

FORM 1. NOTICE TO PARENT: DEPENDENCY ACTION

This is an important notice. Read it carefully. The court will presume you understand this notice unless you tell the court at today’s hearing you do not.

The Department of Child Safety (DCS), or _____ has filed a dependency petition concerning your child.

As a parent, or legal guardian, you have rights in this case.

You have the right to an attorney. Your attorney will be with you at every hearing in your case. You have a right to a trial, called an adjudication hearing, on the allegations in the petition. At the adjudication hearing your attorney can question any witness who testifies against you. You have a right at the adjudication hearing to subpoena witnesses, to present documents, and to testify on your own behalf. Hearings are open to the public, but you may ask the court to close the hearing.

The court will decide whether your child is dependent based on the evidence. If the court determines your child is dependent, your child will become a ward of the court. If your child is a ward of the court, DCS and the court will make decisions about your child’s care and custody until you show that you are able to do so. If within a certain time you cannot fix the problems that caused your child to become dependent, the court may terminate your parental rights and your child may be adopted, or a permanent guardian may be appointed for your child.

As a parent, or legal guardian, you also have responsibilities.

- 1. You must appear for every court date.** You are required to appear for every hearing the court sets, including a pre-trial conference, a settlement conference, and the adjudication hearing. If you don’t show up for a court date and you don’t have a good reason for not showing up, the court may find you have waived your rights in this case and you have admitted the allegations in the dependency petition. The court will then schedule other hearings you must attend, and the court will proceed without you if you do not have a good reason for not coming to court.
- 2. You must participate in reunification services.** You must participate in all the services DCS offers you to help reunite you with your child. Your failure, or refusal, to remedy the circumstances that caused your child to be removed from the home may be grounds for terminating your parental rights, or establishing a permanent guardianship, of your child.
- 3. You must attend termination, or guardianship, hearings.** If a motion, or petition, is filed to terminate your parental rights, or to establish a guardianship, you must attend all additional court hearings concerning the request, including the initial hearing, a pre-trial conference, and the adjudication hearing. If you fail to show up at any of these hearings without a good reason, the court may find you have waived your right to object to the termination of your parental rights or establishing a guardianship. The court may then consider evidence in your absence and terminate your parental rights or order a permanent guardianship of your child.

Upcoming Hearing Title	Date & Time	Appearance Type	Judicial Officer
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Facility Assignment _____ Courtroom _____

Court Connect Link & Conference Number _____

Attorney Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____

My signature means I received a copy of this notice and I understand my rights, my responsibilities, and the consequences of failing to appear at future hearings or failing to participate in reunification services.

_____	_____	_____
Parent Signature	Printed Name	Date