

## CHILD CUSTODY ISSUANCE WORKSHEET

**CASE # OR NAME:**

Instructions: Check all practices and give examples when possible.

**Notes:**

NA = Not applicable in this case

NP = Not possible in this case (explain)

<b>1. The child custody process is open and welcoming.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demeanor of the judge and court personnel is respectful and informative regarding child custody.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court communicates in a way that allows self-represented parties to understand the custody process.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court personnel provide information on advocacy and community resources to enhance safety.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>2. The court issues orders with an emphasis on the best interests of the child.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court inquires about the history, context, and implications of abuse in standard forms of pleading and practice.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court considers a full history of abuse, without restriction to recency, potency, help-seeking, and/or prior court, law enforcement, or child protection involvement.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court evaluates risk and lethality factors to craft appropriate relief that is in the best interests of the child.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court considers how domestic abuse influences and shapes each of the statutory best interest factors.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court considers children’s past, present and ongoing post-separation experience of domestic violence in deciding custody and visitation matters.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court considers the impact of past, present and ongoing post-separation abuse on parenting and the co-parenting relationship in deciding custody and visitation matters.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court considers harm to children and use of children as instruments of abuse in deciding custody and visitation matters.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	

<b>3. Emergency, interim and/or temporary child-related relief is available, accessible and issued under appropriate circumstances.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court provides parties with information about the availability of emergency, interim and temporary child-related relief in custody cases.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Standard forms for requesting emergency, interim and temporary child-related relief in custody cases are easily available to parties and include instructions that are understandable.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures are in place to ensure that requests for emergency, interim and temporary child-related relief are heard and decided in a timely and efficient manner.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>4. The court endeavors to craft the least restrictive parenting arrangement that protects the safety and well-being of the child and the victim-parent.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court carefully evaluates the risk of harm to the child and the victim-parent in decisions about the offender-parent's access to and decision-making authority for the child.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court accounts for the impact of abuse on parenting, co-parenting and the best interests of the child in crafting custody and visitation orders.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>5. The court carefully evaluates the need for supervised visitation or exchange.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court considers safe visitation and exchange procedures in deciding custody and visitation matters.	
<input type="checkbox"/> When ordering the use of a visitation center, the court provides the center with additional information on the parties and children.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court carefully evaluates the appropriateness of allowing family members or other third parties to supervise visitation or exchange.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court clearly defines the responsibilities of third parties selected to supervise visitation or exchange and communicates those expectations to the parties and supervisors.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court confirms that selected third party supervisors accept responsibility for supervision or exchange.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	

<b>6. The presence, use, and control of firearms are considered in the custody process.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Information on the use and control of firearms is collected in the pleadings or sought through court inquiry.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court considers barring possession or control of firearms and ammunition whenever such a bar is in the best interests of the child, even if it is not mandated under state and federal firearm prohibitions.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Procedure is established to ensure surrender or safekeeping of firearm(s) under appropriate circumstances.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>7. The court's findings are clear, concise, and on the record.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court is aware of other court orders in effect and does not create contradictory mandates for either parent.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court clearly articulates the factual and legal basis for its custody and visitation decisions in writing and on the record.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court clearly establishes in writing and on the record the parties' respective parental rights and responsibilities so the parents understand exactly what is expected of them.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>8. The court clearly communicates with parties and directly responds to all inquiries.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court explains orally and in writing all orders that are being imposed, using interpreters when needed.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court explains in detail the consequences of violating its orders.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court provides copies of all orders to the parties.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Court explains the process by which its orders may be modified, enforced, reconsidered and reviewed.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>9. In appropriate cases, compliance review hearings are scheduled to occur on a regular basis at the time of issuance of the final custody order.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Preset compliance review forms are utilized.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Compliance review hearings are scheduled to ensure that the parties comply with the terms and conditions of the final custody order.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	



List gaps in best practices:

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