

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON FOR BENTON AND FRANKLIN COUNTIES

7122 W. OKANOGAN PLACE, BLDG. A, KENNEWICK, WA 99336

COURT ADMINISTRATOR
PATRICIA J. AUSTIN

FAMILY COURT INVESTIGATOR/
COORDINATOR
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The Family Court Investigator (FCI) will conduct an investigation pursuant to the terms set forth in the Orders appointing the FCI to your case. Although each case is unique, the following is a general outline of what **may** be included in the investigation:

- The FCI will spend a maximum of 15 – 20 hours on your case, (depending on the complexity of a case more time may be required), this includes reviewing the case file and all relevant case files and, among other things, CPS records and Criminal History Records, Mental Evaluations, Treatment Reports for Mental Health, Chemical Dependency, Domestic Violence, Counseling, etc.
- After the initial review of the case files, the FCI will contact the parties to schedule separate interviews at the FCI's office at Superior Court Administration. The initial interview **will last one hour to ninety minutes.**
- The FCI will contact professional individuals who have information relevant to the case. Most often this will include third party professionals from: schools, medical and mental health agencies, counselors, probation officers, employers, landlords, day care providers, CPS, law enforcement, etc.
- You may provide the FCI with phone numbers for a maximum of four personal and family references. Personal and family references may or may not be contacted by the FCI. Your references may submit brief, written statements that include their phone numbers. Written statements must include the signed and dated *Penalty of Perjury* statement: "I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the information contained in this document is true and correct. Signature: _____ Date: _____ City & State: _____"
- A home visit in one or both residences will occur only by court order. Observations between the children and the parent (party) will be conducted at FCI's office. A change in the residential time may be necessary to accommodate an observation during FCI's office hours.
- The child or children may be observed or interviewed separately and/or with each parent, or primary care giver.
- All information provided during interviews, reports, records, etc. may become a part of the written report/s.
- The investigation will culminate in a written report filed with the court that includes recommendations regarding a parenting/residential schedule for the children or child. Copies of the report will be provided to all parties.
- Generally the FCI is discharged from the case at the time report and recommendations are presented to the court, except to update and prepare for Trial if there is no agreement at Settlement Conference.

After your initial interview, the best way to communicate information to the FCI, if you feel it necessary, is via E-mail. If you do not have access to E-Mail, you may leave a voice telephone message. However, I will not respond to all voice/email messages received during the investigation, but be assured the FCI will read and listen to all messages.

FCI will strive to conduct a thorough and prompt investigation in order to make recommendations to the court that will address the unique, individual needs of each child and family.