

**Northamptonshire County Council**

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| NAME |

Please ask for:

Tel:

Date:

**PLEASE DO NOT IGNORE THIS LETTER TAKE IT TO A SOLICITOR NOW**

Dear NAME ,

**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILCONCERNS ABOUT CHILD/REN NAME – LETTER BEFORE PROCEEDINGS**

I am writing to let you know how worried Northamptonshire County Councilhave become about the way you are looking after your children. I am writing to tell you that Northamptonshire County Councilis thinking about startingCare Proceedings in respect of CHILD/REN NAME.

This means that we may ask the court if your child can be taken into care. If the court decides this is best for them the court will make an order and CHILD/REN NAME could be taken into care.

We are so worried about your child/ren that we willgo to court unless you are able to make changes so you can look after CHILD/REN NAME better.

There are things you can do which could stop this happening. Attached to this letter is an explanation of things that we are worried about and the things that have already been done to try to help your family.

**AN IMPORTANT MEETING ABOUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT**

Please come to a meeting with us to talk about these worries on [***date and time]*** at the *[****insert name of office****]*. The address is *[****address]*** and there is a map with this letter to help you find it. Please contact your social worker on *[****tel.no.]***to tell us if you will come to the meeting.

At the meeting we will discuss with you what you can do to make your child(ren) safe. We will also discuss with you about how we can help you to do this and we will update the things that we are worried about. We will also make it clear what steps we will take if we continue to be worried about CHILD/REN NAME.

**PLEASE BRING A SOLICITOR WITH YOU TO THE MEETING ON [*insert date*]**

**You can take this letter to a solicitor and ask them to come to the meeting with you. The solicitor will advise you about getting legal aid (free legal advice). With this letter with have sent you a list of local solicitors who work with children and families. They are all separate from the Council's Children’s Services. You do not have to bring a solicitor with you, but you will find it helpful to have them at the meeting with you.**

***Information your Solicitor will need is:***

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| --- |
| *Local Authority Legal Contact:* insert number xxx  *Name, Address & Telephone:* insert number xxxx |

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF YOU DON'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT THIS LETTER**

If you do nothing, we will have to go to Court. If you do not answer this letter or come to the meeting, we will go to Court as soon as we can to make sure

CHILD/REN NAME are safe.

**YOUR WIDER FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

Our worries about CHILD/REN NAME are very serious. If we do go to Court and the Court decides you cannot look after your children. The council has a legal duty to assess your family or friends to see if they can care for your children, before considering a plan of fostering or adoption for them.

We would like you to think about friends or family who may be able to care for your children and you should let your solicitor know their names and addresses so they can be shared with us. Once we have these details we will be able to do an assessment of your relatives at the same time as you are working with us to try and make things better for your child. This means if you aren't able to make the changes needed, we will already know which relatives or friends could safely care for your children.

So if the court decides that your children cannot safely live with you, this they can be looked after by family or friend, rather than being placed in foster care.

Please can you let us have details of your friends and family within 14 days of the date of this letter.

For each friend or family member you need to provide their full contact details including:

1. Full Name:
2. Full address:
3. Telephone numbers:
4. Their relationship to the child and the last time they had contact (if any):
5. Whether the person is aware that you have said that they could care for your child:
6. If possible, their age or date of birth:

The council has a duty to avoid delay in the work that we do so if you don't suggest friends or family it might make it less likely that you can suggest them later, in any care proceedings that may take place.

**We hope to see you at the meeting with your solicitor on [date]. If you do not understand any part of this letter, please contact your social worker [name] on [tel. no.].**

**Please tell your social worker if you need any help with child care or transport arrangements to get to the meeting, and we will try to help.**

Yours sincerely

Manager Name

Team Manager

Local office/service

cc NAME ,Social Worker

Legal Team

Enc: List of Law Society Children Panel Solicitors

Things we are worried about

Genogram

**THINGS WE ARE WORRIED ABOUT**

**HERE ARE THE MAIN THINGS THAT WE ARE WORRIED ABOUT. THESE WORRIES HAVE BEEN THE FOCUS OF THE CHILD PROTECTION PLAN \***

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| **Danger Statement (What we are worried about?)** | **What has and is now happening to keep the child(ren) safe?** | **Safety Goal (How we will know the child(ren) is safe?)** | **Scaling**  **(where 0 is high risk of immediate harm to the child(ren) and 10 is no risk) \*\*** |
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**WHAT CHILDREN’S SERVICES HAVE DONE TO TRY TO HELP SO FAR:**

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| **Who helped ?** | **What help has been given?** | **When did you receive this help?** | **How has this helped?** |
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**ACTION PLAN**

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| **Action for you as a parent/carer and what we need to see** | **Why do you need to do this?** | **When does this need to happen?** | **What does this now mean for the child(ren)?** |
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Date Completed/Updated ………………………………………………

\* To be updated throughout the PLO Pre proceedings process, which may include additional actions

\*\* During the PLO Pre proceedings meeting, the parent(s), Social Worker, Team Manager and any other professional should record their scaling