

LJuCR 4 SETTLEMENT AND PRETRIAL CONFERENCES FOR DEPENDENCY AND TERMINATION CASES

(a) Settlement Conferences for Termination Cases.

(1) *Request for Conference.* Settlement conferences will be scheduled upon the request of any party to a termination action. The settlement conference should be requested when the trial date is set at the first-set appearance, or within 30 days.

(2) *Timing of Conference.* The settlement conference shall be held at least 30 days before the scheduling conference for the termination trial.

(3) *Settlement Conference Statements.* Settlement conference statements shall be required from all parties and shall contain:

(A) a brief history of the case;

(B) reasons for or against termination of parental rights; and

(C) any relevant legal authority.

(4) *Statement Length.* Settlement conference statements shall not exceed three pages in length. The person conducting the settlement conference will also be provided the dependency and termination files.

(5) *Statement Due Date.* Settlement conference statements shall be provided to the court, other counsel, and the court appointed special advocate (CASA) and/or guardian ad litem (GAL) seven calendar days before the conference.

(6) *Confidentiality.* Settlement conference statements are confidential and will not be filed. Settlement conference negotiations are confidential and shall not be used at trial.

(7) *Required Attendance.* Any parent contesting termination, the currently assigned social worker, the social worker's supervisor, counsel for all parties, and the CASA or GAL shall be required to attend the settlement conference. Others may be present at the conference with the approval of the judicial officer.

(8) *Judicial Officer.* Any judicial officer presiding over a settlement conference shall be disqualified from subsequent hearings in the same case.

(b) Settlement Conferences for Dependences Cases. Settlement conferences may be ordered by the court in dependency cases, subject to the requirements of section (a) of this rule.

(c) Pretrial Conferences. Termination cases are subject to pretrial conferences in accordance with these local rules' requirement for pretrial conferences in family law

cases (LSPR 94.03D).

[Adopted effective September 1, 2009; Amended effective September 1, 2010;
September 1, 2011.]