

Types of Proceedings

Shelter Care Hearing

A [Shelter Care Hearing](#) is the first court hearing after a child has been removed from the care of a parent:

- Held within 72 hours, not counting weekends or holidays
- A courtesy attorney is provided for the parent at the hearing
- Contested shelter care hearings are generally set on a different day to allow for a longer hearing

The Fact Finding Trial date is scheduled approximately 45 days after the case is filed. You and your attorney will discuss whether to agree to dependency (and services) or go to trial. If agreed orders of dependency are not entered, the case is set over for a settlement conference.

Fact Finding Trial

A [Fact Finding Trial](#) will be held shortly after the settlement conference if agreement is not reached. This is the case the determines whether or not the facts of the case warrant an open dependency. The standard of proof is higher than in the Shelter Care hearing.

Dispositional Hearing

[Dispositional Hearings](#) are occasionally scheduled following an agreement to dependency when services or placement of the child is still contested. The Dispositional Hearing is to occur within two weeks of dependency being established.

Review Hearings

[Review Hearings](#) are held every three to six months to see how well the court's plan to reunite the family is progressing and whether or not the court's involvement needs to continue.

Permanency Planning Hearings

A [Permanency Planning Hearing](#) will be held within twelve months of the child's removal from a parent. The court must order a permanent plan for the child (Reunification, Adoption, Guardianship or Third-Party Custody).

Termination Proceeding

When a parent is not making progress in services, the court may order the State to file a [termination petition](#). A First Set Termination Proceeding is usually scheduled 45 to 60 days after a termination petition is filed. The court will usually set a trial date out about three to four months from the first set hearing, as well as a status conference six weeks prior to trial.

Termination Trial

A Termination Trial is a trial to terminate parental rights. Parents can either go to trial or relinquish parental rights.