

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLES OF THE PEOPLE  
INVOLVED IN A CPS CASE

# PARENT'S ATTORNEY

## WHO IS THE PARENT'S ATTORNEY?

Parent's Attorney Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## WHAT IS A PARENT'S ATTORNEY?

A parent's attorney is a lawyer who represents parents and helps them understand their rights and options in their case.

A parent has the right to have an attorney help them. A parent may choose to hire their own attorney at any time during their case if they can pay for one. If a parent cannot pay for a lawyer, they can ask the judge to appoint one that will help for free. Sometimes parents may have the same lawyer, but they are allowed to have different ones.

## WHAT DOES A PARENT'S ATTORNEY DO?

A parent's attorney helps parents talk to the judge and other people working on the case. This attorney helps parents try to get their children returned home and helps them keep their parental rights to their child. In court, they might call witnesses, ask questions, and make requests to the judge.

### THE PARENT'S ATTORNEY **MUST**:

- Meet with the parent before each hearing unless it is not possible.
- Ask what the parent wants in the case since the parent is their client.
- Review all of the records in the case and talk to anyone involved.
- Explain to the parent what is happening in the case and discuss their options.
- Keep everything the parent tells them private unless the parent gives them permission to share it. However, the lawyer must share information that could stop someone from being hurt or committing a crime.

## THE PARENT'S ATTORNEY CANNOT:

- Stop representing the parent they have been appointed to, unless a judge says it is okay.
- Tell a lie or allow someone to tell a lie in court.
- Treat people differently because of what they look like, or other reasons that are unfair.

## WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE PROBLEMS WITH MY ATTORNEY?

If you are a parent and have concerns about your attorney, first try to meet with your attorney to make things better. If you are unable to improve the situation, you can ask the judge for another attorney. Then, if you want to complain about something an attorney is doing or not doing, you can contact the State Bar of Texas at 1-800- 932-1900.

Note: Filing this complaint will not necessarily get you a new attorney for your case. You may have to continue working with the same attorney.

## OTHER HELP:

If you have additional questions about what to do if the Department of Family and Protective Services removes your child from your home, you can call the Family Helpline for Strong Families and Safe Children at 1-844-888-6565. They have lawyers available to answer your calls from Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. These lawyers do not take the place of your attorney, but they can give you helpful information.

