

# Reasonable Efforts Findings Checklist

**Best Practice Tip:** At the beginning of each hearing, consider swearing in the parent(s), social worker, and guardian ad litem if testimony about reasonable efforts is taken.

## Ex Parte Removal Hearing

Tex. Fam. Code § § 262.102(a)(6), 262.107(a)(5)

- What specific efforts has DFPS made to prevent removal?
- Were DFPS' efforts to locate all parents reasonable based on the circumstances?
- If child has already been removed, what efforts has DFPS made or what efforts can DFPS make today to eliminate the need for removal?
- Are DFPS' efforts reasonable based on the circumstances of this child and parent?

## Adversary Hearing

Tex. Fam. Code § 262.201(g)(2),(3), (g-1)(2)

- What specific efforts did DFPS make to prevent removal?
- What efforts has DFPS made or what efforts can DFPS make to enable the child to return home? Ask the parents, and all parties and participants for input.
- What efforts has DFPS made to enable possession by a parent who was not involved in the removal?
- Has DFPS made reasonable efforts to locate any missing or unknown parents?
- Are DFPS' efforts reasonable based on the circumstances of this child and parent?
- If placement with a parent is not currently an option, what efforts has DFPS made to place the child with a relative or kin placement?

## Status Hearing

Tex. Fam. Code § 263.202(b)(1)

- Does the service plan ensure that DFPS makes reasonable efforts to correct the conditions and/or rehabilitate the parent and reunify the child and family?
- Are DFPS' efforts reasonable based on the circumstances of this child and parent?
- Has DFPS made reasonable efforts to locate any missing or unknown parents?
- If placement with a parent is not currently an option, what efforts has DFPS made to place the child with a relative or kin placement?

## Permanency Hearing Prior to Final Order

Tex. Fam. Code § 263.306(a-1)(5)(C)

- What specific efforts has DFPS made to correct the conditions and/or rehabilitate the parent and reunify the child and family?
- What specific efforts has DFPS made to finalize an alternative permanent plan for the child?
- If there continues to be any missing or unknown parents, has DFPS made reasonable efforts to locate them?
- Are DFPS' efforts reasonable based on the circumstances of this child and parent?
- If placement with a parent is not currently an option, what efforts has DFPS made to place the child with a relative or kin placement?

# Reasonable Efforts Findings Checklist

continued

## Involuntary Termination of Parent-Child Relationship

### Tex. Fam. Code § 161.001(f)-(g)

- What specific efforts has DFPS made to correct the conditions and/or rehabilitate the parent and reunify the child and family prior to the commencement of a trial on the merits?
- Is there a continuing danger to the child in the home despite reasonable efforts being made?

## Permanency Hearing After Final Order

### Tex. Fam. Code § 263.5031(a)(4)(E)

- What specific efforts has DFPS made to finalize an alternative permanent plan for the child, including continued efforts to locate and identify safe and appropriate relatives and fictive kin?
- Are DFPS' efforts reasonable based on the circumstances of this child and parent?
- If final permanency has not been achieved, what efforts has DFPS made to achieve final permanency for the child?
- Has DFPS made reasonable efforts to determine whether a parent's circumstances have materially and substantially changed so that they may be considered a safe and appropriate option for the child?

