PLO Practice Guidance

Practice Guidance PLO

* Threshold decisions made within local area offices should always go through Area Legal Tracking Meeting (or ad hoc Operations Manager discussion if urgent), prior to any discussion at Legal Gateway Panel.
* See process map.

Initial PLO letter – supported targets for parents

* Letter must be written in simplest language and detail exactly what needs to change, how and when by with the bottom line made clear.
* PLO goals should align with CP plan goals if in place.
* See Initial PLO letter template (template number J0104 – guidance on content below).
* See also Letter before issue (supersede PLO) (template number J0125).

Training and support in PLO

The CSW group provides a series of legal workshops / CPD sessions. These include / cover:

* Process and terminology
* Welfare principles
* Different roles
* Playing devil’s advocate
* Conduct in court
* Re BS and different orders
* Parenting assessments
* Expert assessments

Content of Initial PLO letter (J0104)

Here is what we are worried about:

Here are just some examples of professional’s worries and concerns which we will share with you in more detail at the meeting.

*The heading should clearly state the concern (in order of the main concern first). For example: Mother’s substance misuse, domestic abuse, neglect. Please try to keep to a maximum of four headings – these should link to your danger statement.*

*Then provide a couple of paragraphs summarising what the concern is / how long we have had the concerns.*

*For example:*

1. Neglect: We are worried that babies basic needs will be neglected when she is born as mother and father do not have the capacity or understanding to meet her needs.

Father lived in a residential children’s home until August 2017. He does not have the independent skills to meet his own needs; it is therefore a concern that he will be unable to meet baby’s needs once she is born.

Throughout mother’s childhood there have been concerns regarding her mother’s parenting capacity. Mother suffered neglect and witnessed violence within the family home between her mother and older brother. Her mother has a history of alcohol abuse which has impacted on her capacity to parent mother during her childhood.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date(s) | Main examples |
|  | *These should be significant examples that have occurred within the last two years (unless exceptional things are significant i.e. injuries, parent being convicted of an offence against a child)* |
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|  |  |
|  |  |

1. Emotional abuse: We are worried that baby will be exposed violence and verbalarguments*.*

Mother lives with her mother and brother (aged 19). There are significant concerns that Mother is exposed to her brothers’ violent and aggressive behaviour. It is reported that he is alcohol dependent and drinks to excess which increases his aggressive behaviour.

Children’s Social Care is concerned that mother and father have an unhealthy relationship that is controlling and there are reports of physical abuse. Children’s Social Care does not consider this to be a suitable environment for mother and baby to live.

Children’s Social Care is concerned for fathers’ aggressive behaviour. Mother has reported being pushed by father on two occasions. Father has been arrested by the police for threatening behaviour and violence

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date(s) | Main examples |
|  |  |
|  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date(s) | Problem |
|  |  |
|  |  |

What Children’s Services and other professionals have done so far to try to help your family

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date | Support provided  *This should include all support that has been provided, if they have / have not engaged. This should not be limited to the last two years like with the above.* |
|  | Time Together (TITO) Parenting Support via Health Visitor and Nursery Nurse. |
|  | Mother commences Triple P Parenting Course. |
|  | Child diagnosed with ADHD and provided with medication to support this. |
|  | Parenting assessment completed of mother – recommended…. |
|  | Psychological assessment of mother completed – recommended… |
|  | 10 sessions of CBT Therapy completed by Mother via Talking Therapies. Engaged well and discharged from this service. |

What needs to happen so that we will not go to court?

*These actions need to clearly outline the expectations of the Local Authority – it needs to be specific, broken down and SMART*

*Examples:*

1. Before the meeting we would like you to talk to your solicitor and important people in your family about what you think you and they can do to keep your children safe. This will then be discussed at the meeting.
2. Mother to ensure that as a minimum
   1. There is no mouldy food or objects in the home.
   2. The floors/carpets are clean and hoovered.
   3. Hall ways and stairs are clear.
   4. The bathroom is clean.
   5. The children have a clean bedroom and they have clean sheets on their bed.
3. Mother to take advice and direction following outcome of fire risk assessment by Somerset Fire Prevention Officer.
4. Mother to access support services to assist her understanding of the effects of abuse on herself and her children by engaging with IDVA.