

	<p><b>INNOVATIVE WAYS TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR CPS CLIENT</b></p> <p>By Cindy M. Williams and Nora DeWitt-Barilla</p>

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	<p><b>Appointment of Attorney/Guardian ad Litem</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ At the same time a court signs an order for the removal of a child by CPS, an Attorney/Guardian ad Litem is appointed for the child/ren.</li> <li>■ This appointment for the child will continue until further order, most often when the CPS legal case is closed.</li> </ul>

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	<p><b>Texas Family Code § 107.004(d)</b></p>
	<p>Except as provided by Subsection (e), an attorney ad litem appointed for a child in a proceeding under Chapter 262 or 263 <b>shall meet before each court hearing</b> with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the child, if the child is at least four years of age; or</li> <li>2. the individual with whom the child ordinarily resides, including the child's parent, conservator, guardian, caretaker or custodian, if the child is younger than four years of age.</li> </ol>

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**Traditional means of attorney-client communication**

- Face to Face meeting
- Telephone call
- Letter
- No Contact (not recommended!)

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**Barriers to Meeting with CPS Child-Client**

- Considerable distance between the child and the attorney ad litem;
- Reimbursement for travel unlikely;
- Difficulty making contact with the caretaker of the child.

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**Texas Family Code § 107,004(e)**

An attorney ad litem appointed for a child in a proceeding under Chapter 262 or 263 is not required to comply with Subsection (d) before a hearing if the court finds at that hearing that the **attorney ad litem has shown good cause** why the attorney ad litem's compliance with that subsection is not feasible or in the best interest of the child. Additionally, a court may, on a showing of good cause, **authorize an attorney ad litem to comply** with Subsection (d) by conferring with the child or other individual, as appropriate, by telephone or **video conference**.

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	<p><b>Innovative Ways to Communicate with your CPS Child Client</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Video Conference through CPS Site Locations</li> <li>■ Video Conference through private web access (e.g. SKYPE)</li> <li>■ Scan Call through CPS</li> </ul>
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	<p><b>Benefits to communicating with your CPS client</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Follows the law</li> <li>■ Personalizes the child to you, they become someone you know</li> <li>■ Empowers children to speak for themselves</li> <li>■ Allows the child's voice to be heard at upcoming hearings</li> <li>■ Reduces travel costs</li> </ul>
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	<p><b>Video Conference through CPS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Private web access from one CPS location to another CPS location</li> <li>■ Available at certain CPS locations throughout the state (see attachment)</li> <li>■ Intended for use when the child is placed outside of your region</li> <li>■ Child is placed within 50 miles of a CPS Site Location</li> </ul>
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	<p><b>Steps to Arrange Video Conference through CPS</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Determine whether or not your client is placed in region</li> <li>■ If not in region, check the List of CPS Video Conferencing Site Locations to make sure that your client is located within 50 miles of a facility on the list</li> <li>■ Contact the caseworker and the Legal Relations Specialist in your region (see attachment)</li> </ul>

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	<p><b>Disclaimer</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Every region is different, and the Legal Relations Specialist may not be the person who will set up the video-conference, but they will be your contact person to help facilitate setting up a video-conference or scan call</li> </ul>

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	<p><b>The steps that follow the request...</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Schedule a date and time, usually two weeks out</li> <li>■ Reserve a room at each CPS Site Location (CPS complete form)</li> <li>■ Arrange transportation for the child</li> <li>■ Appear for the video-conference</li> <li>■ If you need to cancel, please do ASAP</li> </ul>

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	<h2 style="margin: 0;">SKYPE.com</h2>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ SKYPE is a software application that allows users to video conference over the internet to other users of this service.</li> <li>■ Downloads and use of this service are generally free</li> <li>■ Visit the website for complete information</li> </ul>

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	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Video Conferencing via SKYPE</h2>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Some placement facilities offer SKYPE access to the children placed there</li> <li>■ Allows private web access from the attorney's office to the placement facility</li> <li>■ SKYPE requires internet access and a webcam</li> <li>■ CPS staff must give approval to the placement facility before the SKYPE video conference can occur</li> <li>■ CPS staff will coordinate the date and time for the SKYPE video conference</li> </ul>

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	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Scan Call with CPS Client</h2>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Allows for 2 to 25 people to be involved in the same telephone conversation through a toll-free number (CPS pays the toll)</li> <li>■ Can be used to facilitate conferences to address the child's needs (i.e. treatment, case planning, family contact)</li> <li>■ Available through certain CPS staff</li> <li>■ Contact Legal Relations Specialist to verify availability in your Region</li> </ul>

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	<b>THE END</b>

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