

Translation services are available if needed.

Useful Acronyms, Words, and Terms

ACYF	The Administration for Children, Youth, and Families is a division of the Department of Economic Security. CPS belongs to this division.
ADOC	Arizona Department of Corrections
AG	Attorney General (<i>see the page on Assistant Attorney Generals in this booklet for more information</i>)
AHCCCS	Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System: This is the State of Arizona's indigent health insurance program.
ALTCS	Arizona Long Term Care System: This is the part of AHCCCS that provides long-term care for eligible people unable to care for themselves.
ARS	Arizona Revised Statutes: This is the collection of Arizona's laws. The state legislature crafts the statutes and the courts interpret them.
AZEIP	Arizona Early Intervention Program: This program provides services to young children identified with developmental changes.
AYAP	Arizona Young Adult Program: This is a program of CPS. Youth 15 years old and older can participate in this program to learn independent living skills in preparing for living independently.
CASA	Court Appointed Special Advocate (<i>see the page on CASA in this booklet for more information</i>)
CMPD	Comprehensive Medical and Dental Plan: This is the medical and dental insurance coverage provided for children in CPS care.
CPS	Child Protective Services: This is the division of the Department of Economic Security that is responsible for the safety of children.
CSA	Child Safety Assessment
DES	Department of Economic Security: A State of Arizona's Department with many branches intended to see to the well being of the residents of Arizona.
DSM-IV	The DSM-IV is a diagnostic tool used within the mental health system. It establishes a classification system that allows people to use shared meanings when discussing mental health illnesses and disorders.
ESPDT	Early Screening Prognostic Diagnosis Test: All children who come into CPS custody have this exam within 72 hours of being placed in foster care. This exam is used by CPS to look for medical conditions that may require additional attention or further testing.
FCRB	Foster Care Review Board (<i>see the page on FCRB in this booklet for more information</i>)
GAL	Guardian ad Litem (<i>see the page on GAL in this booklet for more information</i>)

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ICWA	Indian Child Welfare Act: This is a federal act which gives special federal and state rules for persons registered with a tribe or who are eligible for registration.
IEP	Individual Education Plan: This is a specific plan for a specific child intended to meet his or her special educational needs. School personnel, parents, and other interested parties work together to develop the IEP.
NA	Narcotics Anonymous: This is a 12 step program like Alcoholics Anonymous (AA).
NARBHA	Northern Arizona Regional Behavioral Health Authority: This is the local RBHA (see below). NARBHA establishes and oversees contracts with local behavioral health service providers.
RBHA	Regional Behavioral Health Authority (pronounced "Reba"): The RBHA gets the State's behavioral health dollars for our region and then contracts with various agencies to provide behavioral health services.
SMI	Seriously Mentally Ill: This is a designation given to people who have severe mental illnesses and therefore qualify for specific services from the mental health system.
TANF	Temporary Aid for Needy Families: This is cash assistance to families . It was formerly known as AFDC or simply welfare.
TCN	Temporary Custody Notice: This is a form given to the parent or caregiver when a child is removed from them. This form contains information about how to contact the case manager in charge of the case, gives you the case manager's phone number and may contain other important information.
Abuse	Physical or emotional injury, including situations where the parent or person having custody or control of the child knew, or should have known, about risks to the child.
Abandonment	Failing to maintain contact with a child or to provide reasonable support.
Admission	An admission takes place when a parent agrees in court that the statements made in the dependency petition are true. Deciding to do an admission is a legal decision that parents make after working with their attorneys.
Adjudication	An adjudication occurs when the judge formally determines (finds) that the children are dependent children and are unable to remain in their parents' legal and/or physical custody. A dependent child is found to be dependent upon the State for the oversight of their safety and well being.
Assessment	This is a term used when anyone involved in the case has an initial appointment with a service provider. Assessments are generally done so the provider and the case manager will have an idea of what services to offer the child or family. Clients may be asked to participate in several assessments.

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Child and Family Teams	This is a group of formal supports (professionals such as therapists, probation officers, case managers) and natural supports (such as family members, friends, teachers, ministers) who are working with the family that has mental health issues as one of their challenges. The goal is to develop plans with the family that will assist in the present and also for the long term. Specially trained staff from the behavioral health field facilitate Child and Family Teams (CFTs).
Concurrent Planning	This is a term used by CPS when they are preparing a case plan for children who have been removed from their parents and are now in foster care. Concurrent planning allows case managers to look for people who will be able to keep the children permanently should the parents be unable to complete their case plans and have their children returned to them. Concurrent planning does not mean the case manager will no longer help the parents or provide service and attempt to reunify the family. Concurrent planning allows for both outcomes to be worked on at the same time.
Contempt	Contempt is the intentional disobedience of a court order. Contempt is punishable by incarceration, fine or community service if the person fails to follow the Court's orders.
Custody	Having control over the care of a minor (physical and legal). Physical custody includes the right to have physical placement of the child and the duty to provide for the child's normal daily needs. Legal custody is the right to make the major decisions for a child (medical, educational, etc.).
Discretion	This is the same as permission. When the judge gives CPS discretion to make decisions on issues like visitation and placement, the judge is giving CPS the permission to make the decision and implement it without further approval of the Court.
Department	Department of Economic Security (DES). CPS is a part of DES and you will hear judges and attorneys refer to CPS as "the Department".
Dependency Petition	The legal document asking the court to become involved. It contains statements of facts intended to support the allegations that a minor has no parent able or willing to adequately provide for his/her needs.
Enter a Denial	Formally saying you disagree with the statement or allegations set forth in the Petition.
Failure to Protect	Not protecting a child from harm. A parent or guardian who knew there was a risk, or should have known there was a risk, and yet did not intervene to ensure the child's safety.
Findings	These are statements that indicate that the judge has reviewed certain aspects of the case (placement, services, case plan, CPS efforts, parent efforts) and has made decisions on how things are going or ought to go. The court record and the minute entry reflect what the judge makes as his/her findings.
Joint Staffing	This is an interagency meeting between CPS and the Juvenile Probation Department held to evaluate and coordinate appropriate services for minors who are delinquent and may be dependent.

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Kids Care	Kids Care is a part of AHCCCS. This program provides health insurance to low-income families.
Legal Guardian	A person other than a parent with the legal authority to make decisions for a child.
Mediation	A process of working together with various parties in a case to make decisions and plans that all can support as being in the best interests of the children. Topics for mediation can be visitation, placement, services, or other topics as identified by the parties. A trained mediator is present to assist the parties in their negotiations.
Minute Entry	A summary of what happens at each court hearing. It also lists all the decisions, orders, and findings that the judge made at that hearing. It includes the next court date and time as well.
Motion	A formal request to the Court asking the Court to take some specific action. For example: to enter an order or to set a hearing.
Neglect	Failing to provide proper or effective parenting for a child; failing to provide a child with necessities, including food, clothing, shelter or health care; failing to provide a safe environment.
No Contest Plea	When a person agrees that the Petitioner could prove the allegations being made in the petition, without actually saying that he/she admits they are true. The judge will treat the case as if the allegations were true.
Orders	Formal written direction given by a judge. If the court orders a person to do something or to NOT do something and the person fails to comply with the order, the judge can have the person arrested and/or fined. Case plans are approved by the judge therefore the parents or other people involved in the case are ordered to complete the items set out in the case plan.
Orders of Protection or Restraining Order	An order given by a judge intended to help keep people safe. These are often used in cases where there is a history of violence or when there is a serious custody issue. Juvenile Court judges do not routinely issue Orders of Protection although they may enter No Contact Orders regarding parties in a case.
Parent	The natural or adoptive mother or father of a child.
Parties	People involved in the case that are recognized by the court as legal participants in the case such as the mother, father, child and CPS. Being a family member or a placement for a child does not automatically make a person a party to the case.
Paternity	The legal establishment of a man as the father of a child. Children born to married couples are considered the legal children of the husband. Children born to unmarried parents must have paternity established by birth certificates, by signing a legal affidavit or by DNA testing.

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Permanency	The overall goal for the child which involves a stable, unchanging placement which provides for the child's safety and fundamental needs - physical, emotional, educational, medical, social, etc.
Placement	The primary caregiver of a child. Placement can be with a parent, relative, foster family, group home or childcare agency, or any appropriate person as approved by the Court.
Psychological Evaluation "psych eval"	Assessment performed by a psychologist, generally in 2 separate parts. The 1st part is a "fill in the blank" or "bubble" set of questions. There are no right or wrong answers. The psychologist uses the answers to determine what areas the client may need help in. The 2nd half of the assessment is a meeting with the psychologist. This may take place once or several times depending on the psychologist seeing you. Afterward, the psychologist prepares a report with recommendations for what services may be helpful to the client and his or her family.
Psychiatric Assessment	These assessments are performed by a psychiatrist and may be recommended if the psychologist feels there is a reason to suspect issues such as severe depression, anxiety disorders or other psychiatric concerns. One major difference between a psychologist and a psychiatrist is the psychiatrist is a medical doctor who can prescribe medications that address these problems.
Reasonable Efforts	The term used by the judge and the attorneys when they are discussing whether or not CPS has made adequate efforts to help the family overcome the reasons the children were removed.
Reunification	Having children return to the care of the parent/s or legal guardian from whom they were removed or to their other legal parent if the parents are not together as a couple.
Severance	A legal proceeding that may result in parents' rights and responsibilities to a child being ended. The termination of a parent's rights can happen as the outcome of a trial or come about because a parent voluntarily relinquishes his/her parental rights.
Sexual Abuse	Sexual offenses towards children under the age of 18.
Surrogate Parent	Volunteers from the community that are called upon when when a child needs any kind of special educational services in a school setting. Case managers are not able to sign any special education paperwork.
Trial Rights	The right to have an attorney, to make the State prove the allegations, the right to have witnesses testify for you and the right for your attorney to cross-examine the other side's witnesses.
Ward	A child is considered a ward of the court once the judge has granted CPS legal custody over the child. The child may also be called a dependent child.