

## Glossary – Juvenile (CINA)<sup>1</sup>

Adjudication:	The hearing following the removal hearing, where the court decides if the child(ren) is in need of the court’s assistance. This occurs within six (6) weeks after removal.
Adoption:	The legal process through which the court gives exclusive rights of parenthood to an adult who is not the child’s biological parent.
Appeal (CPA):	If a parent disagrees with the Child Protective Assessment (“CPA”), s/he has a right to appeal (i.e., ask for a review of the decision) within 90 days of the date of the completion of the Assessment. <i>Contact an attorney immediately to determine the actual deadline.</i>
Appeal (Court):	A legal request that the Iowa Supreme Court or Court of Appeals review and change the decision of a lower court (e.g., the district court).
Assessment:	An assessment is done following a report that a child’s caretaker has abused or neglected the child. The goals of this assessment are to first, protect and ensure the child’s safety, and second, to provide services to the family to improve strengths and address needs so they are able to provide a safe environment and care for their child.
Case Plan:	If the child is found to be a child in need of assistance (“CINA”), the Department of Human Services (“DHS”) will put together a case plan outlining what needs to happen in order for the children to return home. This may include things like therapy, “clean” random drug tests, education regarding domestic violence, etc.
Child Abuse:	Any non-accidental physical injury to the child.
Conclusions:	“Conclusions of Law” are the court’s decisions based upon the applicable law as applied to the facts of the case.
Concurrent Jurisdiction:	When there is a pending case in two courts (e.g., family court and juvenile court), the family law judge must defer to the

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<sup>1</sup> This is based off the Juvenile Court’s packet (available online) but I have modified it. Acronyms are identified and defined in a separate document.

juvenile court before making certain decisions, particularly around custody and visitation issues.

- Concurrent Planning:** Although reunification is typically the primary goal, there are some cases where this might not be possible. DHS is required to have a “Plan B” in mind when doing case planning. That doesn’t mean they are *focused* on that as an outcome, or that they think you are going to “fail.” It simply means they are trying to be prepared for whatever might happen.
- Court Order:** Legal document that sets out the courts ruling either on a hearing or written motions.
- Denial of Critical Care:** When a child is denied adequate food, shelter, clothing, or other care necessary to the child’s health and welfare.
- Disposition:** The hearing following Adjudication, where the court decides where the child will live during the course of the juvenile case. This occurs within ten (10) weeks after removal.
- Drug Testing:** This may include urine analysis (UA), hair, or sweat patch.
- Ex parte:** *Ex Parte* communication is when one side tries to talk to the judge without the other party/attorney present. It is generally not permitted.
- Extension:** When the court allows additional time for the parents to try to comply with DHS’ requirements for reunification.
- Family Team Meeting:** Sometimes referred to as a Family Team Decision Meeting (“FTM” or “FTDM”), this is a confidential meeting that brings together everyone involved in the case (except the judge) to work together to develop or modify plans designed to work towards reunification. Topics may include visitation, therapy, drug testing, etc.
- Findings:** Sometimes referred to as “Findings of Fact,” these are simply the facts that the court believes to be true based upon the admissible evidence.
- Guardian:** The Person appointed by the court who has the legal right to make decisions in a child’s life, including medical, psychiatric, or surgical treatment; adoption, consent to marriage, enlistment in the armed forces of the United States; and the protection, education, care and control of the child.

Guardian ad Litem:	Sometimes shortened to GAL, this is a lawyer who represents the child's legal interests. GAL's are always appointed in cases where child abuse is alleged, but rarely in a case where there is not.
Hearing:	Formal court procedure in front of a judge, usually held in a courtroom (although some hearings may be held via telephone). A list of possible hearings is provided elsewhere.
Judge:	Your case will be assigned to one of two family court judges who will handle your case. Judges on the family law bench (i.e., judges who hear only family law matters) typically serve on that court for one calendar year. If your case concludes within that calendar year, s/he will likely be your judge throughout. If it overlaps a calendar year, you will likely have two different judges.
Juvenile Court:	The court that hears cases related to child welfare (CINA) and/or delinquency.
Lack of Supervision:	Failing to supervise the child to the extent that there is a danger of the child suffering significant harm, injury, or death.
Minor Children:	Children under the age of 18.
Permanency:	The Permanency Hearing is at the end, and is the hearing where the judge makes a final decision regarding the child's placement going forward. There are four permanency options: <b>reunification</b> (the child returns home to the parent who was the subject of the removal); <b>Adoption</b> (the parents' rights are terminated, and the child is adopted by another adult); <b>Guardianship</b> (the parental rights are not terminated, but a guardian is appointed to make legal decisions for and regarding the child); <b>Another permanent planned living arrangement</b> (this may include, for example, an institutional setting). When this occurs depends upon the age of the child. If the child is 0-3 years of age, it occurs 3-6 months after removal. If the child is older, it typically occurs between 6-12 months after removal.
Petition:	A formal, written request that the court take specific judicial action.
Placement Options:	If the child is removed from the home, DHS will first try to find a relative placement. In other words, a family member with whom the child can live. If there are no suitable relatives, then

the child will typically be placed in foster care. Placement is simply where the child lives during the course of the juvenile court case.

- Pro Se:* An individual who is representing him or herself without an attorney. This rarely happens in juvenile court, because parents have access to court appointed attorneys.
- Removal:** This is when the child is removed from the care of the parent(s) by DHS. This may be by consent (e.g., the parent agrees that s/he cannot adequately care for the child) or by order (e.g., the child is in imminent danger). There is a removal conference within 1-3 days after removal, and a removal hearing within 10-days after removal.
- Review Hearings:** The review hearing is a “check in” to see how things are going. There may be more than one, and the first one typically occurs 3-6 months after removal.
- Service Provider:** Agencies, individuals and/or other organizations that contract with DHS to provide treatment or supervision services for families involved with DHS.
- Termination:** Termination of Parental Rights (“TPR”) (sometimes referred to as Termination of the Parent-Child Legal Relationship) is when the court determines that the child(ren) cannot return home safely at the end of the statutory time frame. If the court grants a TPR, the legal parents no longer have any legal rights to the child or decisions about the child’s upbringing.
- Testimony:** Answering questions under oath, whether in depositions or court.