



STATE OF MICHIGAN
17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT

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STATE OF MICHIGAN

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF KENT

IN RE: CASES INVOLVING CHILDREN ABSENT
FROM COURT-ORDERED PLACEMENT
WITHOUT LEGAL PERMISSION

LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
2009-03

At a session of said court, held in the Kent County Courthouse
in the City of Grand Rapids, in said County,
November 25, 2009

Present: Honorable Paul J. Sullivan, Chief Judge

This administrative order is issued in accordance with Michigan Supreme Court Administrative Order 2002-4. The purpose of this order is to establish a plan for reviewing cases involving children who are absent from court-ordered placements without permission from the court (AWOLP) upon approval by the State Court Administrative Office. Details regarding this Court's plan will be contained in a separate plan document.

1. The judge responsible for ensuring compliance with this plan is the Presiding Judge of the Family Division as indicated in the specific plan document.
2. The court and Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) will conduct an initial inventory regarding AWOLP children within Kent County.
3. The court will request that DHS identify a local DHS liaison that will be responsible for coordinating and implementing policy in conjunction with expedited hearings on AWOLP cases.
4. Upon notification by the DHS, or upon the court's own initiative of a child's absence without legal permission status, a hearing will be held or other action taken by the court. The court will utilize all statutory and court rule authority to locate and expeditiously return a child to a proper custodial placement. In its discretion the court may use informal measures to locate, communicate with and ensure proper placement of an AWOLP child.
5. Reviews of a child listed as AWOLP will be held within 90 days of notification/identification. The review will address the following:
6.
 - A. Coordination efforts of the Department of Human Services and the court to locate the absent children,
 - B. Process for reviewing such cases
 - C. Frequency of additional reviews
 - D. Any special problems that the court has identified
7. All children 15 years and younger who are AWOLP shall have priority in hearings and reviews, with particular emphasis being placed on cases of younger children who may have been abducted. DHS will utilize the Amber Alert system when appropriate.

This order will be effective upon approval by State Order Administrative Office and rescinds Local Administrative Order 2003-02.

Paul J. Sullivan, Chief Judge

P-24139

**Plan for Reviewing Cases of Children Who Are Absent Without Legal Permission
October 23, 2009**

Special Docket/Expedited Review Process

Each Case on the list of children absent without legal permission (AWOLP) will have a scheduled judicial review hearing every 90 days. In addition, each case will be reviewed each month by the Court and DHS liaisons, and the agency caseworker responsible for the case. Other parties will be called in to the review process as appropriate. Also, the list will be reviewed by the judges at the quarterly family division judges' meeting and at the monthly meeting between the Court, private Agencies, DHS, CMH and the Grand Rapids Police.

Responsibility for Compliance

The Chief Judge has designated the Presiding Judge of the Family Division as the judge responsible for ensuring compliance with Administrative Order 2002-4, Local Administrative Order 2009-04, and this plan.

Coordination of Efforts with Department of Human Services

The Court's liaison (Permanency Planning Supervisor) and the DHS liaison, will meet at least monthly to review each and every case on the AWOLP list. It is the responsibility of the liaisons to keep the list up-to-date, ensure that pick-up orders and L.E.I.N. entries are entered, and respond to special circumstances (i.e. younger children), and include on the list any relevant data regarding locating children or regarding those children who have been located and returned.

Process for Review of Cases

In addition to regular 90-day judicial review hearings, each case will be reviewed monthly by the Court/DHS liaisons and agency caseworker. Those reviews, in addition to detailing specific information regarding locating these cases, will also focus on preparing the agency caseworker for the scheduled review hearing. Also, each month the judges will be given a copy of the AWOLP list. Further, the AWOLP list, and any related issues, concerns, or questions will also be placed on the agenda for the Court's quarterly management meeting with DHS staff, and on the agenda for the monthly Executive Coordinating Council Sub-Committee meeting. Depending on the circumstances (i.e. age of the child) each new case added to the list by the Court or DHS, will be reviewed by the liaisons and agency caseworker within one week or sooner of being officially placed on the AWOLP list.

Obtaining Information and Scheduling Hearings.

The Court and DHS liaisons will include the following on the AWOLP list:

Name	Date of the Last Review Hearing
Birthdate	Date of the Next Schedule Review Hearing
Legal Status	Response (Pick-up order issued, placed on LEIN, etc)
Judge Assigned the Case	Date of Last Case Review by the Court, DHS, and agency caseworker
Any Other Relevant Information Specific to the Possible Whereabouts of the Child and/or Locating the Child	

Priority to Cases of Children Ages 15 and Younger

Cases involving very young children and/or cases that may require a more immediate judicial review, will be placed on the respective judicial docket as soon as can be scheduled and preferably within a one to two week timeframe. These cases will also be reviewed by the liaisons within one week or sooner from the date of placement on the AWOLP list.

Plan Evaluation

The Court, with the input from the liaisons, judges, and others, will make modifications to the plan as required and with the goal in mind of protecting children under its jurisdiction.