Neglect Subcommittee
Family Court of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia
Magistrate Judge William Nooter, Co-Chair
Magistrate Judge Mary Grace Rook, Co-Chair
500 Indiana Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20001
www.dccourts.gov**