Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Family Court Enhancement Project in the Domestic Violence Court, Chicago, IL

FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT

Prepared for

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
OFFICE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Award No: 2018-SI-AX-0006

Principal Investigator
Christine George, PhD
cgeorg@luc.edu; 773.508.8533
Center for Urban Research & Learning
6439 N Sheridan Rd., 433.2
Chicago, IL 60626

Co-Principal Investigator
Gina Spitz, PhD
gsitz@luc.edu; 773.508.8529
Center for Urban Research & Learning
6439 N Sheridan Rd., 441
Chicago, IL 60626

Co-Principal Investigator
Susan Grossman, PhD
sgrossm@luc.edu; 773.508.8949
Loyola University Chicago
6439 N Sheridan Rd., 436
Chicago, IL 60626

Project Manager
Yasmeen Khayr, MA
ykhayr@luc.edu; 773.508.8547
Center for Urban Research & Learning
6439 N Sheridan Rd., 443
Chicago, IL 60626

Research Faculty
Zelda Harris, JD
zharris@luc.edu; 312.915.7783
Loyola University Chicago
25 E Pearson St., 1330
Chicago, IL 60611

Community Partner
Leslie Landis, JD
llandis1@luc.edu;
Cook County Circuit Court
Domestic Violence Division
555 W Harrison St.
Chicago, IL 60607

Contributing CURL Research Fellows: Jaspreet Kaur, MA; Emily Jones, MSW; Erica Fada, MSW; Lillian Platten, MA; Casey Callahan, BA; Anna Monarski, BA; Raimi Woodruff, BA; Kate Woziwodzki, BA; Meredith Farrar, BA.

Award Recipient
Loyola University Chicago
1032 West Sheridan Rd.
Chicago, IL 60660-1537

Project Period: 11/01/2018 to 10/31/2021 Extended to 06/30/2023

Award Amount: $428, 838

This project was supported by Grant No.2018-SI-AX-0006 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

Abstract

The Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) in partnership with the Circuit Court of Cook County Domestic Violence Division have examined the Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP). The FCEP model is a series of federally funded initiatives implemented at the domestic violence court to improve safety outcomes for children-involved Order of Protection cases while increasing a sense of procedural justice in a high volume, urban domestic violence courthouse. FCEP was instituted as a model to reform the civil court system to support litigant parents who share children in common as well as actively review the use of child-related remedies within civil OP proceedings to ensure petitioners have access to full safety remedies permissible under the Illinois Domestic Violence Act. Once implemented at the court, FCEP instituted trainings for court personnel, litigant triage screening and informational materials, and the use of domestic violence informed facilitation and a Child-Relief Expediter in negotiating parenting agreements. The present research measures the impact of changes made to the Domestic Violence Division in better addressing the safety and wellbeing of survivors of domestic violence and their children through orders of protection. Through a mixed methods approach, a sample of pre- and post-FCEP OP case files were quantitatively analyzed as well as qualitative interviews with parent litigants and court personnel were conducted to understand the short- and long-term impacts of FCEP on the civil court system. The FCEP evaluation assessed the effectiveness of changes made to judicial proceedings and court culture in reaching safer joint parenting agreements, reducing reoccurrences of violence, and seeking safety and fairness for families impacted by domestic violence. Overall, FCEP instilled a court culture shift that empowered litigants to receive accessible legal resources and safer co-parenting options for litigants with shared children.

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the hard work and commitment, and passion of those who brought this 4-year project to fruition. We are fortunate to have had a great partnership with the Cook County Circuit Court Domestic Violence Division for entrusting us in evaluating the Family Court Enhancement Project. We are especially grateful for the leadership of former Presiding Judge Sebastian Patti in developing this project and for encouraging the evaluation. This project could not have moved forward without former court administrator, Leslie Landis. Her facilitation of the research with the courthouse, her wealth of domestic violence knowledge and expertise, as well as her passion and conviction to this project were instrumental to the completion of this project. We also want to thank Stephanie Senuta, the Child-Relief Expediter, for sharing her space with the researchers and facilitating many court visits, for her assistance in recruitment and data collection, and for modeling how to engage parents with empathy and humanity.

We are grateful for the Presiding Judges, current and former DVD judges, the Senior Division Attorney, Help Desk staff, the former Supervised Visitation Center Liaison, and other court staff that willingly cooperated in our research endeavors. We also appreciate the assistance of the Cook County Clerk office, the Office Court Reporters, and the research team with the Office of the Chief Judge for helping us gain access to administrative data including public court records, court hearing transcripts, and criminal violation data, respectively. Finally, we appreciate working with the State's Attorney's Office as well as other legal and advocacy agencies housed at the courthouse.

A deep thank you to all the individuals we had the privilege of interviewing during this project. A special thank you to the litigant parents who shared vulnerable space with us, who laughed and cried with us, and who were sincere in their reflections about their difficult experiences with domestic violence, parenting, and the court system. Their dedication and love for their children were brave reminders of why FCEP exists and the power of nuanced familial care.

This project reached completion due to the hard work of the many graduate and undergraduate research assists at the Center for Urban Research and Learning. Their curiosity about the project and the domestic violence court, the many trips to the courthouse, and hours of transcription and coding of heavy data were pivotal to this project. In addition to the fellows that contributed to this report, a special thanks to the many fellows that assisted in transcription: Kate Woziwodzki, Alex Quigley, Ashia Walker, Taylor Thomas, Emma Chawkins, Kasi Woods, Fedi Tadele, Asia Lam, Eva Darow, and Julianna Perez. We also want to also thank two individuals from Loyola's School of Social Work who conducted a number of interviews with litigant parents: Priscilla Freire and Daniela Barrios Morello.

Our community partner, Apna Ghar, and our exceptional Advisory Board contributed invaluable insights, resources, and feedback on the development and results from the research. We are grateful for their partnership and expertise as we work to share out the research findings to the various advocacy network, legal agencies, and courthouses nationwide.

And of course, we thank the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women for funding this project.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT I

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS II

INDEX OF TABLES V

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 6

DETAILED PROJECT REPORT 25

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION 25
The Domestic Violence Courthouse *26*
The Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP) *28*
Impact of COVID on DV Courthouse and Research *31*
Literature Review *32*
CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY 37
Data Security & Protection of Human Subjects *38*
Research Questions *39*
Summary of Data Sources *39*
Methodology *40*
Limitations and Challenges to Research *81*
CHAPTER 3: REVIEW OF ORDER OF PROTECTION PETITIONS AND CHILD-RELATED REMEDIES 84
Requested Child-Related Remedies in OP Petitions *85*
Attorney Presentation of Child-Related Issues *87*
Judges Asking Child-Related Questions *91*
Granted Child-Related Remedies in OP Petitions *95*
Discussion *99*
CHAPTER 4: IMPACT OF THE CHILD RELIEF EXPEDITER 114
Context and Role of CRE *114*
The Evolution of the Expediting Process *116*
Collaboration with Court Personnel *123*
Discussion *132*
CHAPTER 5: IMPACT OF COURT EXPERIENCES OF PARENT LITIGANTS ON SAFE PARENTING 135
Parent Litigant Experience with OP and Parenting Agreements *135*
Criminal Violations of Orders of Protection *160*
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION 167
Discussion of Main Evaluation Findings *167*
Culture Shift in the Courthouse and Court System *179*
Sustainability of FCEP *182*
Recommendations for the Court *184*

APPENDICES 189

APPENDIX A: FCEP INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS 189
Frequently Asked Questions: When the OP is Against the Other Parent *190*
Victim Information Packet *192*
Ways to Feel Safer about the Kids *197*
Child Relief Expediter Program *200*
Supervised Visitation Center Liaison *201*
APPENDIX B: REVIEW OF OP CODING TOOL (RQ 1) 202

APPENDIX C: CRE CODING TOOL 222
APPENDIX D: HELP DESK INTERVIEW GUIDE 225
APPENDIX E: LITIGANT INTERVIEW MATERIALS 229
Litigant Interview Recruitment Flyer *229*
Litigant Interview Recruitment FAQ *230*
Litigant Interview Recruitment Contact Form *232*
Litigant Interview Recruitment Contact Form Survey *233*
Virtual Interviewing Protocol *236*
Participant Guide to Zoom *245*
Litigant Interview Consent Form *250*
Petitioner Interview Guide *253*
Respondent Interview Guide *260*
Litigant Resource Guide *267*
Interview Debrief Template *270*
APPENDIX F: LITIGANT INTERVIEW MATERIALS (SPANISH) 272
Litigant Interview Recruitment Flyer (Spanish) *272*
Litigant Interview Recruitment FAQ (Spanish) *273*
Litigant Interview Recruitment Contact Form (Spanish) *275*
Litigant Interview Recruitment Contact Form Survey (Spanish) *276*
Virtual Interviewing Protocol (Spanish) *279*
Participant Guide to Zoom (Spanish) *287*
Litigant Interview Consent Form (Spanish) *293*
Petitioner Interview Guide (Spanish) *297*
Respondent Interview Guide (Spanish) *304*
Litigant Resource Guide (Spanish) *311*
APPENDIX G: JUDGE INTERVIEW MATERIALS 314
Judge Interview Recruitment Script *314*
Judge Interview Consent Script *316*
Former Judge Interview Guide *319*
Current Judge Interview Guide *324*
Judge Interview Research Findings Handout *329*
Judge SAFeR Tool *333*
CRE Indicators for Judge Referral *335*
APPENDIX H: ATTORNEY AND ADVOCATE FOCUS GROUP MATERIALS 337
Attorney Focus Group Recruitment Script *337*
Attorney Focus Group Consent Script *338*
Attorney Focus Group Guide *341*
Attorney and Advocate Focus Group Research Findings Handout *347*
APPENDIX I: CRE INTERVIEW GUIDE 350
APPENDIX J: GRANTED REMEDIES DATA TABLES 354
APPENDIX K: IMPACT OF CRE DATA TABLES 355
REFERENCES 358

Index of Tables

Table 1. Research Questions and Data Plan 39
Table 2. Population of Cases for Research Questions 1.1-1.5 45
Table 3. Sample of Cases for Research Questions 1.1-1.5 47
Table 4. Case Demographics for Sample 1.1/1.2 48
Table 5. Types of Child-Related Remedies Analyzed 84
Table 6. Remedies Requested Pre- and Post-FCEP by Helper Group 86
Table 7. Alleged Abuses Mentioned in OP Petition or Court Hearing by Helper Group, Pre vs. Post 89
Table 8. Red Flags/Risk Factors Mentioned in OP Petition or Court Hearing by Helper Group, Pre vs. Post 90
Table 9. Percentage of Judges who Asked SAFeR-Related Questions during Court Hearings, Pre vs. Post 92
Table 10. Percentage of Judges who Asked SAFeR-Related Question during Court Hearings Comparing Legal or Self-Representation, Pre vs. Post 93
Table 11. Percentage of Judges who Asked Any SAFeR-Related Question during Court Hearings Comparing Legal or Self-Representation, Pre vs. Post 94
Table 12. Percentage of Judges who Asked Any Child-Related Question during Court Hearings, Pre vs. Post 95
Table 13. Percentage of Judges who Asked Any Child-Related Question during Court Hearings Comparing Legal or Self-Representation, Pre vs. Post 95
Table 14. Frequencies of Individual Remedies Granted in OP Across Helper Group 96
Table 15. Remedies Requested and Granted in EOP Across Helper Groups 97
Table 16. Remedies Requested and Granted in POP Across Helper Group 98
Table 17. Criminal OP Violations of Respondent Cases 162

Executive Summary

Loyola University Chicago Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) in partnership with the Circuit Court of Cook County Domestic Violence Division (DVD) has evaluated the Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP). FCEP was a Department of Justice Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) funded initiative implemented at the Domestic Violence Court to improve safety outcomes for Order of Protection (OP) litigants (legal parties) who share children. The goal has been to increase a sense of safety and procedural justice among litigants accessing legal services within a domestic violence court division.

The Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP)

The Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP) was instituted as a model to reform the civil court system to support litigant parents who share children in common and to ensure petitioners have access to full safety remedies permissible under the Illinois Domestic Violence Act. The funded model implemented a) trainings for judges, attorneys, advocates, and other stakeholders; b) the provision of informational materials during an improved litigant triage screening process; and c) a Child-Relief Expediter. Overall, the FCEP model instilled initiatives that support parent litigants in receiving child-related relief in their Orders of Protection and in creating safe and fair parenting agreements.

Research Design and Methodology

The research and evaluation of FCEP aimed to understand the following questions:

1. To what extent has the FCEP increased the safe and fair child-related remedies in OPs for litigants and their children?
2. What is the long-term impact of FCEP activities on facilitating parenting arrangements that protect the emotional and physical well-being of victimized parents and their children?

3. How has the implementation of FCEP been accomplished?

The community-university collaborative approach utilized in this research project ensured that all research questions and methods were designed and developed with equitable participation by both community and university researchers. This approach incorporates the resources, skills, values, and knowledge of each partner into the research process (Suarez-Balcazar and Harper 2003) as well as guaranteeing that the knowledge gained from the research can be disseminated through and accessed by both academia and community members (Dalton et al., 2001).

Using a mixed method approach, court case records were quantitatively analyzed, and qualitative interviews and focus groups were conducted with judges, attorneys, court advocates, court personnel, and litigants to examine these three research questions.

For administrative court data reviewed:

1. A sample of 329 petitions filed in 2015 before the implementation of the FECP were compared to a sample of 395 petitions filed in 2017 subsequent to the implementation of FCEP. The contents of these 724 petitions for OPs were coded for child-related remedies and types of allegations. The coding tool and codebook were developed by the research team, informed by SAFeR training materials and curriculum, which heavily informed the FCEP model.
2. A sample of 259 court transcripts, 132 from 2015 and 127 from 2017, were compared and reviewed to assess how child-related issues were presented and argued in court.
3. The administrative tracking data of 255 cases served by the Child Relief Expeditor (CRE) in 2016/17 were reviewed.

4. A sample of 314 cases from 2015 and 218 cases that met with the CRE from 2017 were compared to assess the likelihood of respondents violating their OPs within one year after receiving their original OP pre- and post-FCEP.

For interviews conducted:

1. Thirteen interviews were conducted with court personnel, including ten current and former DVD judges, the CRE, and two Help Desk Staff.
2. Thirty litigants (15 petitioners and 15 respondents) who met with the CRE and reached a parenting agreement were interviewed.
3. Three focus groups were conducted with one group of attorneys and two groups of advocates housed currently or previously at the courthouse.

Key Findings

Review of OP Petitions and Court Proceedings

The domestic violence (DV) civil court provides Orders of Protection to those experiencing domestic violence requiring emergency assistance. The court primarily serves individuals who file their OP petition as pro se petitioners (self-represented), with a small percentage of petitioners represented by an attorney who initially files their petition. Some pro se petitioners are assisted with their petitions by court advocates referred from various community DV agencies.

When the petitioner enters the courthouse, they arrive at a reception area with a help desk staffed by court personnel that initially provide petitioners with the OP petition forms and the FCEP informational materials. They are screened and may be triaged to additional resources such as advocates, legal assistance attorneys, and volunteers who are available to assist the petitioners.

Requests for Child-Related Remedies

There was a significant increase in requests for safe and fair child-related remedies in Order of Protection petitions filed after the implementation of FCEP in 2017 as compared to petitions filed in 2015, prior to FCEP implementation. The vast majority of the increased child-related requests occurred in pro se petitions. In 2015, pro se petitions included an average of 6.8 types of child-related remedies requests. In 2017, the average number of child-related requests in pro se petitions increased to 7.58 types of child-related remedies. This increase was statistically significant. Attorney, advocate, and law student assisted petitions increased slightly in the number of child-related remedies requested but this increase was not statistically significant.

Petitioners increasingly present their child-related issues and alleged abuses in their OP petitions and case files post-FCEP, further examination of court hearing transcripts were assessed to determine how alleged abuses and child-related issues were presented in court hearings on behalf of petitioners. The types of abuses and the impact of abuses that were assessed were adapted from the SAFeR curriculum and included the following categories: *abuse by respondent to petitioner; abuse by petitioner to child; impact on abuse on child; impact of abuse on petitioner's parenting, impact of abuse on daily life; and red flags/risk factors.*

Attorney Represented and Advocate Assisted Petitioners. Overall, there were few statistically significant differences pre- and post-FCEP in how attorney-represented cases argued/presented the alleged abuses on behalf of petitioners. This was also true for cases in which petitioners were assisted by advocates. While it appeared that attorneys reported most of the abuses and arguments in the petitions rather than in the court hearings, there were few significant changes pre- and post-FCEP in their litigation practices. One exception worth noting is the increase from

72.7% to 81.9% of attorney-represented cases presenting *red flags/risk factors* during their court hearings.

Self-Represented Pro Se Petitioners. Pro se petitioner cases saw statistically significant changes in how alleged abuses and child-related issues were reported in their OP petitions and during their court hearings**.** Specifically, *abuse by respondent to child* was increasingly mentioned in 59.1% of pre-FCEP cases compared to 86.4% of post-FCEP pro se cases during their court hearings. Additionally, pro se petitioners increasingly reported the *impact of abuse on petitioner's parenting* in their petitions and during their hearings. The increase was from 36.4% of all pro se cases pre-FCEP to 77.3% of all pro se cases post-FCEP in their petitions and from 13.6 of all pro se pre-FCEP cases to 54.4% of pro se post-FCEP cases for court hearings. Pro se petitioner cases also increasingly mentioned *red flags/risk factors* in both their petitions (36.4% to 77.3%) and during their court hearings (13.6% to 54.5%) pre- and post-FCEP, although not statistically significant. In addition, pro se petitioner cases did increasingly mention *abuser's mental state* during their court hearings revealing a statistically significant increase from 4.5% to 31.8% between pre- and post-FCEP pro se cases.

Judges Asking Child-Related Questions

There was a statistically significant increase pre- to post-FCEP in the number of cases in which questions were asked by judges regarding children's exposure to abuse and the impact of abuse on children. When assessing all the possible questions that judges could ask regarding children, cases where judges asked questions regarding children's *exposure to abuse* and the *impact of abuse on children* increased significantly post-FCEP. Cases where judges asked about *children's exposure to abuse* increased from 27.3% pre-FCEP to 48.9% post-FCEP. The percentage of cases heard by judges where the judge asked about *impact of abuse on children*

increased from 2.3% pre- to 12.5% post-FCEP among pro se cases. For cases in which judges asked questions related to *exposure of children to abuse*, judges increasingly ask these questions in 52.3% of self-represented cases post-FCEP as compared to 20.5% of pre-FCEP cases. Finally, when asked about *potential red flags or risk factors*, judges increasingly asked these questions of cases over time, increasing the percentage of cases in which these questions were asked from pre-FCEP (58.0%) to post-FCEP (68.2%). There were no significant differences in judges asking questions related to the *impact of abuse on petitioners' parenting* or *impact on daily life*.

Granted Child-Related Remedies

FCEP had little impact on the percentage of child-related remedies granted in final orders of protection, with a few exceptions. When examining the child-related remedies granted, there were minimal changes between pre-and post-FCEP in both Emergency Orders of Protection (EOP) and Plenary Orders of Protection (POP) cases. Most of those changes that occurred were found for advocate-assisted and pro se cases whereas attorney-represented cases portrayed less change between pre- and post-FCEP.

The granting of *respondent further enjoined* was the only child-related remedy that was significantly and increasingly granted post-FCEP—moving from being granted in 47.1% of all cases pre-FCEP to granted in 100% of all cases requesting this post-FCEP. This remedy allowed for petitioners to write-in additional remedies, and all requests for *respondent further enjoined* by advocate cases in particular included some iteration of 'no contact'. These additional 'no contact' remedies often act as a strategy of child-relief as it can further block the respondent from accessing the petitioner and the children to supplement locations included in 'stay away' orders.

Impact of the Child Relief Expediter (CRE)

The role of the Child Relief Expediter (CRE) was created as part of the Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP) to assist litigant parents reach a parenting agreement that would be incorporated into the granted Order of Protection (OP). Judges at the domestic violence division (DVD) refer cases with shared children to the CRE and provide support around parental custody and visitation agreements as well as other information regarding navigating the court, resources, and referrals to services. The creation of the CRE position, in conjunction with the other FCEP initiatives, aimed to empower litigant parents to create a safe parenting agreement as well as to experience a fair court process.

The process of CRE sessions includes both parents determining the safest parenting options and child-related remedies with support from the CRE. Once a parenting plan is agreed upon by both parents, the parenting agreement is incorporated into their final granted OP by a judge. The final OP and parenting agreement allow the parents to safely experience the parenting plan with their children. Depending on how well the plan is executed, the parents have the right to amend and modify their plans, if needed.

The majority of cases that were involved in CRE deliberations reached parenting agreements that were incorporated into their final OP. During CRE sessions, deliberations focus on child-related remedies such as communication regarding children, visitation options, safe exchange protocols, and financial support. The majority of cases involved in CRE sessions in 2017 reached agreement in at least one area of child-related relief (66.3%) after discussing various parenting options. Of all the parenting agreements reached, 59.1% of cases included supervised visitation, 38.8% included visitation by a family member, and 30.3% included supervised visitation by a center. The majority of cases with parenting agreements reached also included

stipulations for communication (76.5%) as well as options for safe exchange, including neutral exchange (45.1%) and supervised exchange by a family member (38.4%). Overall, 92.3% of cases that had CRE sessions and reached agreement in at least one remedy had their agreement incorporated into their granted OP in 2017.

During more recent CRE sessions, cases most frequently agreed upon and implemented unsupervised visitation remedies in their parenting agreements over the last five years. There have been major shifts in supervised visitation practices as supervised visitation centers have been largely inaccessible since the beginning of the pandemic. Current cases with plans for supervised visitation are most often supervised by family members. Exchange agreements and communication practices across cases involved in the expediting process have remained consistent since 2017.

Notably, when interviewed, the CRE felt that the role of the expediting process has positively affected safe agreement outcomes for litigants. This was seen in the decrease of what she called, "frequent flyers," or litigant parents who often return to the court: "Previously [to FCEP], it was just band-aiding the situation, and then the order is done and then you're back, and then you're back six months later... It feels like there are less people in that sort of situation and more people are actually getting solutions that are helping them move forward." The expediting process is functioning to support and offer practical safety options for families experiencing domestic violence.

CRE's Impact on Court Procedure

Judge Experience with CRE. Almost all of the judges interviewed reported that they relied on the CRE's services heavily and spoke highly of the CRE. One judge summed up their feelings in this statement, to which multiple other judges agreed: "[The CRE is] completely and utterly invaluable. I don't understand how the courthouse could have functioned without one before and

it's really depressing and saddening to think that it didn't exist at some point..." (Judge FJ11DEL). Another judge described the CRE as the "eyes and ears" of the judges (Judge FJ10BET).

The interviewed judges shared that the CRE is invaluable to them because the CRE is able to have conversations with litigants that the litigants may not be comfortable having with the judges in a formal court setting. The judges also noted that the CRE learns more detailed information in her mediation sessions than what the judges would learn during their brief hearings with litigants. Finally, the judges shared how the CRE makes extremely accurate safety recommendations because of the rich conversations she has with both litigants.

Attorney and Advocate Experience with CRE. Attorneys and advocates alike spoke highly of the CRE and their experiences with the role within the court setting. Key factors in creating these positive experiences were the CRE's ability to make litigants feel seen and heard, to mitigate issues with the judges, and to support attorneys and advocates in their respective roles assisting petitioners with their OPs.

Litigant Experience with CRE. Overwhelmingly, litigants found value in their sessions with the Child Relief Expediter (CRE). When asked about their level of satisfaction in working with the CRE and creating a parenting agreement, 63.3% of parents were 'very satisfied.' Many of the litigants distinguished their calm and helpful experience with the CRE compared to their stressful experiences with the judges. Many litigants reported the CRE as an accessible court resource.

Litigants' Perceptions of OP and Parenting Agreements

The majority of parent litigants interviewed felt increasingly safe and comfortable with their parenting plans after meeting with the CRE. A key highlight from the interviews was seeing each parent litigant center their children in their discussion of the parenting plans and their broader

familial goals. Whether a petitioner or respondent, many of the parents appreciated the parenting plans and having opportunities to spend quality time with their children. For many parents moving through the court, the parenting plan encouraged parents to build co-parenting skills as well as sustainable relationships with their children as a means to overall safety.

Some petitioners faced challenges surrounding safe communication while implementing their parenting plans. Parents have the option of no communication, communicating through a third party, or communicating via texting, calling, emailing, or through the Talking Parents app. Some petitioners shared that respondents used Talking Parents to threaten, harass, and otherwise interact with the petitioner outside of matters pertaining to the children and visits. They did not want to talk to the respondent but felt required by the parenting plan to maintain communication about their children. In instances where respondents threatened, harassed, or otherwise misused the Talking Parents app, some petitioners reacted by completely cutting off the respondent, putting their parenting plan in jeopardy. Petitioners were concerned that it became another method for respondents to have "free contact" with petitioners, no different than texting.

While many litigant parents benefited from their parenting plans, many also felt the need to make informal modifications to their plans without involving the court or court procedures. The majority of these modifications were to increase visitation times and access for the respondent parent in contexts where visiting time was going well. Many noted that these modifications were primarily due to either not knowing how to proceed with legal modifications through the court, making modifications to avoid the time constraints of the court, or not wanting to return to the court to make parenting decisions.

Litigant Reflections on Children's Experience with the Parenting Plan

Many of the petitioner mothers interviewed expressed that they have been developing closer relationships and spending more time with their children following their OP and parenting plan. Many petitioners noted that their children more openly shared details about their lives and feelings with them now that there was more one-on-one time available at home due to the OP and the physical separation from the respondent. Many of the petitioner mothers also shared that they wanted their children to spend time with their respondent fathers and wanted to ensure the child and respondent could maintain a safe relationship together.

A handful of petitioner mothers indicated challenges with their children refusing to engage in the scheduled visits with the respondent parent. Some petitioners mentioned their children felt hurt by the respondents' behaviors and did not want to spend time with that parent in fear it would lead to more harm. Other petitioners found themselves trying to encourage their children to visit the respondents by expressing the importance of visitation, but their children still refused.

Many of the respondent fathers expressed frustration with the limited time they had with their children, but they were still adamant about spending quality time with their children. Many fathers were grappling with appreciating the time they had with their children while also struggling with the limitations set at that time. Many shared anecdotes of their children asking them why they could not spend more time together or why they could not stay overnight.

Litigants' Perception of Fairness and Procedural Justice with Court System

All litigant parents were asked to consider how fairly they felt treated during their court process, and the majority of parents felt some level of fairness: 26.7% 'somewhat fair', 23.3% 'moderately fair', and 43.3% 'very fair'.

Overall, petitioners had mixed reports about experiencing fairness in their court proceedings. Some petitioners reported they felt a sense of fairness when the judges listened and asked them questions about their experiences, appeared balanced, did not rushthrough their case, and seemed confident in their decision-making. In addition, petitioners reported they felt a sense of fairness when the judge listened and considered both litigants during the court hearing. One petitioner expressed that this respect increased her sense of fairness with the court: “The fact that they were fair to me, they gave him the same level of respect, to me, plays a big part in how we move forward and whether or not there’s a sense of resentment or a sense of anxiety and distrust because of feeling like a whole system will support you and not me.”

Other petitioners felt like they were not heard by the judges during their court hearings. Many petitioners had difficulty communicating with the judges, often expressing that they were not being listened to, were not acknowledged, and did not have enough time to share their experiences with the judges These petitioners were frustrated that they could not fully express their situation and their needs to the judges. Ultimately, this frustration led to petitioners feeling like they would not receive the support that was best for their families.

Comparatively, many of the respondents shared that they did not have a space to share their concerns or their story with the judges. Many respondents did not even attempt to share their concerns with the judges as they anticipated that the judges would not want to listen to them. Overall, many of the respondents felt that the court was one-sided and especially biased against respondent fathers. Many of the respondents were adamant about how unfairly they were treated by the judges and the lack of support provided to men and fathers from the court. These fathers felt that the court would always side with the petitioner mothers and gave more weight to the mothers’ statements.

Some litigants reported negative feelings with their overall experience with the courthouse environment that left litigants feeling dismissed and unworthy of legal support. Both in-person encounters with court personnel and virtual interactions with the court procedure were already overwhelming for parents and grew more difficult when there were feelings of disrespect and lack of support within the court environment.

Impact of FCEP on OP Violations

When comparing the criminal violation rates of respondent litigants within one year of their civil OP, there was no statistically significant difference between pre- and post-FCEP cases. We cannot confidently attribute a clear impact of FCEP or the CRE on respondent behavior once they left the court with an OP and their likelihood of violating the OP. However, we can see some slight changes in the types of criminal charges that violated OPs between 2015 and 2017. In 2015, OP violations were mainly due to battery/domestic battery (52.8%) whereas in 2017, charges were mainly from violations of orders of protection (VOOP) (44.4%). The decline in the percentage of cases charged with battery/domestic battery had borderline statistical significance.

Impact of COVID on Court Processes

Disruptions occurred within the courthouse during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the start of the pandemic in 2020, the court shifted to limited capacity within the courthouse and all court hearings were heard virtually over Zoom. Court hearings were backed up for months, especially POP hearings, and many EOP orders and parenting plans were extended consistently for months with occasional status hearings. Due to these major delays as well as increases in domestic violence during the pandemic, the judges and the CRE were overwhelmed with cases beyond their capacity. Delayed court hearings limited litigant time with judges, and various CRE sessions scheduled in advance presented a burden of work that was not sustainable for court personnel at the time.

However, these changes also brought about changes to protocol, including the expediting process for the CRE. A clear shift for the CRE was holding sessions virtually, setting up sessions with litigants during their EOP hearing, often weeks in advanced, and having multiple CRE sessions over the course of their case rather than one short session often after the POP hearing. While the procedures may have changed, it is important to recognize the flexibility of the CRE services to adapt to the differing needs that arose during the pandemic while still ensuring the original objectives of the CRE and child safety continued to be centered.

Culture Shift in the Courthouse and Court System

Overall, these findings indicate some cultural shift in the Domestic Violence courthouse as a result of the Family Court Enhancement Project. There have been increased discussions of child-related issues, requests for child-related remedies, and approaches to decision-making and advocacy that have slowly become an overall practice in the court among judges, attorneys, advocates, court staff, and litigants. While the research and evaluation focused on impacts related to the FCEP model, the court experienced other transformations that were immeasurable and spanned beyond its implementation in 2017. The model included the SAFeR trainings, the CRE, and informational materials, but the impact of the development, implementation, and sustainability of the FCEP model cannot be fully captured just in these three elements and just within the short timeframe of its first year in the courthouse.

During the development of FCEP, much time was spent with the provision of technical assistance training by OVAW consultants, stakeholder and management meetings convened by the DV court, as well as exploratory surveys, interviews, and focus groups with court personnel regarding their observations of the court processes. These activities contributed greatly to the slow shift happening within the court. The conversations engendered through these venues considered

current practices and policies around child-related relief as well as identifying needs within the court that would improve information sharing and deliberation of child-related issues. The FCEP planning began in 2013 and continued until it was implemented in 2016/2017, so judges, advocates, and attorneys were primed to start considering child-related issues and relief well before FCEP was finally implemented within the court.

As noted in the findings above, attorney and advocate assisted petitioners requested child-related remedies at high rates in 2015 and this remained high in 2017 suggesting a possible "ceiling effect." Indeed, we can infer that the change in knowledge and practice for attorneys and advocates around child-related relief began earlier than 2015 with the discussions and planning among attorneys, advocates, and judges that occurred during the OVW technical assistance phase in 2013. Therefore, the changes within the court with regards to child safety considerations both in the OP petitions and the court deliberations occurred over a longer period of time and became institutionalized once FCEP was fully implemented at the court. The culture change within the court environment and acceptance of child-related considerations in court policies were nurtured over the larger span of FCEP development.

Key Elements of the FCEP Model

After reflecting on the research and evaluation of the Family Court Enhancement Project, it is important to consider elements of the FCEP model to sustain within the Domestic Violence Court: continuing education and training of court personnel, resources to litigants, and the establishment of the child relief expeditor.

Education for Court Personnel

The SAFeR curriculum informed the FCEP model and molds the child-related practices implemented through the FCEP model. There is value to having the SAFeR training and materials in a more consistent and possibly yearly manner, especially to

account for newly hired staff, to ensure people have access to formal elements of information. It may be also helpful to hold consistent conversations among judges, attorneys, and advocates throughout the year that encourage reflection of the SAFeR values on their own practices, considerations of new policies and practices of other courts, and overall space for court personnel to learn and adapt their practices together. The goal is to have more consistent and streamlined sources of information and space for growth within court practices and procedure for court personnel in a way that is aligned with the SAFeR curriculum.

Resources for Litigants The surprising impact of the informational materials on petitioners, especially for pro se petitioners, revealed the strength of physical reminders and sources of information for litigants entering the court. Maintaining the presence of the informational materials will be integral for the sustainability of FCEP and will provide petitioners with avenues towards child-related relief. However, there can be improvements such as creating additional materials in various languages and considering more accessible languages for folks who may have lower literacy levels. The research also revealed the importance of having court staff (Help Desk staff, court clerks, or advocates) physically present to assist petitioners in addition to the informational materials. It is integral to have both written and verbal explanation for how to fill out an OP petition to increase accessibility and higher likelihood of understanding from petitioners completing an otherwise daunting and hard-to-understand legal form.

Child Relief Expediter The most beneficial and powerful aspect of the FCEP model was creating the role of the Child Relief Expediter. The CRE provides a neutral yet empathetic space for parents to develop a safe parenting plan for their children, and the ease of the session, modeling of conflict resolution, and skills for co-parenting are integral for parents to engage in safe parenting beyond the court and legal processes. The volume of cases and clients that move through the

expediting process is overwhelming to a point that another CRE was hired and ideas for suburban CREs are moving forward as well. It is also important to note the impact of the CRE on the other court personnel and the ability for the CRE to communicate with judges, attorneys, and advocates in ways that encourage discussion around child-related issues, offer information about SAFeR approaches, and practice litigant and child-centered skills. The Cook County court system institutionalized the FCEP model in its Domestic Violence Courthouse, and it has been expanding its features to other courtrooms within the Domestic Violence Division across the county.

Sustainability of FCEP

While FCEP technically was a pilot program funded for one year, the model spanned various years of development and investment that embedded the model within the courthouse. And indeed, the CRE and other court personnel brought on by FCEP were institutionalized within court staffing. The model is also collaborative and adaptable to the changing needs within the court and court personnel, to litigants, and to external changes, such as the pandemic. Any replication of FCEP should consider ways to best support litigants during and after OP procedures through physical resources and staff, sources of information, and referrals for post-court services and resources. The model is deeply committed to child safety as well as safe parenting options for both petitioners and respondents. These values are sustained in the court through various court personnel and how they incorporate these values within their practices working directly with litigants and their children. Finally, having structures for research and evaluation of the model will allow for long-term methods of assessing and improving the model as the court, legal policies, and litigant needs change over time. Overall, to replicate the FCEP model is to engage various stakeholders, to have the flexibility to adapt to ongoing changes in the court, a commitment to the

child-centered values of FCEP, and a long-term investment in maintaining and evolving the model.

Recommendations for the Court

While the presence of FCEP has resulted in a major improvement in the Domestic Violence Court and its civil OP procedures, there are still recommendations for the court based on the research and evaluation.

Increase Capacity for Court Personnel

Hire additional judges specialized in domestic violence, additional CREs across the county, and more litigant-centered staff (Help Desk staff, court clerks, advocates) who can be physically present within the courthouse. This will provide support and accessible information within the legal system and alleviate barriers for litigants struggling to understand how to move through their court procedures.

System of Litigant Resources and Social Worker

It would be beneficial for the court to have a system for litigants and a specialized court social worker to provide litigants with information for their OP, their parenting plan, and any subsequent legal options as well as local partner service providers and advocacy agencies that could assist litigants beyond legal needs.

Training for Visitation Supervisors

We would recommend having the required training, meeting, or discussion between the court and the family members supervising visits to ensure that they are aware of the responsibilities required for supervising a court-ordered visiting time.

Consistent Communication among Court Personnel

We recommend there be structured and consistent communication, reflection, and education among court personnel. This could include instilling consistent meetings among judges, attorneys, advocates, CREs, and Help Desk staff that consider how FCEP and child-related issues are addressed with litigants. These meetings could be a space for all court personnel to reflect on child-related issues, consider new court policies and

procedures, share best practices when working with litigants, and problem-solve issues that arise in court when considering child-related relief.

Required DV Training and Feedback for Judges The Domestic Violence Division should explore having a required DV orientation and training for new and continuing judges annually. While many structural factors may influence how a judge is moving through numerous court cases, it may also be helpful to create structures for judges to reflect and receive feedback on their practices and engagement with litigants.

Evaluation of Court Practices Finally, it is important that the court continue to invest in and instill systems for consistent evaluation of the FCEP model and subsequent structures put in place as a result of FCEP. It would be helpful to have yearly reviews among the court personnel to collaboratively reflect on how the court is functioning, how cases with children in common are addressed, and remaining gaps or challenges that impede court process or litigant-centered service.

Detailed Project Report

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Loyola University Chicago Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) in partnership with the Illinois Circuit Court of Cook County Domestic Violence Division (DVD) has examined the Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP). FCEP is a series of Department of Justice Office of Violence Against Women Office (OVW) funded initiatives implemented at the domestic violence court to improve safety outcomes for Order of Protection (OP) litigants (legal parties) who share children. The goal is to increase a sense of safety and procedural justice among litigants accessing legal services within a domestic violence court division.

OVW awarded CURL a research grant to conduct an evaluation of FCEP under FY 2018 Priority Subject "Evaluations of VAWA-funded interventions" and four *OVW Areas of Study*, including victims' needs, justice, impact, and reducing recidivism. The research and evaluation sought to better understand how the judges, attorneys, and advocates at the court adapted to FCEP and if changes were made to their judicial and legal practices in response to civil Order of Protection (OP) cases that had children involved. Additionally, the evaluation examined how parent litigants with children in common experienced the court, how FCEP impacted their engagement with the OP process, how they engaged with their OP and parenting agreement, and how they move through the overall court system. The research and evaluation interacted with different stakeholders of the court to better assess how the culture of the courthouse changed with FCEP; how various court personnel and the litigants responded to these changes; and how child safety were centered in the court.

We organized the report in 6 chapters. In this introductory first Chapter, we describe the Domestic Violence Courthouse, the FCEP model, and its development, structure, and implementation. Also, we describe the impact of the COVID-19 on FCEP and research. We end this chapter with a review of the literature in three parts: evaluation research; research on domestic violence in diverse communities; and procedural justice. In Chapter 2, we present the research design and methodology used to conduct every element of the research and evaluation. In Chapter 3: Review of the Order of Protection Petitions and Child-Related Remedies, we present the data results and discussion of the child-related remedies requested and granted by litigants pre- and post-FCEP. In Chapter 4: Impact of the Child-Relief Expediter (CRE), we examine the role of the CRE, the interaction of the CRE with court personnel, and overall discussion of the CRE's impact on the courthouse and child-related relief. In Chapter 5: Impact of Court Experiences of Parent Litigants on Safe Parenting, we include the results and discussion of interviews conducted with litigant parents seeking parenting agreements, and data regarding criminal violations of OPs. The report will conclude with Chapter 6: Overall Discussion where we discuss the overall findings, the sustainability of FCEP, and recommendations for the Court.

The Domestic Violence Courthouse

The Circuit Court of Cook County opened a specialized domestic violence courthouse in 2005 in downtown Chicago dedicated to addressing both criminal and civil domestic violence cases. These cases, both criminal and civil, involved parties having a "family or household" relationship, as defined by the Illinois Domestic Violence Act (IDVA).[1] As a result of active community advocacy, the court subsequently created a Domestic Violence Division in 2010 and

[1] Family and household relationships include spouses, former spouses, parents, children, stepchildren, and other persons related by blood or marriage, persons who share or formerly shared a common dwelling, persons who have or allegedly have a child in common, persons who share a blood relationship through a child, person who have or have had a dating relationship, persons with disability and their caregivers

named a Presiding Judge to supervise judges hearing criminal and civil OP cases both in the DV Court House and in other DV courtrooms throughout the County. The centrally located downtown domestic violence courthouse primarily serves litigants from communities of color, especially Black and Latine individuals many of whom hold low socio-economic status and often are self-represented. The courthouse and partnered stakeholders have worked to sustain an enhanced coordinated community response to domestic violence via legal options. And includes space for various domestic violence advocacy agencies, the states attorney's office, and non-profit legal agencies serving victims of domestic violence, etc.

Through the Illinois Domestic Violence Act (IDVA), domestic violence cases can receive legal protections through an Order of Protection (OP). Individuals facing domestic abuse can seek an OP at the DV courthouse by first filing an OP petition. The petition is a multi-page form that asks a *petitioner* (individual seeking a protective order) to list themselves and their children who require protection, the allegations of abuse, and requested safety remedies that they would like to include in their final OP. The IDVA includes an extensive and comprehensive list of available OP remedies including several particularly relevant to FCEP in examining the appropriate use of remedies related to shared children of the litigants including:

- the granting of exclusive possession of a residence on an emergency basis;
- naming children as parties in need of protection under the victim/petitioner's OP;
- the award of physical care and possession of children in common with the respondent/abuser on an emergency, ex parte basis;
- addressing visitation on the emergency OP;
- preventing the removal of children from the jurisdiction; ordering the return of children not in the possession of the petitioner; restricting access to children's school records;

- and, on a plenary (2 year) OP where notice has been given to the respondent with an opportunity to be heard, the award of temporary legal custody and visitation.

Once a petitioner has filed their OP petition, they appear in a civil court hearing where a judge reviews their petition and can grant an Emergency Order of Protection (EOP) that lasts 21 days. Once the EOP is granted, it is necessary to complete service on the *respondent* (individual who the OP is sought against). Petitioners can also decide to extend their EOP or schedule a final OP hearing to receive a Plenary Order of Protection (POP) that may include expanded remedies (including legal custody) and can last up to two years.

The high-volume court environment results in many petitioners obtaining an EOP and returning for several extensions but far fewer obtaining a POP. It is thus an important safety goal to ensure that EOP cases are addressing the emergency safety issues while utilizing all the appropriate protections permissible by the IDVA. Due to the high volume of cases and limited capacity of attorneys and advocates practicing in the DV courthouse, many petitioners are self-represented especially when initiating their OP case.

The Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP)

The Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP) was developed to "provide intensive training and technical assistance seeking to improve safety for DV victims and their children during and beyond court proceedings." Through technical assistance and later funding by the Department of Justice Office of Violence Against Women, FCEP aimed to address cases with child-related issues and identify the need for training and other resources that would assist judges in their OP decision-making regarding child safety. It would become integral for judges as well as attorneys and advocates to learn through FCEP how to examine the context and impact of abuse

on the petitioners' safety, their parenting, and the wellbeing of their children to develop improved safety outcomes for each case.

Prior to FCEP, the DVD had no specific child-related domestic violence training or access to resources that could assist judges in understanding the full context of a case. In a high-volume court, most cases involved self-represented pro se petitioners or advocate-assisted petitioners that were not trained to address child-related matters in their petitions or during their hearings. Attorney-represented petitioners became accustomed to not asking for specific child-related relief in the OPs, often knowing that the judges were not comfortable granting these remedies. Unfortunately, without proper case information or child-related context, the court often made assumptions that influenced their decision-making in OP cases that did not reflect the unique case contexts nor consider the impact of DV on parenting or the wellbeing of children.

The FCEP model aimed to reform the civil court system to support litigants who share children in common as well as actively review the use of child-related remedies within civil OP proceedings to ensure petitioners had access to full safety remedies permissible under the IDVA. The FCEP model was developed through various convenings and working groups of judges, district attorneys, defense lawyers, advocates, and other court personnel to discuss challenges and gaps facing the court system and to craft more accessible and safe options for families experiencing domestic violence with shared children. FCEP was then funded by Office on Violence Against Women Department of Justice in 2015 and the new model instituted a) trainings for judges, attorneys, advocates, and other stakeholders; b) an improved litigant triage screening and informational materials; c) a Child-Relief Expediter; and d) a Supervised Visitation Center Liaison.

Court personnel were trained in 2016 on the new FCEP-enforced court supports provided to litigants with children in common and were informed by the SAFeR curriculum developed by the Battered Women's Justice Project. This curriculum focused on holistically understanding the patterns and impacts of domestic violence on petitioners, respondents, and their shared children with particular attention to how the abuse can influence the wellbeing of the petitioner and their children, the petitioner's parenting, the daily life of the family, and red flags and risk factors.

The courthouse also improved its triage help desk located on the first floor of the courthouse where petitioners can complete their OP petition. Prior to FCEP, the help desk was not equipped with informational materials and no structures were in place to track the movement of each case. Therefore, FCEP instilled additional screenings, developed a case tracking database, and hired additional help desk staff, including a Spanish-speaking staff member. FCEP also developed informational materials to assist petitioners file their OP petitions and request child-related remedies through guiding questions and considerations based on their individual situation and the level of harm petitioners and their children faced. These informational materials were especially helpful for self-represented pro se petitioners that did not have legal support or experience with the OP court process to more easily and accurately request child-related relief in their OP. The improved help desk staffing and materials encouraged a more supportive and educational environment for survivors entering the courthouse seeking an OP that centered child-related relief and family safety. Appendix A includes the various informational materials.

The roles of the Child-Relief Expediter (CRE) and the Supervised Visitation Center Liaison (SVCL) were introduced to the courthouse as supports to parent litigants with children in common seeking safe parenting arrangements. The CRE is specifically trained in domestic violence and conflict resolution techniques and works with parent litigants to collaboratively

define child-related relief in their OP and develop a parenting plan that addresses their specific safety needs for themselves and their children. Specifically, the CRE and parent litigants determine a plan around communication, safe exchange, and safe visitation options that are then incorporated into their protective order. If parents agreed to have supervised visitation at a center, the SVCL then educated parents about the three main supervised visitation centers in Chicago and assisted in setting up those visitations for the parents and their children. Together these roles were pivotal in collaboratively crafting safe parenting plans that encouraged co-parenting and child-centered decision-making. However, in 2017, the SVCL no longer worked at the courthouse and the CRE carried on the SVCL role and acted as a liaison with visitation centers. Due to the court's commitment to sustain the Child Relief Expediter Program, a General Order by the Court determined the permanence of the CRE in the courthouse.

Impact of COVID on DV Courthouse and Research

It is important to note the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the domestic violence courthouse and subsequent consequences on the research process. When the pandemic first began, the courthouse limited their services and extended active Orders of Protection. The courthouse eventually shifted most of their civil OP hearings to be held virtually over Zoom to adhere to COVID-related safety precautions as well as allowing individuals to file their OP petitions online, and slowly open the courthouse for folks to file their OP in-person while remote court hearings continued. With the pandemic came an increase in domestic violence incidences and the court was met with an overwhelming number of DV cases and continue to have full court calls. During this time, the CRE also developed protocols to continue their role virtually and offer expediting services remotely. While civil court hearings are currently held both in-person and virtually over Zoom, the CRE has maintained their sessions virtually over Zoom. Fortunately, the informational

materials continued to be distributed to litigants filing their OPs as the Help Desk remained active during the pandemic and currently as the court opens up to mostly in-person services. Additionally, another round of SAFeR trainings were held in 2022 as the new Presiding Judge has continued to favor the role of FCEP in the courthouse.

The research process also inevitably shifted as a result of the pandemic and changes to the courthouse. Major changes included shifting all qualitative interviews and focus groups to be held virtually over Zoom to ensure both interviewers and individuals interviewed adhered to COVID-related safety precautions. Additional delays in the research process resulted from limited access to quantitative administrative data due to restricted access to the courthouse and changes to online court case databases that occurred during the pandemic. Additional changes within the court personnel, including judges, attorneys, and advocates, also limited access to these individuals for interviews but also changed court cultures that inevitably would affect some research results. More explicit shifts in the research design and results will be detailed in subsequent chapters.

Literature Review

Domestic violence survivors and their advocates have long been concerned about inadequate court considerations of the physical and emotional safety of children (and their parents) when petitioners seek child-related remedies in Orders of Protection (OP). Sole or joint custody or poorly supervised visitation awarded to a parent who has caused harm offer opportunities for harm as that parent may use children to coerce, harass, or manipulate survivors (Wuest et al., 2003). Domestic abuse can often undermine child-mother relationships (Bancroft & Silverman, 2002), while continued exposure to DV can severely damage a child's wellbeing (Felitti et al., 1998; Wolfe et al., 2003). Judges have also expressed concern about the balance between child safety and parental rights, and petitioner safety and respondent rehabilitation. Research, such as the

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study on the lifetime impact of trauma exposure on children (Felitti et al., 1998), illustrates the need to evaluate the court's role in limiting the impact of childhood exposure to DV and the trauma of the absence of either parent. OVW in their 2014 solicitation recognized a lack of "best practices" and "model courts" that could address these child-related issues in civil OP cases.

Although judges may make decisions regarding children without considering a survivor's risk (Nichols-Hadeed et al., 2012), most states mandate that judges take abuse into account when making decisions about child-related remedies (American Bar Association, 2008; Fleury-Steiner et al., 2014; Jaffee & Crooks, 2004; Kernic et al., 2005). However, restrictions placed on consideration of abuse may weaken these child-centered provisions (Zorza, 2010). Fathers with a history of abuse may still receive visitation with their children; the court may not recognize abuse despite substantial evidence; and judges may discount women survivors' claims that their children are at risk (Kernic, et al., 2005; Meier, 2003). Similarly, survivors' attorneys and advocates have historically lacked the necessary knowledge about child custody issues in DV cases. The need for FCEP activities applies to all who work with these cases. Pence et al. (2012) found no evidence that custody evaluators:

> "(1) used or had access to standardized tools, protocols or benchmarks in their work; (2) had any specialized experience or training, or relied upon or consulted with experts, in the field of [DV]; or (3) could make appropriate recommendations…"(p.31).

The FCEP intervention also followed a national movement to turn to supervised visitation programs as a means to reduce DV (Oehme & O'Rourke, 2011-2012). Parent litigants and their children have benefitted from certain restricted and/or conditional forms of visitation and custody given to the parent who caused harm (Hayes, 2012; Zorza, 2010). For instance, women with

abusive ex-partners view child exchange sites and supervised visitation as the most helpful services provided as part of their custody and visitation arrangements (Shepard and Hagemeister, 2013). Children also benefit from supervised visitation and restricted custody of the abusive parent because total loss of contact with fathers may be more distressing than abuse to the child (Stover & Morgos, 2013). Young children in particular may suffer higher rates of depression, anxiety, and other mental illnesses if they are not able to see their fathers after the parents have separated (Stover et al., 2006). Finally, abusers who indicate concern about parenting skills and the wellbeing of their children after incidences of abuse (Litton Fox et al., 2001) have been shown to benefit from family-focused interventions (O'Leary & Cohen, 2007; Stith et al., 2011; Stith et al., 2004; Stover, 2013).

Specific guidelines for visitation, possession, and custody decisions in DV cases benefit all parties (petitioner, respondent, and children) by differentiating between different types and risk levels associated with cases of DV in making parenting decisions (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2010; Johnson, 2008; Swan & Snow, 2002). Studies have also demonstrated the efficacy of training to increase the concern for the safety of all parties as paramount (rather than co-parenting as the most important) and a greater understanding of coercive-controlling violence patterns on the part of the respondent (Saunders et al., 2011).

Additionally, two theories, an FCEP-specific conception of risk and the concept of procedural justice, provide the theoretical foundation for this research and the FCEP model. The *FCEP Conception of Risk* includes "coercive control" and embodied in the SAFeR training provided to judges, attorneys, and advocates as well as in the form of scripts that judges use to make decisions in real time court hearings about OP remedies. A preponderance of practitioners and scholars (including a study by Beck & Raghavan in 2010) argue that screening out abusers

who engage in coercive control is a best practice for evaluating risk posed to children by an abusive parent. Cases in which families have dealt with a partner engaging in coercive control have been shown to produce greater problems in children including socialization problems, academic and intellectual issues, disciplinary issues, and mental and physical illnesses (Jouriles & McDonald, 2015). Thus, in addition to accounting for the safety of the petitioner, the FCEP also accounts for both the petitioner and the respondent in their parental roles (and rights) as well as the children in their child development and safety interests. Giving parents the opportunity to come to agreement about their children is critical because loss of contact with lower-risk abusive respondent parents (usually fathers), not engaged in coercive control can cause distress for children and damage the relationship between the child and the petitioner-parent (see Stover & Morgos, 2015).

"SAFeR" is the theoretical approach of the trainings and resources provided to stakeholders and litigants by the FCEP that takes into account the whole family. SAFeR emphasizes a four-pronged process of DV **s**creening: **a**ssessing the larger context in which the DV has been occurring; **f**ocusing on how DV affects parenting; and, "responding to the lived experience of [DV] in ALL family court recommendations, decisions and interventions" (emphasis mine; Davis, 2016:1-2.). The creators of SAFeR and the Battered Women's Justice Project (BWJP) have argued that unfounded assumptions by court stakeholders about what DV involves (Davis, 2015), including that it always involves serious physical harm or a long history of coercive controlling abuse (Dragiewicz, 2012) and that it always has a negative effect on children or parenting (Crowley, 2006), have previously obscured the actual dynamics and effects of DV cases where litigants have children in common. Only by examining cases in a more complex and nuanced way with regard to the impact on the whole family will the case outcomes "address the full nature, context and implications of DV, whatever they may be" (Davis, 2015).

This study also seeks to examine the FCEP's goal of providing procedural justice as it relates to all parties in DV proceedings. Procedural justice refers to the fairness and transparency of proceedings, and to the effects of the legal processes employed (Thibault & Walker, 1975). The study will examine key elements of procedural justice including the perceived fairness with which legal decisions are imposed. Fairness has been shown to reduce recidivism by abusers in DV cases (Paternoster et al., 1997; Gover, 2007). We will measure recidivism by checking for violations of the OPs up to six months after the order was put in place. Based on previous research, we hypothesize that the FCEP resources and procedures (particularly training elements and the staffing of the CRE and SVCL) will make the survivors and respondents experience a sense of fairness, gain information about court processes, as well as feel that they had a "voice" in the process (Gover, 2007).

The research and evaluation of FCEP will thus contribute to the literature on court practices that address child-related issues and safety and provide useful information that is applicable to specialized domestic violence courts.

Chapter 2: Research Design and Methodology

The Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP) was implemented at the Cook County Domestic Violence Court and has been researched and evaluated to assess its impact on the safe and fair outcomes of parent litigants that have shared children. Primarily, this study examined 1) the extent to which FCEP increased safe and fair child-related remedies for litigants and their children; 2) the long-term impacts of FCEP on safe and fair parenting arrangements for litigants and their children; and 3) the implementation and sustainability of the FCEP program at the court.

This evaluation is primarily participatory and collaborative. This approach ensures that all research questions and methods are designed and developed with equitable participation by both community and university researchers while incorporating the resources, skills, values, and knowledge of each partner into the research process (Suarez-Balcazar and Harper 2003). This method ensures that the knowledge gained from the research can be disseminated through and accessed by both academia and community members (Dalton et al. 2001).

All organizations working on this project have long-practiced collaborative work focused on domestic violence research and advocacy. The Loyola University Chicago Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) is a university-based research center with 26 years of community-based collaborative research and evaluation. CURL has over 20 years of experience working on domestic violence-related research and has partnered with various community partners across the DV advocacy community. During that time, CURL worked in various venues with all the partners on this project. The DV Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois partnered with CURL at the commencement of the planning for the FCEP project in 2014 to assess court procedures, states attorneys, public defenders and other stakeholder procedures, and services to litigant parents and children experiencing domestic violence to inform the development of the

FCEP model. Apna Ghar, a domestic violence service agency and CURL have partnered on previous collaborative research projects, focusing on the experiences of immigrant women survivors of Domestic Violence and the services available to them. The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) is a state agency which implements and funds criminal justice and violence prevention programs under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and other state and federal grants. CURL and ICJIA have worked together analyzing data from InfoNet, a web-based data collection and reporting system used by victim service providers. ICJIA has also provided a forum for statewide dissemination of criminal justice related research projects conducted by Loyola University researchers.

This research and evaluation triangulates various data points, including information from administrative court data, court hearing transcripts, and experiences of parent litigants, judges, attorneys, advocates, and help desk staff. To assess these various data points, the research uses a mixed methodological approach combining quantitative and qualitative information and is quasi-experimental comparing pre- and post-FCEP impacts on Order of Protection (OP) petitions and violation rates.

Data Security & Protection of Human Subjects

This evaluation research was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Loyola University Chicago under IRB project number #2623. The initial grant proposal was approved in 2018 and has since been amended various times to ensure all research practices are updated and approved to align with changes made due to practical changes to the research design. The IRB approval of this project ensures the research is conducted ethically and human subjects, including litigant parents and court personnel, are protected. Additionally, IRB protocol commits this research to securely collecting and storing data information.

Research Questions

Overall, the FCEP evaluation aimed to understand the following questions:

- To what extent has FCEP increased the safe and fair child-related remedies in OPs for litigants and their children?
- What is the long-term impact of FCEP activities on facilitating parenting arrangements that protect the emotional and physical wellbeing of victimized parents and their children?
- How has the implementation of FCEP been accomplished?

The table below lists the sub-questions related to these 3 research questions as well as indicating the data sources, databases, and data analysis procedures for each sub-part.

Summary of Data Sources

Table 1. Research Questions and Data Plan

RESEARCH QUESTION	DATA SOURCE	DATA COLLECTION	DATA ANALYSIS
RQ 1.1/1.2 Request of Child-Related Remedies for All Petitioners	Administrative Court Data *OP Petitions*	Passport Database *Qualtrics Coding Tool*	Quantitative Analysis *Frequencies, Chi-Square Testing, T-Testing*
RQ 1.3 Attorney Argumentation re: Child-Related Remedies	Administrative Court Data *OP Petitions* *Court Hearing Transcripts*	Passport Database Court Hearing Transcript *Qualtrics Coding Tool*	Quantitative Analysis *SPSS Frequencies, Chi-Square Testing*
RQ 1.4 Judge Questioning re: Child-Related Issues	Administrative Court Data *Court Hearing Transcripts*	Court Hearing Transcript *Qualtrics Coding Tool*	Quantitative Analysis *SPSS Frequencies, Chi-Square Testing*
RQ 1.5 Granted Child-Relief	Administrative Court Data	Passport Database	Quantitative Analysis

Remedies for all Petitioners	*OP Petitions*	*Qualtrics Coding Tool*	*SPSS Frequencies, Chi-Square Testing, T-Testing*
RQ 1.6 Impact of CRE on Parenting Arrangements for Litigants	Administrative Court Data *CRE Session Reports* Interview with CRE Interviews with Judges	Excel Database *CRE Report Database* Qualitative Interviews	Quantitative Analysis *SPSS Frequencies* Qualitative Analysis *Thematic Coding*
RQ 2.1 Litigant Experience and Parenting Arrangements	Interview with Litigant Parents	Qualitative Interviews	Qualitative Analysis *NVivo Thematic Coding*
RQ 2.2 OP Criminal Violations	Administrative Court Data *Criminal Cases*	Odyssey Database *Criminal Cases*	Quantitative Analysis *SPSS Frequencies, Chi-Square Testing, T-Testing*
RQ 3.1 FCEP Impact on Judge Decision-Making	Interviews with Judges	Qualitative Interviews	Qualitative Analysis *Thematic Coding*
RQ 3.2 FCEP Impact on Attorney and Advocate OP Petition	Focus Groups with Attorneys and Advocates	Qualitative Focus Groups	Qualitative Analysis *Thematic Coding*
RQ 3.3 CRE Facilitation of Parenting Agreements	Interview with CRE	Qualitative Interviews	Qualitative Analysis *Thematic Coding*

Methodology

In this chapter, we present the methodology used to address each research question, including information about the sampling strategy, data collected, and the data analysis process. This lays the foundation for the discussion of findings which are presented in subsequent chapters.

Administrative Court Data (RQ 1)

The following section outlines the methodology utilized to answer the first five sub-questions of the first research question (RQ 1): To what extent has the FCEP increased the safe and fair child-related remedies in Orders of Protection for litigants and their children? The overall research question aimed to capture the impact of FCEP initiatives on encouraging more safe and fair outcomes for litigants including how child-related remedies were requested and granted to litigants seeking an Order of Protection.

Child-Related Remedies Requested and Granted (RQ 1.1-1.5)

Research Questions and Study Population

The following five sub-questions focus exclusively on the child-related remedies requested and granted pre-FCEP and post-FCEP with the aim of determining the impact of FCEP on any changes. FCEP-related activities began mid-2016 and were fully established by 2017, therefore we analyzed cases before (2015) and after (2017) the implementation of the FCEP program to assess change. The child-related remedies examined included the following:

- Minor Child(ren) named Protected Parties
- Exclusive Possession of Residence
- Stay Away *from Petitioner/Protected Parties*
- Stay Away *from Other Addresses*
- Physical Care and Possession (PCP) of Children
- Return to/Non-removal of Children from Petitioner
- Temporary Legal Custody
- Granted Visitation
- Restricted Visitation

- Reserved Visitation
- Denied Visitation
- Prohibited Removal from IL/Concealment of Children
- Respondent Further Enjoined

Additionally, these questions focus on the impact of the judges, attorneys, law students, and advocates that assist litigants with the process of requesting and receiving child-related remedies. Petitioners were assigned to helper groups based on who was assisting them; helper groups included attorney-represented, law student-assisted, advocate-assisted, and self-represented pro-se litigants.

RQ 1.1 asks: *To what extent have the FCEP trainings and stakeholder meetings increased the proportion of requests for physical care and possession (PCP), custody, and visitation remedies in OPs by attorney-represented, law student-assisted, and advocate-assisted petitioners?* Similarly, RQ 1.2 asks: *To what extent has the FCEP's provision of child-related remedy educational materials at the DV Court Help Desk increased the proportion of requests for the three remedies in OPs by pro-se petitioners?* Both of these questions focus on the extent to which FCEP activities increased the proportion of requests for child-related remedies in Orders of Protection across the different helper groups. Cases included in the population and subsequent samples for these questions had to meet the following criteria: They had to have filed a petition for an Order of Protection and they had to have children in common shared between litigants.

RQ 1.3 asks: *To what extent have the FCEP trainings and stakeholder meetings increased the amount of argumentation made on behalf of petitioners in court hearings by attorneys for the three remedies to be included in OPs?* This subsequent question focuses more narrowly on the

quantity and quality of arguments made by attorneys regarding child-related remedies during court hearings. Only attorney-represented cases were utilized for this sample, and cases needed to meet the following criteria: They had to have filed a petition for an Order of Protection; they had to have children in common; they requested at least one of the child-related remedies; and an attorney had to have been present in at least one court hearing. [3] Cases for RQ 1.3 were selected from cases used in RQ 1.1/1.2 that adhered to these sampling criteria.

RQ 1.4 asks: *To what extent have the FCEP trainings and stakeholder meetings increased DVD judges' questioning and probing—of petitioners and their attorneys or advocates—during court hearings regarding abuse, parenting, and the child(ren)'s safety and development to focus OP remedies requested?* This question focuses specifically on whether or not judges asked questions regarding child-related remedies during various court hearings. Attorney-represented and pro se cases were selected for this sample. Pro se cases within this sample refer to both advocate-assisted and pro se cases as litigants are considered as self-represented pro se during court hearings whether they were assisted or not. Moreover, cases in this sample had to adhere to the following criteria: litigants had to have children in common; petitioner requested at least one of the child-related remedies; and the litigants had to have been present at a court hearing at least once. Cases for RQ 1.4 were selected from cases used in RQ 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 that adhered to the sampling criteria.

RQ 1.5 asks: *How much have the FCEP activities as a whole increased the proportion of safe and appropriate child-related remedies granted in OPs by judges?* RQ 1.5 functions to track the entirety of a case and the child-related remedies that were granted to litigants across the various helper groups. To maintain consistency of the samples and ensure comprehensibility of our findings, the cases used in the RQ 1.4 sample were also used in the RQ 1.5 sample. In this way,

the sample strategy for RQ 1.5 did not change and enabled us to analyze cases beginning with the remedies to the alleged abuses litigants requested and remedies finally granted in the Order of Protection.

Data Collection

Data utilized for RQ 1.1-1.5 included two main sources of information: 1) Order of Protection petitions and pleadings; and 2) court hearing transcripts. Each civil OP case was identified using administrative court data through the Help Desk database. The Help Desk is staffed by court employees that track the movement of petitioners from when they enter the court and first file their petition for an Order of Protection. This Help Desk data provided a list of individual names and information pertaining to their OP case, including whether children were shared between the petitioner and respondent, the helper group assisting the petitioner (attorney, advocate, law student, or pro se), and if there were concerns related to children's safety. The Help Desk data provided the population of cases including litigants with children in common who filed a petition for an Order of Protection in 2015 and 2017. Because Help Desk data on petitioners is not always up to date, all cases in the original population of cases followed a validation process before inclusion in the final population of cases and selection into the subsequent samples. Each case included adhered to the following characteristics:

- Petition filed for an Order of Protection
- Helper group listed in Help Desk data matched helper group in full case pleading
- Petitioner and respondent shared minor children
- Minor children were listed on the petition as protected parties
- At least one child-related remedy was requested on the petition

Cases that did not meet at least one of the above requirements were removed from the population pool. For attorneys, law students, and advocates, the final population of cases represented all validated cases from the larger population of cases in the administrative data. For pro se cases, we utilized interval sampling to select cases from the administrative data and then verified them subsequently. Table 1 presents the population of original and verified cases for each helper group for each time period.

Table 2. Population of Cases for Research Questions 1.1-1.5

Population of Case	2015		2017	
	Original	**Verified**	**Original**	**Verified**
Total n(%)	**2758 (100)**	**348 (100)**	**1993 (100)**	**395 (100)**
Attorney	246 (8.9)	107 (30.7)	114 (5.7)	64 (16.2)
Law Student	73 (2.7)	36 (10.3)	107 (5.4)	76 (19.2)
Advocate	248 (9.0)	102 (29.3)	235 (11.8)	101 (25.6)
Pro Se	1268 (46.0)	103 (29.6)	935 (46.9)	154 (39.0)
Missing[2]	923 (33.5)	--	602 (30.2)	--

Sample of Cases for RQ 1.1-15

The population of validated cases as shown in Table 1 was utilized to determine all subsequent samples for each sub-question (RQ 1.1-1.5). Each sample was informed by the proposed sample size of 88 cases per group in order to detect effect and significance. This number was the minimum sample size needed to maximize statistical power and enable us to reach statistical significance in assessing differences in outcomes pre and post-FCEP. For RQ 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3, 88 cases were proposed for each helper group per each time period. For RQ 1.4 and 1.5, 88 cases per time period was proposed, including 44 attorney cases, 22 pro se cases, and 22 advocate cases. Unfortunately, we were unable to garner 88 cases for all helper groups and thus

[2] Missing cases are cases that did not have an identifiable helper group via the Help Desk data.

utilized as many cases as the Help Desk provided through a purposive sample. Table 2 presents the number of cases for each sample for RQ 1.1-1.5 by helper group per each time period. The following sections will outline the more focused sampling strategy and sample sizes based on each sub-question and the various helper groups.

RQ 1.1/1.2: This sample included cases that had a petition for an Order of Protection and the litigants had children in common. For 2015 attorney-represented cases, the 107 cases were randomized and the first 88 cases were randomly selected. For 2017 attorney cases, all 64 cases were purposively selected. For law student-assisted cases, all 36 cases for 2105 and 76 cases for 2017 that adhered to sample requirements were purposively sampled. For advocate-assisted cases, all 102 cases for 2015 and 101 cases for 2017 that adhered to the sampling requirements were purposively selected for RQ 1.1. Due to a much larger number of pro se cases available in the Help Desk data, two sets of interval samples were pulled for each time period by choosing every 6^{th} case available. These cases were then verified to insure they adhered to the sample requirements, resulting in 103 cases for 2015 and 154 cases for 2017 in order to answer RQ 1.2.

RQ 1.3: All cases in this sample included cases that had children in common, had requested at least one child-related remedy, and had participated in at least one court hearing where an attorney was present. . To ensure consistency across sub-questions and samples, attorney cases used for RQ 1.1 were also used in RQ 1.3. For 2015 attorney cases, 88 cases that adhered to the above requirement were randomly selected. For 2017, the 60 cases that adhered to the sample requirement from RQ 1.1 were utilized . Due to the shortage of cases, an additional 23 cases that began as a pro se or advocate case and then acquired an attorney for a hearing were added. Thus, 83 attorney-cases for 2017 were selected for the sample.

RQ 1.4 and 1.5: The 1.4 and 1.5 samples follow the same sampling strategy and include the same cases used for both questions. The cases used for RQ 1.4 and 1.5 all had to have children in common, had to have requested at least one child-related remedy, and at least the petitioner if not both the petitioner and respondent had to be present during any kind of hearing. To remain consistent, a total of 88 cases were selected for 2015 and 2017 each. Within those 88, 44 were attorney-represented cases randomly selected from the sample of cases used in RQ 1.1 and 44 were pro se cases (22 pro se and 22 advocate) . Again, for advocate-assisted cases, the 22 cases for both 2015 and 2017 were randomly selected from the available cases used in RQ 1.1. For pro se cases, 22 cases for both time periods were randomly selected from the available cases used to answer RQ 1.2.

Table 3. Sample of Cases for Research Questions 1.1-1.5

Sample of Cases								
	RQ 1.1/1.2		RQ 1.3		RQ 1.4		RQ 1.5	
Time Period	**2015**	**2017**	**2015**	**2017**	**2015**	**2017**	**2015**	**2017**
Attorney	88	64	88	83	44	44	44	44
Law Student	36	76	--	--	--	--	--	--
Advocate	102	101	22	22	22	22	22	22
Pro Se	103	154	22	22	22	22	22	22

Demographic information for the cases included in the 1.1/1.2 sampled are listed in Table 3. The majority of the sample consisted of women 95.5% pre-FCEP and 93.8% post-FCEP. There was a small percentage of the sample who were male-identified, 4.5% of the cases pre-FCEP and 6.2% post-FCEP. Overall, petitioners on average were in their early thirties both pre- and post-FCEP.

About half of the petitioners, 53.1% pre-FCEP, 53.6% post-FCEP, had either a dating relationship or were engaged to the respondent. About 23% of the petitioners and respondents were

either current or former spouses, and the remaining cases reported another relationship between the petitioner and respondent or did not specify the relationship (24.2% pre-FCEP, 21.5% post-FCEP). Only about 40% of the petitioners were sharing a living or dwelling situation with the respondent. For the majority of the cases, the petitioner was the primary caregiver, with 80.3% and 82.1% listing themselves as such in the pre- and post-FCEP groups, respectively. Very few petitioners, 1.5% pre-FCEP and 0.3% post-FCEP, listed 'other' for caregivers. The remaining data were either missing or left blank.

Data were also collected about pending court cases associated with each petition. Only 19 cases pre-FCEP and 18 cases post-FCEP had additional cases pending. These pending cases ranged from criminal cases, multiple types of family court issues, and other types of cases. All frequencies are listed in Table 3.

The majority of cases had paternity established for their children, 76.1 pre-FCEP and 79.5% post-FCEP. There were 23.9% of cases pre-FCEP and 20.2% post-FCEP that did not have paternity. Cases where paternity was not established were further coded to distinguish the number of children that had not established paternity within the same family. In most of these cases, paternity had not been established for any of the children mentioned in the petition pre-FCEP (76.3%) and post-FCEP (71.8%). In a few cases, 15.0% and 19.2% pre- and post-FCEP respectively, paternity had been established for some of the shared children, but not all.

Table 4. Case Demographics for Sample 1.1/1.2

Variable	Pre	Post
Cases (N)	100 (335)	100 (386)
Frequency of Sex/Gender Pre vs. Post	100 (335)	100 (386)
Male	4.5 (15)	6.2 (24)
Female	95.5 (320)	93.8 (362)
Respondent Relationship to Petitioner	100 (335)	100 (386)
Current or Former Spouse	22.7 (76)	24.8 (96)
Having or having had a dating/engagement relationship	53.1 (178)	53.6 (207)
Other or no relationship specified	24.2 (81)	21.5 (83)
Living Situation of Petitioner and Respondent	100 (335)	100 (386)

Sharing/formerly sharing a common dwelling	38.5 (129)	35.8 (138)
No dwelling in common	61.5 (206)	64.2 (248)
Frequency of Primary Caregiver	100 (335)	100 (386)
Petitioner is caregiver	80.3 (269)	82.1 (317)
Petitioner not caregiver	1.2 (4)	0.5 (2)
Left Blank/Unknown	17.0 (57)	16.8 (65)
Other (co-parent or foster)	1.5 (503)	0.03 (1)
Missing	0.0 (0)	0.03 (1)
Age (Years)	97.9 (328)	99.2 (383)
Median Age	33.44	31.92
Frequency of Pending Cases	5.7 (19)	4.7 (18)
Criminal	5.3	0.0
Family-Divorce	5.3	0.0
Family-Paternity	10.7	11.1
Family-Custody	5.3	0.0
Family-Child Support	21.1	16.7
Other	26.3	61.1
Unknown/Unspecified	15.8	11.1
Frequency of Paternity	100 (335)	100 (386)
Paternity Established	76.1 (255)	79.5 (307)
No Paternity	23.9 (80)	20.0 (78)
All children	*76.3 (61)*	*71.8 (56)*
Not all, but some	*15.0 (12)*	*19.2 (15)*
Missing information	*6.3 (5)*	*2.6 (2)*

Coding of Administrative Court Data

Coding Tool for RQ 1.1-1.5 The research team utilized an online survey software, Qualtrics, to develop a coding tool for quantitative data collection; the tool is located in Appendix B. The coding tool was informed by the SAFeR curriculum and OP petition form and was developed by the research team with assistance from the Advisory Board, especially the developers of SAFeR. The coding tool collected information on the OP petitions, including child-related remedies requested and granted; the petitioner's experiences of abuse, exposure of child(ren) to abuse, the effects of the abuse on the child(ren), the impact of abuse on the petitioner's ability to parent and daily life, attorneys' questioning during hearings, and judges' probing during hearings. Qualtrics' advanced settings allowed for intricate logic and formatting, the ability to access and edit data directly on the platform, and the ease of transferring data to other platforms for statistical analysis, including Excel and SPSS. Additionally, Qualtrics was selected for the coding tool to reduce human error, and enhance transparency, reliability, and validity in data collection. Coders

and members of the research team could easily access the coding tool and collect data remotely, which proved crucial for completing data collection during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Development of the coding tool occurred over several months, with various drafts and versions designed around the research questions. Additional changes and adjustments were made to the coding tool throughout the pilot coding process. The final version of the coding tool consisted of 58 unique items to collect information from OP petitions and court hearing transcripts. Most items included hover text that defined and provided examples to guide the coders.

Codebook Development A codebook was developed as well to help guide the researchers while coding and to establish definitions for variables utilized in the coding tool. The codebook was heavily informed by SAFeR materials and definitions, and the research team collaborated to define variables, identify examples, and adjust the codebook based on experience with the coding tool. The codebook was categorized into six questions: *What is the respondent doing to the petitioner? What is the respondent doing to the child? What is the impact of abuse on daily life? What is the impact of abuse on child(ren)? What is the impact of abuse on petitioner? Are the following risk factors brought up?* Each question included related variables, SAFeR and legal definitions of the variables, and a list of example behaviors or "what to look for" within the petition or court transcript. The codebook was designed to be a living document that coders could edit and adjust as coding progressed.

Coding Training Once the coding tool was developed and before conducting the coding process, the research team completed a two-day coding training. The purpose of the training was to establish foundational domestic violence knowledge and terminology; review the Order of Protection filing process with the purpose of gaining familiarity with OP petitions and the domestic violence court procedures; examine the SAFeR training and the logic behind its implementation

in FCEP; and to practice coding three OP case files as a group. The intent of the training was also to prepare and familiarize coders with the coding tool and application of the coding tool on full OP cases prior to the formal coding process.

The first day of the coding training focused on reviewing foundational assumptions, theories, and research related to domestic violence. Primarily, the focus was to establish an understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence, including reviewing the Duluth Model and the Power and Control Wheel, the definition of coercive control, and the contexts in which abuse occurs. We also considered each of these aspects through an intersectional lens (Crenshaw,1991), common responses petitioners may have to abuse, intimate terrorism (Johnson, 2008), the Campbell Danger Assessment, and the Illinois Domestic Violence Act, Of key importance was a discussion of the impact of domestic violence on children including its impact on infant brain development (Perry et al., 1995) and mental health issues commonly experienced by children exposed to domestic violence. On the second day we reviewed the materials of the SAFeR training and the logic behind the model. Lastly, the training included practice coding of three OP cases. The team coded the cases individually and then discussed together their findings and how they filled out the coding tool per case. This process allowed coders to become familiar with the application of the coding tool and highlighted some areas of the coding tool that needed to be further developed.

Pilot and Full Coding of Court Data Pilot coding occurred in two phases to assess the inter-coder reliability of 1) RQ 1.1/1.2 and 2) 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5. For pilot coding of RQ 1.1/1.2, twenty cases were randomly selected from the sample of cases and the coders completed the pilot coding for these cases independently and met afterwards to compare results. Differences in responses were

minimal and intercoder reliability was established informally. Additionally, edits to the coding tool were identified and made at this time.

For pilot coding of 1.3/1.4/1.5, the research team first met to determine a plan for coding this section. The team decided the coders would complete coding five pilot cases and then meet to determine the percentage of agreement on the coding results, with a goal of 75% agreement (Glen, 2016). Coders would complete as many rounds as necessary of pilot coding needed to achieve the 75% agreement rate. The purpose of pilot coding was to also establish a similar mindset amongst coders to ensure reliable results across coders and cases. Following the first five cases of pilot coding, the coding team achieved 94% agreement for all items in the coding tool. Due to the complex nature of coding, the team decided to complete an additional two rounds of pilot coding, despite exceeding the 75% agreement rate goal determined earlier in the process. Round 2 of pilot coding had an agreement rate of 90% and Round 3 had an agreement rate of 94%, respectively. Following the completion of the three rounds of coding, the coding team's Inter-Coder Reliability was determined to be 93% for all items.

The team of three coders conducted the coding for RQ 1.1/1.2 over the course of three months. Coders reviewed the OPs to record case information and the child-related remedies requested by petitioners. Once completed, the coders cleaned the data collected to ensure all information was consistent throughout the sample. Coding for RQ 1.3/1.4/1.5 took about ten months in order to review all the court hearing transcripts and case pleadings (petitions, affidavits, etc.) and clean the data. The coders kept personal coding notes throughout this process to keep track of questions, concerns, or other relevant information not collected in the coding tool. Additionally, coders frequently referenced the codebook for clarification during coding. The

coders also had weekly check-ins to address questions, coding errors, or other coding issues together. These meetings also served as a vital place for coder self-care and problem-solving.

Prior to March 2020, coders typically coded cases in-person at the CURL office. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic coders had to begin coding remotely. The transition to working from home delayed coding significantly, especially as coders and the research team adjusted to the other challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The coding tool, coding documents, and data collected were all accessible online, which proved vital for transitioning due to COVID-19 restrictions. Coders were able to access the coding tool and data on Qualtrics and coders were able to access petitions and court hearing transcripts using OneDrive.

Coding and Self-Care An integral part of conducting the coding for RQ 1.1-1.5 was to implement a trauma-informed procedure for fostering self-care for the research team members coding and working directly with the Order of Protection case files and court hearing transcripts. Case files and hearing transcripts contained highly traumatic materials and the research team recognized the potential harm to coders from prolonged exposure to the traumatic content of the data. Additionally, coding involved multiple readings of traumatic materials in order to properly code the data. Due to the unique nature of exposure during coding, the research team was concerned about vicarious trauma, burnout, and compassion fatigue impacting the quality of data collection (Coles et al., 2014; Woodby et al., 2011). Therefore, a self-care process was developed to prevent coders experiencing the negative side effects of continued exposure to the traumatic contents of petitions and court hearings (Bell et al., 2003; Etherington, 2007). Specifically, the self-care process for coders included: limits on number of cases coded at once; having consistent debriefing sessions amongst the three primary coders to release the emotional burden of reading through case files and court hearing transcripts; self-soothing creative activities; individualized

self-care plans; individualized therapy sessions; and engaging in a healing circle once coding was completed. This practice of communal self-care not only fostered a safe and reflective space for the researchers, but it grounded the entire project and research process in trauma-informed practices.

Analysis of Administrative Court Data

In order to answer RQ 1.1/1.2, the research team analyzed child related remedies requested in each OP petition document using a Qualtrics survey to collect information. Each OP case included the original court petition (filed by the petitioner) along with all other documents pertaining to the case. Data from Qualtrics was downloaded and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 27). Initial download of the data required data cleaning and re-coding for missing or incomplete data points. After initial calculation of frequencies of the demographic data, further analysis was conducted to assess the change pre- and post-FCEP across the individual remedies and total number of remedies requested across each helper group. In order to test whether there was a statistically significant change in the type and number of cases that requested the child-related remedies (comparing pre and post FCEP), we compared the percent of cases asking for each remedy pre- and post-FCEP as well as the average number of remedies requested in each time period. Pearson chi square and T-tests were used to test for statistical significance. Calculations that point towards a statistically significant increase in the number of remedies requested would indicate that FCEP interventions and educational materials were effective.

To answer RQ 1.3, the research team analyzed the OP petition, any pertaining affidavits, and court hearing transcripts to examine the alleged abuses and other child-related information presented in attorney-represented petitions and child-related arguments made by attorneys during

court hearings. Advocate-assisted and pro se OP petitions and case files were also examined for alleged abuses and other child-related information presented in the case files. For RQ 1.4, court hearing transcripts were examined to identify child-related questions asked by judges. Finally, granted EOP and POP orders were coded for the types of child-related remedies granted for RQ 1.5. The same Qualtrics coding tool utilized for RQ 1.1/1.2 was used to collect information for RQ 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5. After initial calculation of frequencies related to remedies requested pre- and post- FCEP, further analysis was conducted to assess the change in attorney, advocate, and pro se presentation of alleged abuses, child-related questions asked by judges, and total number of remedies granted pre- and post-FCEP. The data were analyzed for difference by calculating basic frequencies and using Pearson Chi-Square tests and t-tests to calculate statistical significance and assess change pre- and post-FCEP. Calculations that point towards a statistically significant increase in child-related information presented in petitions, child-related judge questions asked during OP hearings, and child-related remedies granted would indicate that FCEP interventions, trainings, and educational materials were effective.

Child-Relief Expediter Cases in 2016/2017 (RQ 1.6)

Research Question and Study Population

The CRE entered the court when FCEP was first implemented at the end of 2016. During the first year of FCEP in 2017, the CRE met and reached agreements with approximately 255 cases with parent litigants. The following research question guided our research on this role in its first year: *What short-term impact did the FCEP-provided CRE have on increasing the safety and fairness of visitation arrangements for litigants?* We examined those 255 cases facilitated by the CRE to reveal the ways in which this role may have encouraged greater safety and court fairness to parent litigants.

Data Collection and Analysis

In order to examine the cases and parenting agreements reached in the first year of FCEP, cases from 2016 and 2017 that had a session with the CRE and had children shared between the petitioner and respondent for each case were collected and analyzed. The data were collected through a coding tool to keep track of important information during the CRE sessions with litigant parents. The tool collected general case information, the status of the CRE session, child-related relief discussed, and outcomes reached during the session. The coding tool is included in Appendix C. Once the CRE completed a session with a case, she would complete the coding tool and scan a pdf of the filled-out tool to the research team. The research team would then code and input the information from the coding tool into a database to consolidate all case information. The database included the measures for each of the items included in the CRE coding tool. This included the following variables: timing of referral; agreement modification; session status; visitation; exchange; communication; other miscellaneous child-related issues; and agreement in OPs. The database also included the following demographic information for all petitioners and respondents who met with the CRE: age; education completed; marital status; gender; and race/ethnicity.

Additionally, cases that reached a parenting agreement with the CRE were examined to determine whether the parenting agreement was incorporated into the granted OP. To do this, case IDs were collected for cases that had a CRE session where there was an agreement for at least one child-related relief. These case IDs were then confirmed in the online civil case database, Odyssey, to check whether the parenting agreements were included with the granted OP or whether the agreement and/or its stipulations were referenced in the granted OP. This information was collected in the larger coding tool database as well.

Once all CRE report data were entered into the database, the data were uploaded to SPSS. The data were then further cleaned and analyzed to identify the scope of cases that had session with the CRE during the first year of FCEP. Descriptive statistics and frequencies of all session details and demographics of the litigants were produced in the analysis.

Interview with Help Desk Staff

After conducting the quantitative review of OPs and requested and granted child-related remedies, there were still questions regarding the ways petitioners were supported while filing their OP petitions. The Help Desk is a support desk located on the first floor of the courthouse and is the first place petitioners go to begin their OP case process. The Help Desk staff provide the OP petition forms and determine additional resources to share with petitioners to ensure they are successfully navigating the courthouse to receive an OP. To better understand the process of the Help Desk, two Help Desk staff members were interviewed.

The interviews occurred in-person at the courthouse and lasted about one hour with each Help Desk staff member separately. The interviewer went through an informed consent process with each participant sharing the purpose of the interview, the kinds of questions that would be asked, and confidentiality practices. They then secured their consent to be interviewed and to have the interview recorded. The interview guide included questions about the role of the Help Desk staff at the court, the process and function of the Help Desk in supporting petitioners, their familiarity with FCEP and FCEP informational materials, their relationship with other court personnel (CRE, attorneys, advocates, judges, etc.), and the impact of COVID on the Help Desk. Additionally, some aggregated research findings from RQ 1.1-1.5 were shared with the Help Desk staff for them to share their observations and reactions to the findings based on their experience assisting petitioners. The audio-recorded interviews were transcribed by CURL fellows using

Otter.ai transcription software, and thematically coded and organized by themes without formal coding software. Appendix D includes the interview guide utilized for the Help Desk interviews.

Litigant Experience with Domestic Violence Court (RQ 2)

The following sections focus on the second main research question: *What is the long-term impact of FCEP activities on facilitating parenting arrangements that protect the emotional and physical well-being of victimized parents and their children?* This question centers on the experiences of litigant parents after they have received their OP and parenting agreement, identifying ways FCEP did or did not impact their lives after leaving the courthouse.

Interviews with Parent Litigants (RQ 2.1)

Research Questions and Study Population

To understand the long-term impacts of FCEP on litigants with shared children, the following research question was asked: *To what extent do petitioners and respondents perceive, after working with the CRE, that parenting arrangements in the OP are safe and fair three months after the OP is entered?* To answer this question, in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with 30 litigant parents (15 petitioners, 15 respondents) who adhered to the following eligibility requirements: an Order of Protection was ordered between litigants that had shared minor child(ren); the litigant parents met with the CRE and reached a parenting agreement; and litigant parents were 18 years or older. All interviews were conducted three months after the parenting agreement was reached to assess for long-term impacts of the parenting plan on the lives of the litigants.

The Impact of COVID on the Interviews

The development of the litigant interviews began in 2019 and was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Accordingly, many adjustments were made to the research design and

preparation for these interviews. The interviews were initially proposed to be conducted in-person and some recruitment began in-person; however, with the pandemic stay-at-home orders and shifts to remote/virtual work, all interview procedures needed to shift to being conducted virtually. In order to insure that we conducted the interviews in an ethical and safe manner, we spent several months researching best practices for conducting virtual interviews with individuals impacted by domestic violence. We were deeply informed by several sources of information including national and local DV communities, Inspire Action for Social Change. the CRE and the academic literature. All these forms of information shaped how we were to conduct safe, trauma-informed, and survivor-centered interviews and the protocols and interview questions we would utilize during the interviews.

Recruitment and Scheduling Interviews

Initially, the proposal aimed to reach 50 total litigant parents; however, due to pandemic delays, inconsistent recruitment, and research saturation, we reached 30 parents. All litigant participants were recruited through the CRE. After having a session with the CRE and reaching an agreement, the CRE shared the recruitment materials with the litigants which included a recruitment flyer, a recruitment FAQ sheet, and a contact form that litigants could fill out and return to the research team with their contact information if they were interested in participating in an interview. Recruitment began in 2019 prior to the pandemic and all recruitment at that time was done in person with physical copies of recruitment materials shared with litigants after their session with the CRE. Once the pandemic began and interview processes transitioned to remote processes, an online Qualtrics survey was created that included the questions of the contact form and attached the recruitment flyer and an FAQ document in the survey. The survey was shared by

the CRE with her clients, both petitioners and respondents, via email for them to access the necessary information remotely.

Both petitioners and respondents were offered an interview contact form to fill out individually based on each person's interest to be interviewed. Each parent could choose to participate; pairs of matched petitioners and respondents were not purposely recruited. Once a parent completed the contact form, whether in-person or using the online survey, indicating their willingness to take part in the research. A research team member reached out to them over email or phone to recruit them. The litigant was first asked if they were still interested in participating in an interview and if so, a series of questions was asked to ensure the participant adhered to the eligibility requirements. The participant was then provided detailed information about the interview, including the purpose of the interview, the manner in which it would take place (over Zoom), the compensation plan, and the three months wait between recruitment and the interview. Every month for three months, research staff reached out to each participant to ensure they were still interested in participating and gave them a chance to ask any questions about the interview. After three months, the research staff contacted the participant to schedule an interview and once a date and time were confirmed, a password protected Zoom link, a consent form, screening questions, and a guide to Zoom were all sent to the participant. Interview times were flexible, to make it easy for the participant to take part, including offering after-work hours and weekends as options. All interviews were blocked off for two hours each to ensure there was enough time to move through all the interview questions. Most interviews were conducted in 90 minutes, although some needed only an hour or less and others took close to two hours.

A total of 55 litigant parents were recruited using both the physical and virtual contact form, 42 initially agreed to an interview, and 30 interviews with litigants were conducted (15

petitioner mothers, 15 respondent fathers). Of the 30 interviews, four were conducted with litigants recruited before the pandemic and 26 were recruited during the pandemic.

Development of Interview Guide, Interview Materials, and Choosing Interviewers

The interview guide and questions for the litigant parent interviews began development before the pandemic and continued during the first few months of the pandemic. Two interview guides were developed for the interviews, one for petitioners and one for respondents to account for differences in their court experiences. The interview questions were expanded from the original interview guides included in the original research proposal to consider more nuanced experiences of the litigant parents. The interview questions focused on the context and content of the parenting plan reached by the litigant parents; their current experience with the parenting plan; the litigant experience with the CRE and the judges; and their overall court experience. The interview guides were shared with the CRE, advisory board member from cook county mediation, and the research team to consider whether the questions aligned with the overall research question and included enough detail to account for the differences across the litigant experiences. Other interview materials were developed at this time, including a consent script, a virtual interviewing protocol, and an interview debrief document. These materials were created during the pandemic once it was decided the interviews would be conducted virtually. The consent form was updated to include information about the interview procedures, questions to be asked, compensation, confidentiality, and consent to participate and be audio recorded during the interview. A consent script was approved to be shared and read during the interviews and for the participants to verbally consent to the interview procedures.

Additionally, a virtual interviewing protocol was developed to ensure trauma-informed practices when speaking with litigant parents. This protocol was heavily informed by a virtual

protocol the CRE created when returning to meet with litigants virtually. We also were informed by literature around virtual interviewing as well as best practices advised by the domestic violence advocacy networks conducting virtual mediation and survivor services. This protocol was compiled to ensure every part of the recruiting and interviewing process was trauma-informed and kept the litigants safe while conducting these interviews. The protocol was used to screen participants prior to the interview and included questions that were asked before the formal interview began. Questions asked litigants about their immediate safety and privacy, whether participants were alone; whether their children were present and if so, how to make sure they would not overhear the interview; confidentiality of the interview, privacy on Zoom, and other questions pertaining to the ability for the participants to safely and easily participate in the research interview were also included.

Finally, a debrief document template was created which would be completed after each interview to capture the most salient observations immediately after the interview. These notes acted as qualitative *jottings* after each interview and gave space for the interviewers and note takers to reflect on the interview after it was completed. These notes would also be utilized as *memos* once the interviews were qualitatively coded. The debrief document collected information about the interview participant and context for their case, descriptive observational notes about the participant's physical description, temperament, and responsiveness to the interview. It also documented notes for the interviewer to assess how the interview was conducted over Zoom, comments on how questions were asked or could be rephrased, and if any interview logistical problems arose during the interview process.

The recruitment materials, petitioner and respondent interview guides, consent form, and virtual interviewing protocol were all finalized in both English and Spanish to accommodate for

English and Spanish-speaking litigants. All litigant interview materials can be found in Appendix E and the Spanish versions of the interview materials can be found in Appendix F.

Once the interview guide and other interview materials were finalized, it was imperative to determine who would be conducting the interviews and the requirements needed. The parent litigants who would be participating were experiencing domestic violence, enduring harm, causing harm towards others, and engaging with a difficult court experience, so the research team insisted on having individuals that could approach these interviews with care, expertise, and understanding. It was agreed that one of the research team members would conduct interviews, but it was also clear that one individual could not conduct all the interviews on their own and endure numerous content-heavy interviews without support. In the search for additional interviewers, a few requirements were decided: the interviewers needed to be fluent in English and Spanish, have experience working with survivors and those who cause harm, and have experience conducting qualitative interviews. The team also spent some time considering the gender and sexual orientation of the interviewer and whether these factors would be important to consider, especially related to interviews with respondent fathers who had caused harm. In the end, we recognized the various assumptions this discussion reflected and were mindful of how they might harm our respondents in making our final selection of interviewers. Various colleagues and community members were considered and contacted to find interviewers interested and available to assist in these interviews. In the end, two individuals, one Loyola faculty member and a recent Loyola master's graduate from the School of Social Work, were chosen to assist and conduct the interviews with the research team member.

Pilot Interview

Before delving into the full interviews with parent litigants, three pilot interviews were conducted to assess the effectiveness of the interview guide and questions, the efficiency of the interviewing process, and the adaptability of conducting the interviews virtually over Zoom. For the pilot, Apna Ghar, a partner on the project, identified for recruitment three individuals who were currently receiving visitation services. These individuals, who were not eligible for the study, were similar to our target research population in demography and court experiences.

The interviews followed closely the way the full interviews would be conducted, including going through the virtual interviewing protocol, informed consent, and following the interview guides. This informative pilot interview not only focused on asking the interview questions but asking the participants to reflect on how they questions made them feel, how they initially reacted to the questions, and how hard or easy it was to answer the interview questions. This allowed the research team to examine how participants would react, respond, and understand the questions during a full interview. The three pilot interviews were exceptionally helpful as they provided various litigant experiences and reactions that would come up during the full interviews. It was important to understand the differences between petitioner and respondent experiences and to conduct the interviews in English and Spanish to ensure both languages would be received well by participants. Adjustments were made to the interview guide and other materials in response to how the pilot participants reacted during the pilot interviews.

Interview Training

An Interview Training was virtually held over Zoom in preparation for the interviews with litigant parents, hosted by members of the research team for the three interviewers. The training included didactic information about the context of FCEP and the evaluation, as well as different

interviewing skills and issues. It also included a two-hour focused role play training so the interviewers could practice asking the interview questions for both English and Spanish versions of the interview guide. After the training, the interviewers were fully prepared to begin interviewing litigant parent participants. All the information shared during the interview training was consolidated into a comprehensive Guide to Interviewing that would be available as a resource and reference when preparing for or conducting an interview.

Litigant Parent Interviews

Interviews with litigant parents began in January 2021 and ended in September 2022. During this time, 30 interviews were conducted with 15 petitioner mothers and 15 respondent fathers, many of whom were people of racially marginalized groups. Most of the litigants interviewed were unmarried to their domestic partner with which they have children in common. The recruitment process did not intentionally match petitioners and respondents of the same couple; however, one petitioner and respondent pair with shared children were interviewed.

The majority of litigant parents (17) were self-represented pro se litigants, eight litigants were represented by an attorney, and five petitioners were assisted by an advocate. Almost half of the litigant parents (14) had established unsupervised visitation with their children. Ten litigant parents had supervised visitation, most often visits were supervised by family members. Only three litigant parents were ordered to have visits at the supervised visitation center and two other litigants had utilized multiple forms of visitation with their children. One parent did not share information about any visitation plan included in the parenting agreement. Additionally, two litigants had active DCFS investigations during the time of their OP case, and only one was required to adhere to DCFS stipulations in the parenting plan.

All interviews were conducted virtually over Zoom and ranged from one to two hours in length per interview. All interviews had the project manager present to lead the participant through logistics such as the virtual screening process and informed consent. In all but a few interviews, the interviews were conducted by two interview staff--a main interviewer and a note taker. All interviews were conducted in English except for one interview conducted in Spanish with a Spanish-speaking participant.

Each interview followed he Virtual Interviewing Protocol to ensure the safety and privacy of all interview participants as well as consistency across interviews. Participants would also be walked through the informed consent script which included sharing the purpose of the interview and the type of questions they would be asked. We assured the participants that their participation was confidential, private, and voluntary. This included also asking participants to choose pseudonyms and unique IDs. A compensation plan was determined as well where the participant could decide on three compensation options: mail-in check; physical Visa gift card; electronic Visa gift card. Finally, the interviewers ask the participants to consent to participating in the interview and whether they consented to being audio-recorded during the interview. Once participants consented to the interviews, the interviewers reiterated the potentially heavy or triggering content of the interview and their ability to pause the interview, skip questions, or end the interview at any time to prioritize their comfort during the interview. Once all interview logistics have been completed, the interviewer began the audio recording and began the formal interview questions with the participants. After the interview questions were asked, participants were offered an opportunity to ask any questions about the information shared or the larger project. After each interview, utilizing the debrief document, the interview team shared initial reactions and observations from the interview.

All information regarding the interview and participant context, their compensation, interview audio-recordings, and interview transcriptions were tracked and stored in password-protected files and folders to ensure data security.

Coding and Analysis

Once more than ten interviews were conducted and transcribed, planning for the qualitative thematic coding and analysis of the interviews began. All interviews were organized and coded using NVivo 12, a qualitative coding software program. Each interview was first classified based on the types of participants interviewed. These case classifications categorized each interview by litigant type (petitioner, respondent); participant's gender (man, woman, genderqueer); participant helper group (attorney, advocate, pro se), COVID timeline (pre-COVID, during COVID); DCFS involvement (yes, not applicable); and visitation type (unsupervised visitation; supervised visitation; supervised visitation center; multiple visitation options; not applicable). Coding nodes were then preliminarily created through pre-determined codes based off the interview questions. Additional thematic codes were included based on the interviewers' experience with the interviews and themes that were beginning to arise across completed interviews.

Once the NVivo project file was developed, the coding team held an NVivo training to prepare the coders on how to utilize the NVivo software and how to utilize the nodes to code the interviews based on the larger research question. After the training and further development of the NVivo project file, the trained coders coded three interviews as part of the pilot coding to assess the effectiveness of the nodes and to ensure the coders reached comparable inter-coder reliability. Three completed litigant interviews were chosen specifically because they exposed the coders to a variety of key factors on which to practice using the coding scheme in NVivo. The coders spent

a few weeks coding the three interviews and then met to share their experience of coding with the present nodes, their differences in coding per interview, and how each interpreted different nodes.

The pilot coding was then tested for intercoder reliability in order to understand the degree of agreement or disagreement between coders on each qualitative code through percentage agreement or the kappa coefficient. Researchers preferred to analyze the percent agreement since the kappa coefficient tends to overestimate error, impact agreement, and is more useful for medical/clinical research. The intercoder statistics reported a very high percentage agreement ranging between 86 and 100% agreement, with an average around 97% for both what was being coded the same and what was being 'not-coded' the same. The percent agreement across the codes is within the standard accepted threshold of percent agreement (80% agreement on 95% of codes; O'Connor & Joffe, 2020). These results signaled to the coding team that the multiple coders were well trained and were coding in comparable ways that would yield consistent coding across interviews. While the inter-coder reliability yielded satisfactory results, the pilot coding also revealed ways that the coding scheme and nodes could be improved for easier coding by the coders. Thus, following the pilot coding, the researchers reorganized the existing codes in a streamlined way that would decrease coder error.

The coding team coded the 30 completed interviews and had consistent check-in meetings throughout to check on the progress of the coding. All the completed interviews were coded twice, had memos written across interviews, and were reviewed to determine which nodes would be especially important in answering the research question around litigant safety and sense of fairness with the court system.

Criminal Violations of Orders of Protection (RQ 2.2)

Research Question and Study Population

To further assess the role of procedural justice and the impact of FCEP initiatives on litigants, the following research question was asked: *To what extent do FCEP activities reduce criminal violations of OPs up to 12 months later?* This question examines the violation rates of OPs by respondents within one year of the granted OP by comparing respondent cases that were present at the court in 2015 and in 2017. The question is especially of interest regarding respondents who met and reached an agreement with the CRE in 2017 and how that interaction impacted their sense of procedural justice and how they followed their OP.

Sample

The cases used to assess differences in OP violation rates between pre-FCEP (2015) and post-FCEP (2017) all were required to have 1) children in common shared between litigants and 2) one or more child-related remedies requested in the OP petition. All 2015 cases were selected from the population of cases utilized for RQ 1.1/1.2 limited to those where litigants had children in common and requested child-related remedies. The sample of cases was further filtered to those where an Emergency Order of Protection (EOP) or Plenary Order of Protection (POP) was granted, so that criminal violations of the OP could be levied. All cases with denied OPs were removed from the sample of cases. All 2017 cases were selected from the population of cases that met with the CRE that had children in common and requested child-related remedies. These cases were provided by the CRE directly from her list of clients she met with when she first began her role at the end of 2016 into the full year of 2017. The main difference between the 2015 and 2017 cases is the involvement of the CRE in 2017 working with litigant parents to determine a parenting agreement. The intervention of FCEP and the CRE are the main determinants to assess regarding

whether additional court support for respondents would impact their likelihood of violating their OP. The final sample included 314 cases pre-FCEP (2015) and 218 cases post-FCEP (2017).

Data Collection

All the cases used to assess OP violation rates relied on administrative court data located on various civil and criminal online databases at the domestic violence (DV) courthouse. The OP case IDs were first verified on the online civil court database using Passport Software, and the following information was collected for each case: respondent first and last name, respondent date of birth, and the issuance dates for all granted EOPs and POPs.

The Passport database at the court only had access to civil court cases which would not provide the data on the criminal charges associated with each OP case needed for this research. Due to our limited access, the Office of the Chief Judge (OCJ) and their research team agreed to assist us in acquiring all the criminal charges needed for our research. We provided an excel spreadsheet to the OCJ research team including the OP case ID numbers, respondent first and last names, respondent date of birth, and issuance dates for the EOPs and/or POPs for all 2015 and 2017 cases. With this information, the OCJ found all the criminal charges that were associated with each case/respondent and sent us an updated excel spreadsheet including the criminal charges, charge types, and charge date filed for each case.

Data Cleaning and Analysis

The excel spreadsheet of information provided by the OCJ research team was then further cleaned to allow for ease of analysis that would later be completed using SPSS. For all cases with criminal charges, we assessed all the types of criminal charges listed and distinguished which charges were related to DV and would violate the OP, charges that were not related to DV, and charges that were unclear in their association with the original OP. Additionally, all

cases that had a DV-related charge were checked to assess whether the petitioner on the original OP was the same or different than the complaining witness on the criminal charge. Any other discrepancies found across the cases were also verified. Once all the cases and charges were identified and categorized, all the charges were collapsed under each respondent so that the data were organized by the original OP/respondent for all 2015 and 2017 cases.

The finalized dataset included the year the case started (2015 or 2017), the OP case number, respondent last name, respondent first name, and respondent date of birth. For each cases, the number of criminal charges per case was tallied. The type of criminal charge, if any, was included and categorized as 'no charge', 'DV-related charge', or 'non-DV related charge'. Domestic violence (DV)-related charges included violations of order of protection (VOOP), domestic battery, property damage, aggravated harassment or assault, or other charges that would violate an OP. Non-DV related charges often included drug possession, theft or burglary, weapon use, and other charges that would not violate specific stipulations of an OP. The dataset also collected the OP issuance dates and charge date filed to assess whether or not there was a violation of the OP.

The first stage of analysis included assessing all cases with DV-related criminal charges and whether the criminal charge date was filed within one year of the issued EOP or POP to determine whether there was an OP Violation. If a DV-related criminal charge occurred within one year of either or both OP dates, the case was coded as a '1'. For cases that had a DV-related criminal charge occur within one year of the OP but with a different complaining witness than the original petitioner on the OP, the case was coded as a '2'. All cases that had no criminal charge, had a non-DV related charge, or the DV-related charge occurred beyond one year of the OP, were coded as '0'.

Once all the data were coded in the excel spreadsheet, they were uploaded to SPSS to conduct quantitative statistical analysis. Descriptive frequencies were run for each of the following variables: Criminal Charge Type; Number of DV Charges; OP Violation; and Type of Criminal OP Violation. Each of these variables were then compared across 2015 and 2017 in a crosstab and Pearson chi-square tests were run to assess for statistically significant changes pre- and post-FCEP. An independent t-test was also conducted to examine the effect of pre- and post-FCEP years on the prevalence of OP violations within one year of a granted OP. Both chi-square and independent t-test were assessed for statistical significance at the .05 level. A decrease in OP violations or criminal charges would further indicate the effectiveness of FCEP and the CRE's expediting process in increasing safe and appropriate child-related remedies in OPs. Statistically significant results from the chi-square and t-test would demonstrate a high probability that the findings were not due to chance alone. Any statistically significant decrease in criminal charges and OP violations might also suggest that respondents were well supported and informed during their session with the CRE, and their sense of procedural justice was influenced to the extent that it decreased their likelihood of violating their OP.

Court Personnel Experience with Domestic Violence Court (RQ 3)

Research Question and Study Population

The Domestic Violence Division (DVD) judges at the DV court were an integral part of the planning and development of the FCEP project. Interviews and meetings were held with DVD judges to assess gaps in the court system and OP process and determine ways to increase safety options and outcomes for litigants with shared children. The DVD judges were also trained in the SAFeR curriculum when FCEP was first implemented at the court. DVD judges were interviewed to assess the impact of the training and FCEP on judicial decision-making and to answer the

following question: *How did the FCEP training and stakeholder meetings, as well as the additional resources provided by the FCEP, affect judges' decision-making processes on child-related remedies for litigants?* Judges were also interviewed to share their experiences working with the CRE and how the expediting process provided more child-related information to reach safer visitation agreements. Their reflections on the CRE stems from the following research question: *What short-term impact did the FCEP-provided CRE have on increasing the safety and fairness of visitation arrangements for litigants?* These questions together provide insights into the connections between the role of the CRE, the FCEP trainings, and quantitative results on judicial decision-making regarding children.

There has been much turnover of judges at the court over the last few years, so most of the judges that were trained in FCEP in 2016 no longer work at the DV courthouse. Due to this limitation, it was decided to interview both former and current DVD civil judges to understand how FCEP was first impacting judges' practices when FCEP was initially implemented and how that has changed with the current DVD judges. It is worth noting that many of these judges have moved to different courthouses or have moved from civil to criminal calls at the DV court, but the questions we asked them primarily focused on their experiences in civil court with litigants with children in common.

Recruitment and Scheduling Interviews

Judges recruited for these interviews included both former and current DVD judges that were at the courthouse when FCEP was first implemented and those who are currently working at the court--most of whom were not FCEP trained. A list of former judges that were present at the court in 2016 and attended the FCEP training and all current civil judges was compiled by the research team. Due to transitions in the court, the research team also renewed the overall

permission to recruit and interview judges. Institutional cooperation and support from the former and current presiding judges were instrumental in providing contact information of the judges and encouraging the judges to accept our recruitment efforts and participate in an interview.

A list of all 24 potential judges and their contact information was compiled. The project manager then reached out to all the judges via email and read a recruitment script explaining the FCEP project, the purpose of the interviews, the types of questions that would be asked during the interview, and a request for an interview with them. Ten judges agreed to participate in the interviews, including four former judges, five current judges, and one judge from the Domestic Relations Division. Once a date and time were confirmed, the participants were sent a private Zoom link, a document outlining an overview of FCEP, the informed consent script, and a document of the research findings from RQ 1.1-1.5. All judge interview materials are included in Appendix G.

Developing Interview Materials and Conducting Interviews

Various interview materials were utilized during the interviews with DVD judges. The research team developed two interview guides for former and current judges over several months. The interview questions were expanded from the original interview guides included in the proposal to consider the contextual differences between former and current judges. As with the litigant interview guides, the judge interview guides included an introductory script and notes throughout to guide the interviewer in when and how to ask certain questions. Both interview guides included questions focused on the judges' experience with FCEP and their experience working with the CRE. The former judge interview guide had additional questions focused on their experience with the FCEP SAFeR training held in 2016 and their experience with various FCEP materials. These materials included a bench card that was created by the FCEP based on the SAFeR curriculum, a

document listing factual indicators for judges to refer litigants to the CRE, and the SAFeR practice guide. These documents were shared with the judges during the interview, and they were asked about their familiarity with and use of these FCEP resources. The current judge interview guide had additional questions about the impact of the COVID pandemic on the court and their court proceedings. All the interviews also ended with sharing with the judges the research findings from RQ 1.1-1.5 and having them react to the results. Unfortunately, this portion of the interview was often rushed and there was not sufficient time to have a rich conversation about these results. Many provided minimal feedback and mostly asked clarifying questions to better understand the findings. All judge interview materials are included in Appendix H.

All ten interviews were conducted virtually over Zoom and were facilitated by one research team member. All interviews began with introductions, an informed consent process for participating in and audio recording of the interview, and recording of the formal interview. In addition, all the interview documents (Judge SAFeR Bench Card, CRE Factual Indicators, SAFeR Practice Guide, and FCEP Research Findings) were shared on the screen during the interview for the participants to react to. A follow-up email thanking the judges for their participation and their time was sent to each participant. The audio recording and transcript were downloaded from Zoom, were securely saved, and all interviews were transcribed by CURL research fellows using the Otter.ai transcription software.

Coding and Analysis

Once all interviews were transcribed and de-identified, all ten interviews were thematically coded and analyzed for major themes. Because of the low number of interviews, we decided to not use any formal qualitative coding software. Coding began with research team members meeting to discuss how to thematically code the interviews. They used one of the interview

transcripts to decide which codes to include based on the interview questions. Once the general codes were discussed, one member of the research team spent time creating a set of a priori codes based on the interview questions and then open coded the interviews to add additional emergent codes. Once the list of codes was determined, this team member coded each of the ten interviews and organizing information and quotes under each code in three Word documents to more easily separate and organize the codes. Once all the interviews were coded, major themes from the codes were identified.

Focus Groups with Attorneys and Advocates (RQ 3.2)

Research Question and Study Population

As with the DVD judges, attorneys and advocates that represent and support petitioners through their civil OP case were also pivotal to the development of the FCEP. Attorneys and advocates that worked with clients in the DV courthouse were trained in the SAFeR curriculum in 2016 in preparation for the implementation of FCEP. In order to assess the impact of FCEP on their practice, we asked: *How did FCEP training and stakeholder meetings and the availability/utilization of the CRE affect attorneys' and advocates' interactions with petitioners and their subsequent decisions to help them to request the child-related remedies?* Focus groups were conducted with one group of attorneys and two groups of advocates that included individuals who attended the FCEP training in 2016 and many of whom were still practicing with petitioners at the DV court.

Recruitment and Scheduling Interviews

All attorneys and advocates recruited were individuals who have worked at the DV court during the implementation of FCEP and those who currently work with petitioners. The original proposal indicated that attorneys would be recruited from all the agencies at the courthouse who

had sent representatives to the FCEP trainings, especially from the agencies that were involved in the Legal Services Committee for FCEP and the DVD General Stakeholders Group. Advocates would be recruited from current advocates working at the courthouse. When actively recruiting, the research team modified this plan due to court changes related to the pandemic, determining which agencies and individuals could be recruited, prioritizing those that were present for the FCEP training as well as those who were part of any committee or stakeholder groups. A list of attorneys and advocates and their contact information was compiled based on attendance sheets from the FCEP training as well as knowledge of individuals who had and currently practiced with the court. Both attorneys and advocates were recruited from agencies that had a presence with the court.

A recruitment email including a recruitment script was sent to all listed attorneys and advocates. The recruitment script included background information on FCEP and the research currently conducted, and asked for their participation in a focus group regarding their experience with FCEP, FCEP trainings, working with the CRE, and their overall experience working at the court with petitioners. Based on the number of individuals who agreed to participate and their availability (determined through a doodle poll), one focus group for attorneys and two focus groups for advocates were planned. Once dates and times were confirmed for each focus group, the participants were sent a private Zoom link, a document outlining an overview of FCEP, the informed consent script, and the document of the research findings from RQ 1.1-1.5.

Developing Materials and Conducting Focus Groups

Focus groups materials were developed prior to conducting the focus groups by members of the research team. Interview guides were developed for each attorney and advocate focus groups to capture differences between attorney and advocate practices and experience with the court. The

focus group questions were informed by the proposed interview guides in the grant proposal as well as questions used for the judge interviews. Interview questions focused on the attorneys' and advocates' experience and familiarity with FCEP and the CRE, their argumentation and advocating process with petitioners with children, and the impact of COVID on court practices with petitioners. As with the judge interviews, time was spent at the end of the focus groups to review the FCEP research findings from RQ 1.1-1.5 to have the attorneys and advocates react and share observation based on their experiences. Like the judge interviews, the presentation of research findings was rushed and did not result in as rich of a discussion as intended with the advocates and attorneys. All materials for the attorney and advocate focus groups are included in Appendix H.

All three focus groups were conducted virtually over Zoom and were facilitated by various research team members. Some research fellows also joined the focus groups to take notes and observe the interactions of the focus group participants. Each focus group began with introductions of all participants (though many knew one another) and an informed consent process. Unique IDs were created for each participant, and the audio recording and formal interview questions began. During the focus groups, the FCEP Research Findings were shared on the shared Zoom screen for the participants to react to. A follow-up email thanking the attorneys and advocates for their participation and their time was sent to each participant. The audio recording and transcript were downloaded from Zoom and securely saved, and all focus groups were transcribed by CURL research fellows using the Otter.ai transcription software.

Coding and Analysis

Once all interviews were transcribed and de-identified, all three focus groups were thematically coded for major themes using Word documents in the same way the judge interviews were coded. Research team members met to discuss how to thematically code the focus groups.

They used one of the focus group transcripts to decide which codes to include based on the interview questions and the research question goals. Once the general codes were discussed, a research fellow spent time creating a set of a priori codes based on the interview questions and then open coded the interviews to add additional emergent codes. Once the list of codes was determined, the research fellow coded each of the focus group transcripts, organizing information and quotes under each code in a Word document to more easily organize the codes. Once all the interviews were coded, the major themes were further elaborated and organized in an outline. Coding results from the attorney and advocate focus groups were analyzed in tandem with other qualitative and quantitative data and included in various sections of the final written report.

Child-Relief Expediter (3.3)

Research Question and Study Population

The Child-Relief Expediter role was a new role for the courthouse and it was imperative to track the progress and changes impacting the CRE role in the DV court since the creation of the role. As part of a larger research question focused on the implementation of FCEP, the following was asked: *How did the CRE facilitate visitation agreements among petitioners and respondents?* Broadly, the question focuses on the expediting process and the CRE's role in working with parent litigants to create parenting agreements focused on the needs of the shared children.

Data Collection and Analysis

To better understand the process and changes over the last few years, two interviews were conducted with the CRE. The first interview was an informative discussion of changes in the DV courthouse and adjustments to the expediting process during the pandemic. The discussion attempted to identify the impact of the pandemic on the functioning of the court and the expediting process. The interview questions focused on the current delivery of CRE services through remote

mediation; the court response to the COVID-19 pandemic; changes made to OPs and how they are shared with litigants; and the adjustment of court personnel (judges, attorneys, advocates) to the pandemic.

The second interview with the CRE was conducted to delve into the full role of the CRE over the last few years since the inception of its role. The interview first focused on sharing the research findings focused on the CRE cases from 2016/2017 and having the CRE reflect on how her cases have changed over the last few years, especially with regards to the demographics of litigants, the types and path of referrals to the CRE, and child-related remedies. The interview then focused on discussing the expediting process, challenges faced, the process of working with and supporting litigants; creating parenting agreements; and how working with the judges, advocates, and attorneys has changed over time.

Both interviews were conducted virtually over Zoom and followed a consent process to inform the CRE of the purpose of the interview. The interviews followed a casual conversation as the researchers have had a long-standing relationship with the CRE since the inception of FCEP. The interviews were audio recorded and were manually transcribed by a CURL fellow. The interviews were analyzed by organizing the information into specific thematic and categorical codes using Word documents to consolidate the data. The codes followed most of the interview questions and especially focused on comparing the CRE's responses and observations about the 2016/2017 cases with the quantitative data. These interviews provided context and depth into the data collected and inform other aspects of the court process. The CRE interview guide is included in Appendix I.

Limitations and Challenges to Research

An evaluation and research project of this size and capacity is not without its limitations. As the research process began, it was clear that the research would be impacted by the realities of the courthouse, the court personnel, and external factors that may affect the court and its procedures.

A majority of information collected and analyzed throughout this project was through administrative courthouse data. In order to identify the samples for the review of Orders of Protections, the research team utilized data collected by the Help Desk to first identify case numbers of civil OP cases that filed and requested child-related remedies. This Help Desk database was utilized to track case information from petitioners filing their OP petition and their subsequent movement within their court case. While this data provided a consolidated list of civil OP cases, the data listed included inaccurate information as well as missing or inconsistent data. This database was not designed to be analyzed quantitatively, thus the research team was tasked with validating these cases with the court's online civil case database (Passport). The validation process required numerous rounds of verification of the sample requirements to account for human error that occurred from entering and collecting this administrative data.

In addition, it became clear during the validation process that the Help Desk overestimated the number of cases that would require attorney representation. Instead, many of the cases that the Help Desk had originally triaged to attorneys were denied and were assigned an advocate, a law student, or remained pro se. As a result, there were far fewer number of attorney-represented cases whereas most cases were self-represented (pro se or advocate-assisted). To offset these limitations, the sample included cases that were represented by an attorney at some point during the case. This allowed the sample to be more flexible with cases that were not solely attorney-represented

throughout the entirety of the case. Additionally, more advocate-assisted, and pro se cases were included in the samples to ensure the overall sample numbers had enough statistical power to conduct statistical analysis. In this way, the sample was no longer a fully random probability sample, but the sample was more representative of the types of cases that enter the court. Namely, the sample represented the high number of individuals that are self-represented whereas many litigants are less able to have attorney representation.

It became subsequently clear that the sampling design for the first research question was based on an erroneous estimate on the distribution of types of cases available for analysis. The sampling design assume that from the overall sample of OP cases, sub samples could be created for each subsequent research question. While the overall sample sizes were determined to maximize statistical power to assess significant differences, the resulting sub- samples of different helper groups were too small to determine to analyze for statistical significance, therefore we could not reach generalizable conclusions about the many of the sub- samples.

While creating the samples themselves was a challenge to conducting this research, the petitions, written testimonies, and lengthy court hearing transcripts were equally difficult to code quantitatively. The coders had to familiarize themselves with the petition form, how they are filled out, and the legal jargon used throughout the case files in order to accurately code this qualitative information quantitatively. Despite having an-depth coding training, coders also had to accurately interpret how the petitioner intended to fill out their petition; this no doubt led to human error in the coding and data collection process. This also indicated to us the inaccessibility of filing a OP petition and appearing in front of a judge without legal representation. While these forms took years to be created in a manner that both met legal standards and included user-friendly language, it is unclear how these take into consideration the violence and trauma impacting individuals

seeking protection for themselves and their children. These forms also do not appear accessible to individuals who are not legally trained, who have varying levels of reading literacy, or who do not speak English fluently. Overall, the process of coding as well as interacting with the case materials revealed the barriers that can impact litigants as well as the analytic process.

Additional limitations resulted in disruptions to the courthouse and the research process due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Primarily, all qualitative interviews and focus groups with court personnel and parent litigants were delayed and shifted from in-person to virtual interviews/focus groups over Zoom. While it took time to create the virtual protocol and ensure participant safety during the interviews, the remote interviews/focus groups were a viable and accessible option for participants. Unfortunately, by the time the research team was prepared to begin interviewing, many participants had to recall court experiences that occurred months or years prior to the interview. This often led to many participants not remembering certain experiences or details. Especially asking about certain FCEP or court experiences, many participants were conflating current experiences impacted by the pandemic and court practices that occurred prior to the pandemic that was influenced by FCEP. It became especially important to try to clarify timelines during the interviews as well as during the analysis process to distinguish between time before and during the pandemic. This was especially difficult for many judges, attorneys, and advocates since many of them interviewed engaged with FCEP in 2016, which was five or six years prior to when they were interviewed. Additionally, the court personnel was split between individuals who formerly were at the courthouse during FCEP and those who currently work at the courthouse. These factors complicated the analysis process especially as it was difficult to determine changes and impacts of FCEP initiatives on court personnel practices. In this way, any changes may be due to idiosyncrasies and unique court personnel experiences rather than due to FCEP particularly.

Chapter 3: Review of Order of Protection Petitions and Child-Related Remedies

The goal for implementation of the Family Court Enhancement Program (FCEP) was to improve the domestic violence court's response to Order of Protection cases involving intimate partners who shared common children in order to increase safe, sustainable, and fair outcomes for these families. A major component of this intervention specifically targeted building awareness of the available types of legal remedies that were child-related and how to best request them when filing an OP petition. One measure of FCEP impact was its impact on the number of requested child-related OP remedies available in the domestic violence court division (i.e. physical care and possession, custody, and visitation remedies). Additionally, the evaluation sought to measure any changes in presentation and argumentation made by attorneys in court, probing/questioning by judges of litigants in court as part of decision-making, and the child-related remedies granted in OPs by the domestic violence court system. Below is a full list of child-related remedies analyzed to answer the following research questions.

Table 5. Types of Child-Related Remedies Analyzed

Remedy Type
Minor Child(ren) named Protected Parties
Exclusive Possession of Residence
Stay Away
from Petitioner/Protected Parties
from Other Addresses
Physical Care and Possession (PCP) of Minor Children
Return to/Non-Removal of Children from Petitioner
Temporary Legal Custody
Visitation
Granted Visitation
Restricted Visitation
Reserved Visitation
Denied Visitation
Prohibited Removal from IL/Concealment of Children
Respondent Further Enjoined

Requested Child-Related Remedies in OP Petitions

Cases with children in common from 2015 and 2017 were analyzed to assess how many and which types of child-related remedies were requested pre- and post-FCEP. Cases were further analyzed across helper groups, attorney-represented, advocate-assisted, law student-assisted, or pro se cases.

Overall, the results emphasized self-represented pro se petitioners increasingly requesting almost every type of child-related remedy post-FCEP as compared to other assisted petitioners. There was a statistically significant increase in the number of requests made for the *exclusive possession of residence*, 76.1% of cases pre-FCEP and 90% of cases post-FCEP. There was a statistically significant increase in requests made for *stay away from petitioner* from 77.1% pre-FCEP to 91.2% post-FCEP. After the FCEP intervention, pro-se litigants increasingly made requests for *respondent further enjoined* for additional child-related protection not covered in the petition, 64.2% pre-FCEP and 92.5% post-FCEP. Pro se petitioners increasingly requested all remedies with the exception of *child support*. Child support declined from 24.8% pre-FCEP to 12.2% post-FCEP and was statistically significant. Additionally, the average number of remedies requested in pro se cases pre-FCEP was 6.81 remedies and increased to 7.57 remedies post-FCEP, revealing a statistically significant increase through a t-test. All the results are reported in Table 6.

For cases assisted by an advocate, overall, there were no statistically significant differences in the remedies requested pre- and post-FCEP cases aside from *respondent further enjoined*. There was a significant increase in petitioners requesting *respondent further enjoined* with 80.4% pre-FCEP and 97% post-FCEP. Additionally, petitioners decreasingly requested *child support* between 19.6% pre-FCEP and 8.9% post-FCEP, and this difference was statistically significant. A

t-test further revealed that there was a slight increase in the average number of remedies requested pre-FCEP (7.87) and post-FCEP (8.12).

For petitioners assisted by a law student, there was a statistically significant increase in petitioner requesting *temporary legal custody* of their children, 59.5% pre-FCEP and 85.1% post-FCEP. Requests for *child support* also increased among litigants helped by law students, in contrast to litigants in the pro se or advocate helper groups. However, increased requests for *child support* was not statistically significant. On average, petitions assisted by law students had a high number of total remedies requested pre-FCEP (8.62) that increased post-FCEP (9.26) but not enough to detect statistical significance.

For petitioners represented by an attorney, there were no statistical differences in child-related remedies requested pre- and post-FCEP. Again, the percentage of cases where there were requests for *child support* did increase between pre- and post-FCEP but this increase was not statistically significant. Like with law student petitions, attorney-represented petitions had a high mean of remedies requested pre-FCEP (8.68) that increased slightly post-FCEP (8.94), but was not statistically significant.

Table 6. Remedies Requested Pre- and Post-FCEP by Helper Group

	Pro Se		**Advocate**		**Law Student**		**Attorney**	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Cases (N)	109	147	102	101	37	74	87	64
% Minor Child(ren) named Protected Parties	98.2	98.0	98.0	99.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
% Exclusive Possession of Residence	**76.1**	**90.5****	96.1	89.1	100.0	98.6	97.7	96.9
% Stay Away from Petitioner	**77.1**	**91.2****	94.1	92.1	97.3	100.0	100.0	98.4
% Stay Away from Other Addresses	65.1	68.0	60.8	61.4	73.0	97.7	73.6	73.4
% PCP of Minor Children	68.8	69.4	80.4	86.1	94.6	100.0	94.3	96.9
% Return to/Non-Removal of Children from Petitioner	56.9	68.0	81.4	85.1	91.1	98.6	89.7	90.6
% Temporary Legal Custody	38.5	44.2	36.3	35.6	**59.5**	**85.1****	63.2	75.0
% Any Visitation	60.6	67.3	75.5	86.1	94.6	90.5	73.6	78.1

% Prohibited Removal from IL/Concealment of Children	50.5	55.1	63.7	71.3	83.8	93.2	88.5	90.6
% Child Support	**24.8**	**12.2***	**19.6**	**8.9***	40.5	58.1	41.4	53.1
% Respondent Further Enjoined	**64.2**	**92.5*****	**80.4**	**97.0*****	27.0	21.6	46.0	40.6
Mean Total Remedies	**6.81**	**7.58****	7.87	8.12	8.62	9.26	8.68	8.94

*** p ≤ 0.05**
**** p ≤ 0.01**
***** p ≤ 0.001**

Attorney Presentation of Child-Related Issues

Order of Protection case files and court hearings were assessed to examine how attorneys presented the alleged abuses and child-related issues in court hearings on behalf of petitioners. Specifically, petitions, case files, and court hearing transcripts were coded for the alleged abuses and impacts of abuse that were shared in petitions, affidavits, and during court hearings by attorney-represented petitioners. The types of abuses/impact of abuses that were assessed were adapted from the SAFeR curriculum and included the following categories: *abuse by respondent to petitioner; abuse by petitioner to child; impact on abuse on child; impact of abuse on petitioner's parenting, impact of abuse on daily life; and red flags/risk factors.*

There were few statistically significant differences pre- and post-FCEP and how attorneys argued/presented the alleged abuses on behalf of petitioners. While it appeared that attorneys reported most of the abuses and arguments in the petitions rather than in the hearings, there were few significant changes pre- and post-FCEP in their litigation practices. One exception worth noting is the increase from 72.7% to 81.9% of attorney-represented cases presenting *red flags/risk factors* during the court hearing. Of the various *red flags/risk factors* that petitioners can share, there were statistically significant increases in the following factors: *respondent is unemployed and not seeking employment; abuse during pregnancy;* and *strangulation.*

While no specific research question focused on the impact of FCEP on the argumentation on behalf of advocate-assisted and pro se petitioners due to not having legal representation, it seemed appropriate to assess how self-represented petitioners reported and presented the alleged abuses in their petitions and during their court hearings. Although petitioners assisted by advocates receive additional support when filing their OP and going through the court process, both advocate-assisted and pro se petitioners testify before a judge as self-represented litigants during their court hearings. These results further consider if the FCEP SAFeR trainings or initiatives led to changed court practices by advocate-assisted and self-represented petitioners.

For advocate-assisted petitioners, there were not significant differences in how petitioners described the alleged abuses they experienced in their OP petition or during their court hearings pre- and post- FCEP. Due to the small sample size of 22 cases per time period, any differences pre- and post-FCEP reflect a difference of one or two cases. For example, there was an increase from 68.2% to 77.3% cases that mentioned *abuse by respondent to child* during the hearings. Or there was a decrease from 90.9% pre-FCEP to 81.8% in post-FCEP in terms of petitioners mentioning *impact of abuse on daily life* during court hearings. In both examples, there was only a difference of two cases between time periods thus making it difficult to interpret any significant impact of FCEP on how advocate-assisted petitioners argued their cases in their petitions and during their hearings. In terms of *red flags/risk factors* brought up by advocate-assisted petitioners, there were a handful of factors that were decreasingly reported by petitioners post-FCEP. For example, 22.7% to 9.1% of petitioners decreasingly reported *excessive jealousy*; 36.4% to 22.7% of petitioners reported *avoidance of consequences;* and 45.5% to 27.3% of petitioners reported *strangulation* pre- and post-FCEP.

Unlike with the attorney-represented and advocate-assisted petitioners, pro se petitioners saw significant changes in how alleged abuses and child-related issues were reported in their OP petitions and during their court hearings. There were a few statistically significant increases in the percentage of cases that mentioned child-related abuses and impacts. Specifically, *abuse by respondent to child* was increasingly mentioned from 59.1% pre-FCEP to 86.4% post-FCEP of pro se cases during their court hearings. Additionally, pro se petitioners increasingly reported *impact of abuse on petitioner's parenting* in their petitions and during their hearings, from 36.4% pre-FCEP to 77.3% post-FCEP in their petitions and 13.6 pre-FCEP to 54.4% post-FCEP during their court hearings, both statistically significant. Pro se petitioners also increasingly mentioned *red flags/risk factors* in both their petitions (36.4% to 77.3%) and during their court hearings (13.6% to 54.5%) pre- and post-FCEP. However, pro se petitioners did increasingly mention *abuser's mental state* during their court hearings revealing a statistically significant increase from 4.5% to 31.8% between pre- and post-FCEP.

See Table 7 for all types of abuses reported in the OP petition or mentioned during a court hearing pre- and post-FCEP across all helper groups. Table 8 reports all individual red flag/risk factors.

Table 7. Alleged Abuses Mentioned in OP Petition or Court Hearing by Helper Group, Pre vs. Post

	Attorney		Advocate		Pro Se	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Cases %(n)	100 (88)	100 (83)	100 (22)	100 (22)	100 (22)	100 (22)
Abuse by Respondent to Petitioner						
% Reported in Petition	100 (88)	100 (83)	100 (22)	100 (22)	100 (22)	100 (22)
% Mentioned in Hearing	89.8 (79)	89.2 (74)	95.5 (21)	100 (22)	90.9 (20)	95.5 (21)
Abuse by Respondent to Child						
% Reported in Petition	92.0 (81)	88 (73)	81.1 (18)	81.1 (18)	68.2 (15)	77.3 (17)
% Mentioned in Hearing	50.0 (44)	61.4 (51)	68.2 (15)	77.3 (17)	**59.1 (13)**	**86.4 (19)***

Impact of Abuse on Child						
% Reported in Petition	10.2 (9)	10.8 (9)	0 (0)	4.5 (1)	13.6 (3)	13.6 (3)
% Mentioned in Hearing	3.4 (3)	3.6 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	13.6 (3)
Impact of Abuse on Petitioner's Parenting						
% Reported in Petition	98.9 (87)	100 (83)	54.5 (12)	50 (11)	**36.4 (8)**	**77.3 (17)****
% Mentioned in Hearing	60.2 (53)	61.4 (51)	31.8 (7)	36.4 (8)	**13.6 (3)**	**54.5 (12)****
Impact of Abuse on Daily Life						
% Reported in Petition	97.7 (86)	98.8 (82)	100 (22)	100 (22)	90.9 (20)	100 (22)
% Mentioned in Hearing	71.6 (63)	68.7 (57)	90.9 (20)	81.8 (18)	86.4 (19)	81.6 (18)
Red Flags/Risk Factors						
% Reported in Petition	100 (88)	100 (83)	95.5 (21)	90.9 (20)	63.6 (14)	81.8 (18)
% Mentioned in Hearing	72.7 (64)	81.9 (68)	81.8 (18)	81.8 (18)	68.2 (15)	86.4 (19)

*** p ≤ 0.05 ** p ≤ 0.01**

Table 8. Red Flags/Risk Factors Mentioned in OP Petition or Court Hearing by Helper Group, Pre vs. Post

	Attorney		**Advocate**		**Pro Se**	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Cases (n)	88	83	22	22	22	22
Recent or current separation of the party's access to the petition(s)						
% Reported in Petition	50.0	60.2	9.1	22.7	13.6	9.1
% Mentioned in Hearing	37.5	43.4	36.4	36.4	27.3	54.5
Access to guns/weapons						
% Reported in Petition	20.5	28.9	9.1	9.1	13.6	22.7
% Mentioned in Hearing	9.1	13.2	4.5	4.5	9.1	18.2
Threats to use Weapons						
% Reported in Petition	22.7	27.7	9.1	13.6	18.2	27.3
% Mentioned in Hearing	14.8	13.3	4.5	4.5	13.6	22.7
Respondent is unemployed and not seeking employment						
% Reported in Petition	**1.1**	**8.4***	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% Mentioned in Hearing	**0.0**	**10.8****	0.0	4.5	4.5	9.1
Rape						
% Reported in Petition	13.6	7.2	4.5	0.0	0.0	4.5
% Mentioned in Hearing	2.3	0.0	4.5	0.0	0.0	4.5
Abuse during pregnancy						
% Reported in Petition	**18.2**	**31.3***	13.6	13.6	0.0	4.5
% Mentioned in Hearing	5.7	13.3	13.6	9.1	4.5	9.1
Respondent controlling all or most of petitioner's daily activities						
% Reported in Petition	20.5	18.1	4.5	13.6	4.5	18.2

% Mentioned in Hearing	8.0	2.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.1
Respondent threatened or tried to commit suicide						
% Reported in Petition	2.2	7.2	9.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
% Mentioned in Hearing	1.1	4.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.5
Petitioner believes respondent will re-assault or attempt to kill the petitioner						
% Reported in Petition	52.3	44.6	18.2	9.1	22.7	27.3
% Mentioned in Hearing	26.1	20.5	13.6	9.1	9.1	4.5
Escalating violence over the past year						
% Reported in Petition	20.5	21.7	4.5	4.5	0.0	9.1
% Mentioned in Hearing	10.2	9.6	9.1	0.0	0.0	9.1
Excessive jealousy						
% Reported in Petition	39.8	37.3	22.7	9.1	13.6	27.3
% Mentioned in Hearing	14.8	10.8	13.6	0.0	13.6	9.1
Abuser's mental state						
% Reported in Petition	36.4	49.4	18.2	22.7	9.1	22.7
% Mentioned in Hearing	9.1	14.5	4.5	22.7	**4.5**	**31.8***
Avoidance of consequences						
% Reported in Petition	35.2	43.4	36.4	22.7	4.5	22.7
% Mentioned in Hearing	11.4	18.1	13.6	27.3	22.7	13.6
Threats to kill						
% Reported in Petition	40.9	43.4	31.8	22.7	31.8	13.6
% Mentioned in Hearing	20.5	20.5	22.7	22.7	18.2	9.1
Strangulation						
% Reported in Petition	**38.6**	**56.6***	45.5	27.3	4.5	9.1
% Mentioned in Hearing	18.2	20.5	36.4	13.6	0.0	9.1
Animal Abuse						
% Reported in Petition	2.2	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% Mentioned in Hearing	5.7	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

*** p ≤ 0.05 ** p ≤ 0.01**

Judges Asking Child-Related Questions

Court hearing transcripts were reviewed to assess whether judges changed the ways they interacted with petitioners, and particularly whether they asked more child-related questions after receiving SAFeR training and other FCEP materials. More specifically, the court hearing transcripts were examined for changes in questions asked by judges around *abuse done to the*

petitioner, exposure of children to abuse, impact of abuse on children, impact of abuse on parenting, impact on daily life, and *red flags/risk factors*.

When assessing all the possible questions that judges could ask regarding children across helper groups, questions regarding children's exposure to abuse and the impact of abuse on children increased a statistically significant amount in cases heard by judges post-FCEP. Cases where judges asked about *children's exposure to abuse* increased from 27.3% in the pre- to 48.9% post-FCEP. The percentage of cases heard by judges and asked about *impact of abuse on children* increased from 2.3% pre- to 12.5% post-FCEP. The remaining questions did not follow any particular trends. When looking if the judge asked the petitioner or attorney one or more questions about the *abuse of the petitioner*, percentages increased from 83.0% to 86.4%. For the questions focused on the *impact of the abuse on the petitioner*, judges decreasingly asked these questions. Judges asked about the *impact of abuse on the petitioner's parenting* 10.2% of the time pre-FCEP, and only 6.8% of the time post-FCEP. Similarly, questions about the impact of abuse on daily life also decreased from 37.5% pre-FCEP to 31.8% post-FCEP. Finally, when asked about *potential red flags or risk factors*, judges increasingly asked these questions pre-FCEP (58.0%) and post-FCEP (68.2%). Table 9 reports frequency of questions asked by judges pre- and post-FCEP.

Table 9. Percentage of Judges who Asked SAFeR-Related Questions during Court Hearings, Pre vs. Post

	Pre	**Post**
Cases %(n)	100(88)	100(88)
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the abuse of the petitioner?	83.0 (73)	86.4(76)
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the exposure of children to abuse?	**27.3(24)**	**48.9(43)****
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the impact of the abuse on children?	**2.3(2)**	**12.5(11)****
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the impact of abuse of the petitioner's abilities to care for/protect their children or control their own parenting?	10.2(9)	6.8(6)

Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the impact of abuse on daily life?	37.5(33)	31.8(27)
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the red flags/risk factors?	58.0(51)	68.2(60)

*** p ≤ 0.05, ** p ≤ 0.01**

The data was further analyzed across the various helper groups, particularly comparing petitioners with legal representation (attorney-represented) or self-represented petitioners (advocate-assisted and pro se) and whether there were differences between these two groupings pre- and post-FCEP. For questions related to *exposure of children to abuse*, judges increasingly asked these questions from pre-FCEP (20.5%) to post-FCEP (52.3%) for self-represented cases at a statistically significant rate. No other measure was statistically significant, but questions regarding the impact of abuse tended to decrease in the frequency of times asked post-FCEP in both legal and self-represented cases. These results are listed in Table 10.

Table 10. Percentage of Judges who Asked SAFeR-Related Question during Court Hearings Comparing Legal or Self-Representation, Pre vs. Post

	Attorney		Advocate/Pro Se	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Cases n(%)	44(100)	44(100)	44(100)	44(100)
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the abuse of the petitioner?	79.5(35)	81.8(36)	86.4(38)	90.9(40)
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the exposure of children to abuse?	34.1(15)	45.5(20)	**20.5(11)**	**52.3(23)****
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the impact of the abuse on children?	4.5(2)	15.9(7)	0.0(0)	9.1(4)
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the impact of abuse of the petitioner's abilities to care for/protect their children or control their own parenting?	11.4(5)	11.4(5)	9.1(4)	2.3(1)
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the impact of abuse on daily life?	34.1(15)	27.3(12)	40.9(18)	36.4(16)
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the red flags/risk factors?	63.6(28)	70.5(31)	52.3(23)	65.9(29)

*** p ≤ 0.05, ** p ≤ 0.01**

Overall, judges asked at least one of the child-related questions based on SAFeR elements pre- and post-FCEP. Attorney-represented cases showed a statistically significant increase in

judges asking any SAFeR-related question when compared to self-represented cases. Specifically, judges increasingly asked SAFeR-related questions in 86.4% to 100% of attorney-represented cases pre- and post-FCEP, respectively. All data is reported in Table 11 below.

Table 11. Percentage of Judges who Asked Any SAFeR-Related Question during Court Hearings Comparing Legal or Self-Representation, Pre vs. Post

	Attorney		Advocate/Pro Se	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Cases %(n)	100(44)	100(44)	100(44)	100(44)
SAFeR Questions	**86.4(38)**	**100(44)***	90.9(40)	97.7(43)

*** p ≤ 0.05**

Analyses were then conducted for the questions overtly asking about children:

- *Does the judge ask the petitioner/attorney one or more questions about the exposure of children to abuse?*
- *Does the judge ask the petitioner/ attorney one or more questions about the impact of the abuse on children?*
- *Does the judge ask the petitioner/ attorney one or more questions about the impact of abuse of the petitioner's abilities to care for/protect their children or control their own parenting?*

When these questions were isolated and analyzed without separating helper groups, there was a statistically significant increase in cases where judges asked child-related questions. As seen in Table 12, judges increased from asking any of the above-mentioned child-related questions 27.2% of the time pre-FCEP to 62.8% of cases post-FCEP. Separating this analysis into legal and self-representation in Table 13, there was a greater increase in these questions asked in self-represented cases, with any question about children asked in 54.5% of the cases, as opposed to only 25% of the cases before FCEP. For the legal representation cases, there was only about a 16% increase that was not statistically significant.

Table 12. Percentage of Judges who Asked Any Child-Related Question during Court Hearings, Pre vs. Post

	Pre	Post
Cases %(n)	**100(88)**	**100(88)**
Child-Related Questions	**27.2(29)**	**62.8(49)****

**** p ≤ 0.01**

Table 13. Percentage of Judges who Asked Any Child-Related Question during Court Hearings Comparing Legal or Self-Representation, Pre vs. Post

	Attorney		**Advocate/Pro Se**	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Cases %(n)	**100(44)**	**100(44)**	**100(44)**	**100(44)**
Child-Related Questions	40.9(18)	56.8(25)	**25.0(11)**	**54.5(24)****

*** p ≤ 0.01**

Granted Child-Related Remedies in OP Petitions

Granted Orders of Protection were examined to assess the frequency and type of child-related remedies granted in final orders as compared to the remedies requested in the original petition and whether any changes in granted remedies were due to FCEP implementation. Data tables reporting overall frequencies of granted OPs are included in Appendix J. The data was first analyzed for individual child-related remedies granted in any kind of OP and changes due to FCEP implementation. Overall, there were few statistically significant changes in child-related remedies granted between pre-and post-FCEP. Specifically, advocate-assisted cases revealed a statistically significant increase in *respondent further enjoined* granted in OPs, revealing only 47.1% of cases pre-FCEP to 100% of cases post-FCEP granted this remedy. Petitioners are able to write specific stipulations under *respondent further enjoined* in which most cases wrote some iteration of "no contact by any means" for complete protection against the respondent.

While no other remedy showed statistically significant change, most of the pro se remedies were increasingly granted post-FCEP when compared to pre-FCEP**.** In terms of the visitation

remedies, it is difficult to track generalizable patterns, but *reserved visitation* was increasingly granted for attorney-represented and pro se cases. Overall, there were steady increases in *granted visitation*, *restricted visitation*, and *child exchange* post-FCEP. All results are reported in Table 14 below.

Table 14. Frequencies of Individual Remedies Granted in OP Across Helper Group

	Attorney		**Advocate**		**Pro Se**	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Granted OP n(%)	44(100)	44(100)	17(100)	18(100)	19(100)	20(100)
Exclusive Possession of Residence	43(97.7)	43(97.7)	17(100)	16(88.8)	18(94.7)	19(95)
Stay Away from Petitioner	43(97.7)	44(100)	17(100)	17(94.4)	17(89.5)	20(100)
Stay Away, Other	31(70.5)	32(72.7)	14(82.4)	13(72.2)	12(63.2)	15(75)
Physical Care and Possession of Minor Children	42(95.5)	43(97.7)	15(88.2)	16(88.8)	16(84.2)	19(95)
Return/Non-Removal of Children from Petitioner	40(90.9)	40(90.9)	15(88.2)	16(88.8)	16(84.2)	19(95)
Temporary Legal Custody	11(25)	9(20.5)	1(5.9)	1(5.6)	0(0)	0(0)
Granted Visitation	6(13.6)	7(15.9)	2(11.8)	2(11.1)	0(0)	1(5)
Restricted Visitation	7(15.9)	6(13.6)	1(5.9)	3(16.7)	1(5.3)	0(0)
Denied Visitation	4(9.1)	5(11.4)	4(23.5)	4(22.2)	6(31.6)	5(25)
Reserved Visitation	31(70.5)	35(79.5)	12(70.6)	12(66.7)	11(57.9)	15(75)
(Prohibited Removal from IL/Concealment of Children	41(93.2)	42(95.5)	12(70.6)	15(83.3)	16(84.2)	18(90)
Child Support	3(6.8)	2(4.5)	0(0)	1(5.6)	0(0)	1(5)
Respondent Further Enjoined	25(56.8)	24(54.5)	8(47.1)	18(100)**	11(57.9)	16(80)

* $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$

Secondly, to assess the impact of FCEP on the complete process of receiving an Order of Protection, cases were examined in terms of the child-related remedies that were requested and whether they were granted or not in their terminal OP. While the previous observations examined the overall impact of FCEP on requested remedies and granted remedies on their own, the following analysis revealed the full path of the OP cases from their requested petition to their granted OP. Table 15 and Table 16 below display the total number of cases with a granted EOP or POP followed by the individual child-related remedies requested and granted across the various helper groups compared between pre- and post-FCEP. More specifically, each data point reveals

the percentage of remedies granted from the total number of cases that requested that individual remedy (n count in parentheses). For example, 100% of 22 cases requested *exclusive possession of residence* and were granted that remedy in the EOP.

When examining the cases that ended with an EOP, overall there were not many statistically significant differences between the remedies requested and granted pre- and post-FCEP. However, pro se cases that requested *return/non-removal of children from petitioner* did see both statistically significant increase in this remedy requested and higher percentage of cases having the remedy granted. Pre-FCEP, only 7 cases requested this remedy and 71.4% of those cases received the remedy, while 100% of the 16 cases requested were granted the remedy post-FCEP. Additionally, advocate-assisted cases saw an increase in *respondent further enjoined* being requested and granted. Only 33.3% of the 9 requested remedy were granted pre-FCEP whereas 100% of 13 cases requested and were granted this remedy post-FCEP. While more cases requested *denied visitation* post-FCEP, the percentage of cases that were granted *denied visitation* did not drastically change between pre- and post-FCEP. Attorney-represented cases continued to request and grant *reserved visitation* while pro se cases increasingly requested and were granted *reserved visitation* post-FCEP. While not represented in the tables below, cases that were granted remedies during a hearing that were not initially requested in their petition increasingly were granted *reserved visitation* post-FCEP across helper groups but especially for attorney-represented cases.

Table 15. Remedies Requested and Granted in EOP Across Helper Groups

	Attorney		**Advocate**		**Pro Se**	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Granted OP N[a]	24	26	10	13	12	16
Variable %[b](n[c])						
Exclusive Possession of Residence	100 (22)	100 (25)	100 (10)	100 (11)	100 (7)	100 (15)
Stay Away from Petitioner	100 (24)	100 (26)	100 (10)	100 (12)	100 (8)	100 (16)
Stay Away, Other	100 (17)	100 (18)	100 (8)	87.5 (8)	85.7 (7)	84.6 (13)

Physical Care and Possession of Minor Children	100 (22)	96 (25)	100 (7)	90.9 (11)	75 (8)	100 (16)
Return/Non-Removal of Children from Petitioner	95 (20)	100 (23)	100 (8)	91.7 (12)	71.4 (7)	100 (16)*
Temporary Legal Custody	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Granted Visitation	50 (2)	100 (1)	100 (1)	0 (1)	100 (1)	0 (0)
Restricted Visitation	50 (2)	100 (1)	0 (0)	100 (1)	33.3 (3)	0 (1)
Denied Visitation	0 (0)	25 (8)	20 (5)	33.3 (12)	33.3 (6)	33.3 (12)
Reserved Visitation	100 (11)	90 (10)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	100 (4)
(Prohibited Removal from IL/Concealment of Children	95.5 (22)	95.7 (23)	100 (5)	100 (8)	100 (4)	100 (16)
Child Support	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Respondent Further Enjoined	100 (9)	90.9 (11)	33.3 (9)	100 (13)*	57.1 (7)	75 (16)

* $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$

[a] Total number of cases that received a granted EOP as the terminal OP

[b] Majority of data points had missing data; presented are percentages of remedies granted from the total remedies requested (n presented in parentheses)

[c] Total number of cases that requested at least one child-relief remedy in the original EOP petition

For cases that received a POP, overall, attorney-represented cases generally were granted a larger amount of remedies post-FCEP than pre-FCEP compared to the other helper groups as well. However, 9 cases requested *reserved visitation* in both pre- and post-FCEP time periods, yet 0% of those 9 cases were granted visitation in post-FCEP (a statistically significant decrease). For both advocate-assisted and pro se cases, overall there were few cases with granted POPs and there were few differences in which remedies were requested or granted pre- and post-FCEP. There were no other statistically significant changes pre- and post-FCEP for POP cases.

Table 16. Remedies Requested and Granted in POP Across Helper Group

	Attorney		**Advocate**		**Pro Se**	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Granted OP N[a]	20	18	7	5	7	4
Variable %[b](n[c])						
Exclusive Possession of Residence	85 (20)	88.9 (18)	100 (6)	100 (5)	66.7 (3)	75 (4)
Stay Away from Petitioner	80 (20)	94.1 (17)	100 (7)	100 (5)	100 (4)	100 (4)
Stay Away, Other	69.2 (13)	80 (15)	83.3 (6)	100 (4)	100 (2)	100 (3)
Physical Care and Possession of Minor Children	85 (20)	88.2 (17)	100 (7)	100 (4)	100 (5)	66.7 (3)
Return/Non-Removal of Children from Petitioner	80 (20)	87.5 (16)	85.7 (7)	100 (5)	100 (2)	100 (3)
Temporary Legal Custody	76.9 (13)	81.8 (11)	0 (2)	0 (2)	0 (3)	0 (3)
Granted Visitation	100 (3)	66.7 (3)	0 (1)	100 (2)	0 (0)	0 (1)

Restricted Visitation	33.3 (3)	50 (2)	0 (0)	100 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Denied Visitation	14.3 (7)	33.3 (6)	40 (5)	0 (4)	75 (4)	33.3 (3)
Reserved Visitation	44.4 (9)	0 (9)*	0 (0)	0 (0)	100 (1)	0 (0)
(Prohibited Removal from IL/Concealment of Children	82.4 (17)	88.2 (17)	66.7 (6)	50 (4)	100 (1)	66.7 (3)
Child Support	25 (12)	22.2 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (1)
Respondent Further Enjoined	66.7 (12)	80 (10)	71.4 (7)	100 (5)	100 (4)	100 (4)

* $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$

[a] Total number of cases that received a granted POP as the terminal OP

[b] Majority of data points had missing data; presented are percentages of remedies granted from the total remedies requested (n presented in parentheses)

[c] Total number of cases that requested at least one child-relief remedy in the original POP petition

Discussion

Overall, the clearest changes post-FCEP occurred for pro se petitioners in terms of the increased requests for a variety of child-related remedies, increased mention of child-related issues in their OP petitions, and small changes in remedies granted in their final OP. These changes for pro se petitioners are especially stark when compared to the minimal changes to petitioners supported by advocates, attorneys, or law students. Further discussion into why these changes around child-related relief occurred and how the culture of the court and court personnel (judges, attorneys, advocates, help desk employees) shifted during the implementation of FCEP are shared below.

Requested Child-Related Remedies in OP Petitions

Pro Se Cases Self-represented pro se petitioners increasingly requested child-related remedies post-FCEP and revealed the most statistically significant changes between pre- and post-FCEP when compared with other types of petitioners and helper groups. While pro se petitioners are at a disadvantage due to not having the legal assistance or knowledge to more easily fill out their petition, these results indicate that the implementation of the FCEP informational Help Desk materials had an impact on how pro se petitioners requested remedies and filed their OP. Total mean remedies per helper group revealed that pro se petitioners only requested an average of 6.81

remedies pre-FCEP whereas they requested an average of 7.57 remedies post-FCEP. This statistically significant difference captures the impact of the FCEP-related activities, particularly the introduction of the help desk materials provided to pro se litigants. While this intervention initially seemed to be a small contribution from FCEP, these results reveal the importance of accessible information-sharing with litigants otherwise unfamiliar with legal jargon and the legal system.

Prior to the implementation of FCEP at the court, petitioners entered the courthouse and received little information to guide their requests for child-related remedies in an OP petition. There were not detailed informational handouts provided to them, which would reflect the low number of child-related remedies requested pre-FCEP. However, the distribution of FCEP informational materials, such as the Child Safety Information and FAQ Information Sheet, to petitioners guided them through questions to consider about their children safety and co-parenting and the corresponding remedy that could be requested. These materials focused heavily on child-related remedies such as physical care and possession, child custody, and visitation, which were reflected in the substantial increases in post-FCEP requests for *return to/non-removal of children from petitioner, temporary legal custody, and visitation.* The addition of informational material, newly-added Spanish-speaking Help Desk employee, and more efficient triaging and tracking of petitioners all contributed to assisting petitioners in better understanding the OP petition and child-related remedies available to them. For pro se petitioners that did not have additional assistance from advocates or attorneys, the informational materials and improved Help Desk facilitated by FCEP were pivotal in better informing petitioners of their options and ability to request safer relief.

The most statistically significant differences for pro se petitions were increased requests for *exclusive possession of a residence* and a *stay away order*. It is unclear why there was a

significant increase in requests for these remedies when the help desk materials do not specifically elaborate about *exclusive possession of residence* or *stay away orders*. These remedies are the most basic types of remedies requested and granted to litigants seeking immediate relief, but it is less obvious why these remedies were not requested pre-FCEP and more so post-FCEP. It may be possible that the clerks that reviewed the petitions before processing an OP would advise the petitioners to request those remedies.

Advocate, Law Student, and Attorney Assisted Cases Among those petitioners assisted by legal advocates, law students, and attorneys, there was little change in how petitioners assisted by these helper groups were requesting child-related relief in their OP petitions. The average number of remedies requested by petitioners assisted by advocates, law students, and attorneys did not reveal any statistically nor substantially significant differences between pre- and post-FCEP cases (Table 8). Advocate, law student, and attorney cases already requested a higher number of total remedies pre-FCEP, a higher amount of remedies than those requested by pro se petitioners both pre- and post-FCEP. While the mean number of remedies requested increased between pre- and post-FCEP time periods for all three helper groups, the minimal change for advocate, law student, and attorney assisted cases suggests a ceiling effect. This ceiling effect suggests that the advocates, law students, and attorneys already were trained to advise petitioners to request child-related remedies prior to the implementation of FCEP. Thus, the FCEP training and materials would not have drastically changed their practices in any significant way.

These results were reiterated in focus groups held with attorneys and advocates who noted that many were already familiar with the court system and child-related issues from separate legal training, advocacy training, and training around OPs and filing petitions. Attorneys and advocates that did remember the training felt that the training was a strong reinforcement for the skills they

were already implementing with their clients and the SAFeR materials were helpful resources as well. While the FCEP trainings did not revolutionize their practices nor drastically impact the filing practices for petitioners assisted by attorneys and advocates, there were substantial increases in requesting child-related remedies that suggests a renewed intentionality and court culture to suggest child-related remedies in response to safety concerns brought up by the petitioners. Both attorneys and advocates shared that they nurtured a habit of collecting more information from petitioners in a ways that was normalized and became practice to ask petitioners about children and safety concerns that could be included in the petition.

When diving deeper into the individual remedies requested by petitioners assisted by attorneys, advocates, and law students, there were substantial increases in the request for certain child-related remedies including: physical care and possession (including return to/non-removal of children from petitioner), any form of visitation (granted, restricted, reserved, or denied), and prohibited removal from IL/concealment of children (Table 7). It is difficult to claim that these slight increases were due to the FCEP trainings but perhaps due to a more focused culture among advocates and attorneys to center child-related issues and relief when working with petitioners. Many of the advocates and attorneys during the focus groups noted that they did not change their practices specifically due to the FCEP trainings, but there were practices enforced around requesting certain types of child-related relief.

Specifically, there were clear changes in how legal custody and child support were requested by petitioners that suggest changes in how certain child-related relief was requested. Attorney-represented and law student-assisted cases increasingly requested *legal custody* between pre- and post-FCEP as well as pro se cases slightly increasing their requests for *legal custody*. Requests for *child support* was a little more divided between certain helper groups. Both advocate-

assisted and pro se cases decreasingly requested *child support* while law student and attorney represented cases increasingly requested *child support* between pre- and post-FCEP. While the help desk materials do suggest to pro se petitioners to request child support to cover particular expenses, the FCEP training did not particularly focus on *child support* nor encouraged court personnel to emphasize to petitioners to request *child support*.

The significant decrease in requests for child support by pro se and advocate-assisted petitioners reveal less of an impact due to FCEP and more of the changes in the practices held by attorneys and advocates at that time. Both interviewed attorneys and advocates shared their practice of requesting *child support* for their petitioners and the common practice for many law and advocate agencies to encourage requesting this remedy. However, they also noted that they were often faced by judges who would not grant *child support* for temporary OPs. Due to judge disapproval of granting *child support*, advocates specifically were more likely to decreasingly request this remedy. Attorneys were more able to assist their petitioners reach child support through the Child Support Enforcement Legal System. Having legal representation would make possible the ability to receive child support whereas this process would be inaccessible to pro se and advocate-assisted petitioners. It is also worth noting that there have been recent changes to statewide forms that encourage petitioners to address child support with the Domestic Relations Division because it would not be determined at an emergency order hearing. We see a myriad of factors that impact the request for *child support* that move beyond the role of FCEP, including the normalized practices of certain helper groups, the role of judicial decision-making, and statewide policy that impact these changes.

Similarly for *respondent further enjoined*, there were differences in how petitioners overall requested this remedy across helper groups. Particularly, advocate-assisted and pro se cases

revealed statistically significant increases for this requested remedy pre and post FCEP, whereas law student and attorney-represented cases showed decreases in requests for injunctive relief. Interviewed advocates confirmed that there was a strong practice among advocates across different agencies to consistently request *respondent further enjoined*, even if it was repetitive and likely would be asked by judges to remove this requested remedy. This remedy was also included in the informational materials and law clerks also encouraged petitioners to include this remedy in their petition requests.

It is worth noting that this remedy was not wholly meaningful nor ensured any additional safety precautions to petitioner. This remedy is often used by petitioners to include additional protections that they could not express elsewhere in the petition. While petitioners could include notes regarding communication around or other concerns regarding children, law enforcement assistance to return a child to the petitioner, or distribution of various forms of media, the majority of folks requested "no contact/no unlawful contact" through this remedy. Therefore, we can only conclude that the significance of adding a "no contact/no unlawful contact" request increased more so due to an established culture amongst advocates and the clerk's office than due to FCEP-related advice.

Attorney Argumentation

Overall, there were little statistically significant changes in attorney argumentation made on behalf of petitioners during court hearings before and after the implementation of FCEP. However, there was an increase in types of *red flags/risk factors* that were raised in either petitions or during court hearings. These *red flags/risk factors* were particularly emphasized in the SAFeR curriculum and training offered to attorneys due to the severity of these factors can have on the physical, emotional, and daily safety of petitioners, children, and an entire family impacted by

domestic violence (Davis et al. 2018). While the attorneys continued their practice to argue on behalf of petitioners regarding their child-related issues, the results also reveal that attorneys were not bringing up issues related to the *impact of the abuse on children, petitioner's parenting, or daily life* in either time period. The attorneys did not seem to incorporate any new information related to impacts of abuse from the SAFeR trainings to their litigation practices. This may be due to a hesitancy to share these vaguer impacts as forms of evidence and doubt that this information could lead to legal action or additional granted remedies.

The advocate-assisted cases also reflect a similar pattern as the attorney-represented cases in terms of how petitioners filed their petitions and argued their case during their court hearings. More specifically, there was little change before and after FCEP in how advocates supported petitioners to share the alleged abuses and argue their cases in both petitions and court hearings. The advocate-assisted petitioners did not bring up any issues related to impact of abuse on children or petitioner's parenting either in pre- or post-FCEP time periods. While advocates do provide legal and emotional support to petitioners filing for an OP, there is little evidence that advocate-assisted petitioners saw any distinguishable change in their practices pre- and post-FCEP.

While minimal changes occurred for attorney-represented and advocate-assisted cases, pro se petitioners revealed statistically significant increases in how they reported/argued their alleged abuses in their petitions and during court hearings due to FCEP, particularly for child-related issues such as *abuse on children* and *impact on petitioner's parenting* as well as significant increases for various r*ed flags/risk factors*. The researchers can infer that the FCEP educational materials provided pro se petitioners more information on abuses they can bring up and especially the impacts these experiences have on themselves, their parenting, and their children. It is also likely that judges were more likely to ask petitioners questions about these incidences to ensure that

petitioners were eligible for an OP. In this case, judges were more likely to prompt pro se petitioners to share these experiences due to petitioners not having the legal knowledge or support to provide that information on their own or in their petitions. While this is a common reality for most self-represented petitioners, it is still important to recognize the significant changes in child-related relief that resulted from both petitioners and judges having more focus on child-related issues due to FCEP initiatives whether that be educational materials or trainings for the judges. The strong increase in child-related remedies requests and argumentation of their abuses by the pro-se petitioners with their receiving of the FCEP educational materials point to the empowering impact of providing litigants with even simple, but accessible, legal information.

Judges Asking Child-Related Questions and Decision-Making

Prior to the creation of FCEP, DVD judges were interviewed and identified gaps in their training regarding cases with children in common between litigants. They particularly felt like they lacked the necessary information needed to best assess and grant safety options in OP cases with shared children. The 2016 FCEP training provided an overview of the SAFeR curriculum, guidance for judges on how to ask child-related questions to petitioners during their court hearings, and skills to better inform their decision making around child-related relief. Through FCEP, judges were provided materials that would assist in asking and making decisions regarding children in OP cases: Judge SAFeR Bench Card and SAFeR Practice Guide. The bench card was a concise checklist that judges could refer to during their court hearings while the longer practice guide provided more SAFeR context and detailed decision-making skills.

Interviews held with former and current DVD judges asked them to reflect on the FCEP trainings, the role of FCEP at the court, and any impacts the FCEP materials may have had on their decision-making process. While many of them were trained in FCEP during the 2016 training or

alternative FCEP orientations, most of the judges did not have clear memories of the 2016 training and the information that was shared during that training. However, a handful of the judges found the shared FCEP materials helpful in providing more information for their cases that ultimately assisted their decision-making. As one judge noted, "I think [FCEP] gave me additional tools to elicit some information that would help in the long-run" (Judge FJ16POR). And this was confirmed by another judge who shared: "We were engaging in a careful analysis given the best information that we had available and we responded accordingly" (Judge FJ10BET). This guide was provided to the judges to encourage them to ask more prompting questions about child-related abuse to better inform the types of child-related remedies they should grant to petitioners.

While not all the judges engaged deeply with the SAFeR materials, many did share other supplemental sources of information that assisted their decision-making process. Many of the judges shared experiences with other judicial trainings, domestic violence trainings, and previous education that assisted their knowledge of domestic violence and child-related issues. And for many, it was important for them to constantly discuss with colleagues and other judges, read case law, and see how other courthouses were interacting with cases involving children. But as one judge shared, "To me there's no better way than to sit down and just start listening to litigants and figuring it out. And then the more you do more cases, the more you learn" (Judge CJ05PAT). All these types of information sharing show how important it is for the judges to have the necessary tools to inform their decisions with other judges and most importantly with the litigants.

When specifically examining the questions that judges asked during OP civil hearings, judges significantly increased in asking questions about the *exposure of children to abuse* and the *impact of abuse on children*. These results suggest that the informational guide may have led to the increase in judges asking questions relating to child-related abuse during the hearings.

However, seeing the trend in decreasing questioning around the *impact of abuse on the petitioner's life* showed that the training may have been lacking in information about signs that judges could look out for to prompt asking questions about the impact of the abuse. Judges interviewed were also surprised that judges were not asking more child-related questions overall during the OP cases. These results were especially surprising as all the interviewed judges shared their in-depth process of asking various questions to petitioners to share all the details of what is happening between the parents, the children, and how the OP could provide some safety options. The judges specifically shared that they asked a variety of questions regarding safety concerns, questions to determine which visitation type is best, whether paternity was established, which parent is the primary caretaker, experiences of physical abuse, and the exposure of children to the abuse.

Overall, there is still room for improvement for the judges to continue to learn and incorporate new information into the questions they ask and how they assess cases including children. There also continues to be space for additional information and context that questioning may not fulfil during a short hearing. One judge shared their experience:

> So, you ask these question to get more of a rounded picture of what this person's life and their experiences is like and what is happening inside their home and how they're experiencing this situation… And so sometimes it would be great if we had some people who trained in this area to assist informing us because our judges here feel like we are operating a little bit in the dark and a little bit without full information about the children in the home of domestic violence victims (FJ30THE).

This judge both acknowledged the importance of asking questions as had most of the other judges, but also recognized that there remain gaps in information that require attention if some judges continue to feel under informed to make accurate and safe decisions for families.

Additional analysis was also conducted to assess differences in the amount and type of child-related questions asked to petitioners with distinct helper groups, particularly comparing petitioners with legal or self-representation. The only statistical significance increase occurred for questions asked about *exposure of children to abuse* to self-represented petitioners. Conversely, judges did not ask a significant amount of questions focused on the *impact of abuse on children* across all petitioners both pre- and post-FCEP. These results reveal small changes in how judges interacted with self-represented petitioner, but there does not seem to be a significant effect from the type of helper group on the kinds of questions asked by judges. When considering all the SAFeR-related questions that judges could ask, the attorney-represented cases overall saw a statistically significant increase in questions asked from 86.4%pre-FCEP to 100% post-FCEP. In comparison, the self-represented cases started with 90.9% of the judges asking questions in the pre-condition, so there was not as much room for change, and there may have been a ceiling effect in the practice of judges asking questions to self-represented petitioners.

Of the six SAFeR-related questions, it seemed appropriate to focus the analysis primarily on the three child-related questions focused on *exposure of abuse on child, impact of abuse on child,* and *impact on petitioner's parenting of child*. Because these concepts were the newest information shared from the SAFeR and FCEP trainings, it was important to explore this distinction to see whether there were significant differences in how judges approached child-related abuse. There was a dramatic increase in the amount of child-related questions that the judges asked to all petitioners during their court hearings. This increase in child-related questions asked during court hearings suggests that the judges were using the provided SAFeR guides to their intended effect and implemented information from the SAFeR trainings into their practice. When examining particularly the difference between legal and self-representation, while there was

an increase for both groups, self-represented cases saw a greater and statistically significant increase in the judges' questioning. While the attorneys may have known to bring up certain child-related questions in the court hearings without probing, the advocate and pro se cases may have not, which could have prompted the judges to ask more questions in those cases.

Granted Child-Related Remedies

Overall, FCEP had little impact on the number of orders of protection granted. When examining deeper the particular child-related remedies granted, there were minimal changes between pre-and post-FCEP in both EOP and POP cases. However, there were a number of remedies granted in EOPs that revealed a substantial increase. In line with previously captured trends, significant changes in the remedies requested and granted were found for advocate and pro se cases whereas attorney-represented cases portrayed less change between pre- and post-FCEP. The granting of *respondent further enjoined* was the only child-related remedy that was significantly and increasingly granted post-FCEP—moving from 47.1% granted pre-FCEP to 100% of requests granted post-FCEP. This remedy allowed for petitioners to write-in additional remedies, and all requests for *respondent further enjoined* by advocate cases included some iteration of "no contact". These additional 'no contact' remedies often act as a strategy of child-relief as it can further block the respondent from accessing the petitioner and the children to supplement locations included in 'stay away' orders.

Specifically for visitation remedies (*granted, denied, restricted, reserved*), overall, there were not many types of visitation remedies that were granted. For EOP cases, there were not many instances when visitation was granted. However, both attorney and pro se cases saw *reserved visitation* increasingly granted from pre- to post-FCEP. Petitioners were encouraged to request *reserved visitation* in the EOP stage as a strategy to address a detailed visitation plan at the POP

stage. As such, judges were not likely to establish a visitation plan at the emergency hearing since respondents were often not present at this initial hearing. However, this practice began to change with the added role of the CRE as they greatly assisted in creating visitation plans during EOP continuances. Interestingly, *reserved visitation* was decreasingly granted and statistically significant for attorney-represented POP orders between pre- and post-FCEP. Considering other visitation remedies granted in POP cases, few visitation orders were granted in 2017. While the added process led by the CRE began in 2017, the data does not signal dramatic changes to visitation remedies granted post-FCEP. Through anecdotal information, it can be inferred that the full effect of the CRE's practices were developed and encouraged by the judges more so in years following 2017 as FCEP was more deeply implemented.

Based on the increased requests for child-related remedies by petitioners, more granted remedies were anticipated. No clear patterns were revealed around the impact of FCEP and specifically the role of the judge trainings. While petitioners, especially pro se petitioners, utilized the FCEP materials to request more remedies post-FCEP, judges were still hesitant to grant child-related remedies for emergency orders and they did not make any significant changes in their habits around granting child-related remedies in 2017. It is unclear what supports or information judges still need to offer granted remedies or whether there are other judicial or legal barriers that limit their ability to grant child-related remedies. These data reveal immediate short-term impacts of FCEP especially in the usefulness of the FCEP informational materials for petitioners as well as the benefits and remaining gaps in the SAFeR trainings provided to judges, attorneys, and advocates. Further research is still necessary to understand the long-term impacts of FCEP on granted remedies and on visitation remedies as influenced by the role of the CRE.

During the focus groups with attorneys and advocates, there were clear discussions focused on the difficulties that arose in having requested child-related remedies dismissed and not included in the final granted order. Attorneys and advocates described cases where requested remedies would be removed by the judge, regardless if the petitioner was entitled to this remedy under the Illinois Domestic Violence Act. Both attorneys and advocates shared that some judges were reluctant to issue orders to cases with children involved. Also, the attorneys and advocates shared various examples where in the their opinion the orders granted to litigants were restrictive and in many cases did not fit the safety needs of the litigants. The advocates and attorneys noted that each judge was different and this led to inconsistencies in how judges were granting certain child-related remedies.

When the results were shared with the interviewed judges, some were surprised that there was not a lot of change in the number of child-related remedies granted pre- and post-FCEP. Judges were particularly concerned that the visitation remedies did not increase more drastically post-FCEP, especially when there were clear conversations between judges on how to better grant these remedies. Judges felt that they were granting more child-related remedies and were observing first-hand ways that FCEP was significantly supporting families and individuals with children. Many judges also noted that these results do not take into consideration that each case will have its own needs and the goals of each case will differ. One judge stated this notion clearly:

> "How I rule in a particular case, I could not necessarily connect to the program. Say, more probably than not 51-49%, that any particular outcome was clearly related to FCEP. That's because each case is going to be solely generous. Each case is going to rise or fall on its own merits, on the individual fact patterns that are presented by the applicants that come in. But what this does do is, it shows elegantly, I use that word without hesitation. The

> information is presented to the judges, and they ask questions because of the education that we have provided them and the training that we have given them as a result of the FCEP. And as a corollary, the unrepresented litigants are asking for relief, are taking positions, are stating their cases in a different, more expansive kind of way because of the information that we have provided, the education that we have given them. And that's a good thing, that's a very good thing. Now if anybody is looking for the result, that more orders of protection should be entered, I challenge that, I disagree. And I would defend against trying to say, well more orders of protection were issued because--I just reject that" (Judge FJ10BET).

This judge presented an important reminder that the judge does not determine the kinds of cases that are presented and instead can only make an informed decision on an individual case. The goal of the judge is not to grant more OPs but rather to make as informed a decision as possible. He detailed clearly the role of FCEP in providing judges and petitioners with as much information, especially regarding children, and skills to ask questions that will inform the best decision—whether that be a granted remedy or not.

Chapter 4: Impact of the Child Relief Expediter

Context and Role of CRE

The role of the Child Relief Expediter was created as part of the Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP) to assist litigant parents reach a parenting agreement that would be incorporated into the granted Order of Protection (OP). Judges at the domestic violence division (DVD) would refer cases with shared children to the CRE and provide support around parental custody and visitation agreements as well as other information regarding navigating the court, resources, and referrals to services. As part of the evaluation of FCEP, various research questions were posed to assess the impact of the CRE on safety and fairness of parenting agreements for litigants and on the practice of judges, attorneys, and advocates working with litigant parents with children in common. The CRE in conjunction with the other FCEP initiatives aimed to empower litigant parents to create a safe parenting agreement and for litigants to gain a sense of fairness through a difficult court process.

The DVD judges initially suggested the role of the CRE as a solution to their lack of information about the existence and consequences of abuse on survivors and their children during their civil OP cases involving child-related relief and remedies. Judges often do not have enough time during court hearings to understand the full scope of abuse impacting petitioners and their children. Simultaneously, petitioners are moving through intense trauma and crisis that impede their ability to fully articulate to judges their experience and needs in a manner that would allow judges to confidently determine necessary relief. Thus, the CRE role was created to support parent litigants identify child-related relief that addresses their safety concerns, facilitate parenting agreements between the petitioner and respondent parents, and determine specific communication, exchange, and visitation plans that would elicit greater safety between the parents and children.

The Child-Relief Expediter acted as a safety facilitator and was distinct from a traditional mediator. As detailed in, Defining Child-Related Relief in Civil Protection Orders to Enhance Safety:

1. The safety facilitator assumes some responsibility for the substantive outcome of the negotiation and deciding whether it passes muster.
    a. The safety facilitator does not move forward with an agreement that is not workable, is not likely to be followed, is unsafe, or was created under duress.
2. The safety facilitator is a substantive participant who offers ideas, troubleshoots proposals, and raises concerns not expressed by the parties.
    a. The safety facilitator is hypervigilant about introducing and confronting safety issues, as opposed to just responding to them.
3. The safety facilitator is very active during the process, keeping tight control over what is discussed, how parties act, and how the process is structured.
4. The safety facilitator reports safety concerns directly to the judge.

The role of the CRE and the development of parenting agreements were also intended to ensure the physical and emotional safety of the children shared between parent litigants. The parenting agreements allow the parents to autonomously determine how they can safely engage with their children through safe communication, exchange, and visitation options. While the parenting plans are not created with the children present, these parenting determinations do undeniably impact the wellbeing and safety of the children. To better understand how children were interacting with the parenting plans, the research team interviewed the litigant parents and asked them to share their observations about their children interacting with the parenting plan. These reflections are obviously biased, but they do offer some insights into how the children are

experiencing the plan and how the parents navigate and make adjustments to the plan to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their children.

The CRE entered the court when FCEP was first implemented at the end of 2016. During the first year of FCEP in 2017, the CRE met and reached agreements with litigant parents from approximately 255 OP civil cases. The following research question guided the research of this role in its first year: *What short-term impact did the FCEP-provided CRE have on increasing the safety and fairness of visitation arrangements for litigants?* An examination of those 255 cases facilitated by the CRE revealed the ways in which this role encouraged greater safety and court fairness to parent litigants. It was also imperative to track the progress and changes impacting the CRE role in the DV court since the creation of the role. As part of a larger research question focused on the implementation of FCEP, the following question was asked: *How did the CRE facilitate visitation agreements among petitioners and respondents?* Broadly, the question focuses on the expediting process and the CRE's role in working with parent litigants to create parenting agreements focused on the safety needs of the shared children and the petitioner.

The Evolution of the Expediting Process

Litigant Referral to CRE

The CRE begins the expediting process through OP case referrals from a judge for cases that have children in common between the petitioner and respondent parents. There are various points at which litigant parents can be referred to the CRE based on the progress of their OP case. Litigants can be referred after a temporary EOP is established, during a POP hearing, after a POP hearing, or when a case is being modified in any way. If both parents are open to the option, they are scheduled to have a session with the CRE either the same day or at a later date. In 2017, most litigants were referred to the CRE at the point of receiving an issued POP order (23.1%) or when

a petitioner obtained an EOP temporary agreement (22.7%). This point of referral has changed over time with most referrals coming from cases that are only at the EOP stage with cases still being referred at the POP stage, but less frequently. The CRE shared that this shift may be due to the increased length of time that litigant parents must wait in between the emergency and plenary hearings. The CRE received few referrals from cases that had already obtained its POP agreed order, both in 2017 and onwards.

In 2017, the majority of cases were referred once (88.2%) and most had one session (80.8%) with the CRE. A small number of litigants returned to the CRE to modify their previously agreed order and parenting plan (7.8%). Overall, during 2016 and 2017, the CRE had 202 sessions (79.2%) that occurred, and the remaining sessions either did not occur (14.1%) or were terminated (6.7%) due to various logistic and safety reasons. Since 2017, CRE session termination rates have slightly increased with 6%-10% of case sessions resulting in termination. The CRE noted that termination is often the result of a safety concern, lack of information about the case, disagreement between litigant parents and/or the CRE, etc. The CRE estimated that they currently see an average of 10-12 cases per week, but this number fluctuates depending on several factors such as the quantity of judges available and their capacity, specific details that may make a case more or less complicated, and delays within the court system timeline and/or processing of a case.

Sessions with Litigant Parents

The CRE begins all initial meetings with litigant parents by reviewing information such as the policy statement, her neutral role and the goal of the sessions, confidentiality and exceptions, as well as the full range of parenting options available, particularly communication, exchange, visitation, and financial support. The CRE shared that throughout the entirety of FCEP and going forward, they have seen a much higher level of interest towards creating parenting plans amongst

litigant parents than was initially anticipated. The CRE has found that generally there is an overall lack of knowledge about parenting options amongst litigant parents, both petitioner and respondent, regardless of time period. However, FCEP has made education of such options and a trust in these options more widely accessible to parents.

The process of meeting and working with litigant parents at the earlier stages of FCEP operated on a short-notice basis where litigant parents would meet with the CRE the same day as their court hearing. The CRE facilitates their session utilizing shuttle mediation, meaning the parents meet separately while the CRE moves between them to determine shared decisions about the parenting plan. The CRE usually began with meeting with the petitioner in their office while the respondent waited in the lobby. Once the CRE was done meeting with the petitioner, they would meet with the respondent. The CRE would move between meeting both parents until a parenting plan was determined and agreed upon by both parents. While litigants had the option to meet together, this was very rare to occur. If either litigant has an advocate or attorney on their team, those individuals are free to be a part of the meeting, but not required. The session would last about two hours, in which the CRE and litigant parents worked out a "less detailed" parenting plan. Then, the litigants would return to the judge with this established parenting plan. The CRE explained that because meetings with litigant parents were held on the same day as their hearings, emotions were often still quite high. Additionally, at this point of the FCEP project, many litigant parents were unaware of the project and thus not expecting, planning, nor aware of a staying at the courthouse all day to meet with the CRE.

More recently and with the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, CRE sessions occur remotely through Zoom. Meetings are scheduled and held on a shuttle and staggered system where the petitioner and respondent are scheduled, generally, 90 minutes apart from each other in separate

Zoom rooms, and the CRE shuttles back and forth between the virtual rooms. There is an option for litigant parents to be in the same breakout room, but this does not happen most of the time. As before, litigants are welcome to have their attorneys or advocates join the CRE session with them. Currently this process has operated on a calendar system where litigants schedule a time to meet with the CRE, sometimes weeks in advance due to the CRE's packed schedule. However, this process allows litigant parents an improved experience. First, they can step back from the emotions of the hearing and be more prepared to create a parenting plan. Second, they can meet with the CRE for a longer time (noted as a three-hour period) with the option to schedule follow-up meetings with the CRE and utilize her as a point of contact throughout the process. Third, they can meet with their attorneys, advocates, and other supports to prepare for the meeting. Overall, this flexibility and preparation allows litigants to develop a more detailed and effective parenting plan.

Types of Litigant Cases

The CRE meets with a variety of parents during their first year in the role and continue to meet with diverse populations of individuals. In 2017, the majority of all litigant parents identified as BIPOC, specifically Hispanic/Latinx (petitioners 43.1%; respondents 37.7%) and Black/African American (petitioners 27.2%; respondents 26.4%). Since 2017, the majority of litigants who meet with the CRE are BIPOC and predominantly Black and Latine. Most of the petitioners identified as women (75.7%) while the majority of respondents identified as men (68.2%), this continues to be the trend over the last five or six years. The majority of both petitioners (63.8%) and respondents (62.8%) were and continue to be aged between 25 and 51 years old. About a third of petitioners (31.0%) and respondents (28.5%) completed high school or their GED—this has continued to be true for current litigants. In 2017, about half of all petitioners (54.8%) and respondents (49.4%)

were never married. This has changed over the years; the CRE estimates working with about one case per week that includes a previously married individual.

Most cases were civil in 2017, but there was an increasing number of criminal cases since then. The CRE explained that the Legal Aid Society of Metropolitan Family Services, who has a great relationship with the CRE, was recently working on criminal cases as part of a grant-funded project, so they were referring many cases to her. There were also current criminal judges that have been in the courts for a long time, many of whom were previously appointed to the civil courts, were familiar with the referral process, and often utilized the CRE services.

Regarding litigant legal representation and advocacy, the CRE shared that "more often than not, people don't have lawyers." There were many cases in which neither litigant had any legal representation nor advocate assistance. If there was litigant assistance in a case, it was most common for the petitioner to be accompanied by an advocate.

There has been a decrease in DCFS involvement during 2020 and 2021, speculated to be due to COVID, as kids were not interacting with individuals like teachers and coaches who historically are likely to report families to DCFS. Since coming out of pandemic isolation, DCFS involvement was slowly increasing again.

Child-Related Remedies

When litigants meet with the CRE, their priority is determining child-related remedies such as communication regarding children, visitation options, and exchange protocols for these visits. The majority of CRE sessions in 2017 reached agreement in at least one area of child-related relief (66.3%) after discussing various parenting options. The majority of sessions discussed and reached agreement (59.1%) for unsupervised visitation, and about a third of sessions discussed and reached

agreement for supervised visitation by a family member (38.8%) and for a supervised visitation center (30.3%) each. Like the 2017 cases revealed, unsupervised visitation remedies continued to be most frequently agreed upon and implemented over the last five years. This could be because supervised visitation requires more logistical planning as well as a third party's involvement, be it a family member or at an established visitation center. There have been major shifts in supervised visitation practices as supervised visitation centers have been largely inaccessible since the beginning of the pandemic. Cases with plans for supervised visitation are most often supervised by family members or options for unsupervised visitation in public areas are discussed, if determined to be safe. The CRE has seen an increase in restrictions on visitation, estimating that nearly all cases granted visitation have restrictions.

Communication regarding children and the visitation plan was discussed (70.2%) and reached agreement (76.5%) in the majority of sessions. Neutral or safe exchange options are discussed with parents to determine how to best exchange children for the agreed visitation. In 2017, many sessions discussed neutral exchange (45.1%) and supervised exchange by a family member (38.4%), with the majority of those cases reaching agreement for those types of exchange. A small percentage of cases discussed supervised exchange (11.8%) through a visitation center and an even smaller percent reached agreement (6.7%). Exchange agreements and communication practices have remained consistent since 2017. For parenting/safety plans that utilize unsupervised visitation, most determined visits via neutral communication. For parenting/safety plans that utilize supervised visitation, it was ideal for parents to figure out exchange via a third-party individual, but that was often not reliable nor realistic. Communication for neutral exchange between litigant parents has increasingly taken place via a mobile application such as Talking Parents.

Other issues discussed during sessions included: belongings/documents; financial matters; physical care custody; restrictions during visits; and others but they were not discussed in a majority of sessions. Overall, 92.3% of sessions that occurred that reached agreement in at least one remedy had their agreement incorporated into their granted OP in 2017. Notably, the CRE felt that the role has positively affected agreement outcomes. This was seen in the decrease of what they called, "frequent flyers," or litigant parents who return to the court: "Previously [to FCEP], it was just band-aiding the situation, and then the order is done and then you're back, and then you're back six months later... It feels like there are less people in that sort of situation and more people are actually getting solutions that are helping them move forward."

Once agreed upon by both parents, the CRE guides them to have their parenting agreement incorporated into their final granted OP by a judge. The final OP and parenting agreement allow the parents to safely experience the parenting plan with their children. Depending on how well the plan is executed, the parents have the right to amend and modify their plans if needed.

COVID Impacts

During the pandemic, civil and criminal courtrooms moved fully to Zoom. Because of this, CRE sessions with litigants also shifted to Zoom, which allowed for more flexibility and accessibility for litigants to continue to access the CRE's services. Positively, with regards to physical safety and emotional wellbeing, the CRE found that petitioners were less stressed about seeing the respondent in the court as a result of conducting all proceedings over Zoom. However, there were still difficulties with regards to litigant safety, as sometimes they were not alone or were still at risk in their home environments during these proceedings. This made the facilitation of the meetings difficult for the CRE: "I have to be really detailed with people about them guaranteeing that they're in a private space, that they're not recording this, they're not screenshotting it, they're

not—if their location changes, they need to tell me that." Additionally, if litigants are in the same Zoom room, there may be aspects of either's environment that may be triggering for the other (ex. an old photo in the background, a litigant's displayed name, etc.).

Because of the shift to the online court environment as well as an increase in domestic violence during the pandemic, the court struggled with backlog of cases and capacity issues. For the CRE, this meant that they were consistently scheduling meetings anywhere between three weeks and two months in advance to meet demand. The CRE dealt with increased anger from respondent parents who had to wait months to see their children due to the hearing wait times and backlogs, leading to some violating orders or coming to the CRE with a lot of frustration. Regarding case load, the CRE notes that there was a period during the pandemic where judges were inadequately referring cases to them that they terminated early on because of how high risk they were. On top of this, communication between key court personnel that could provide assistance (judges, attorneys, advocates, etc.) was more difficult because they were no longer in one physical space at the court. When these factors compound over time, such as over the course of the pandemic, the trauma and stress of court personnel, CRE included, increases. Thus, the CRE noted that COVID brought people to their breaking points because of the high level of stress they were under and the chaotic environment within the court.

All quantitative data for the 2017 CRE cases are reported in tables, found in Appendix K.

Collaboration with Court Personnel

Interactions between the CRE and advocates or attorneys were limited, but not infrequent, as the level of interaction is fully dependent on the specific case and a litigant's ability to have legal representation. The CRE can request that the litigant's assigned advocates or attorneys be a part of the parenting plan meeting, and/or follow up with a representing attorney or advocate

following a session with the parents. Additionally, the CRE may personally inform or train advocates and/or attorneys about her role, the process of handling cases where litigants have a child in common, the history and context of FCEP, child-related remedies/issues, etc.

Interactions between the CRE and judges are more frequent. As with the advocates and attorneys, the CRE personally informs or trains judges about FCEP, the CRE role, and how to identify case characteristics fit for referral. All case referrals come directly from the judge themselves, and the CRE may meet with the judges to discuss current court practices or concerns. Additionally, sometimes judges will request information from the CRE about certain cases when there is an external agency involved that the CRE has an established relationship with. The CRE also noted that there has been recent communication between them and DCFS, as they are often involved in a case. The CRE also has external relationships and is in communication with other agencies and organizations like the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, Center for Court Innovation, and Battered Women's Justice Project.

Judge Experience with CRE

The Domestic Violence Division Judges spoke highly of the CRE and their positive experiences in collaborating with the CRE at the courthouse. One judge summed up their feelings in this statement, to which multiple other judges agreed: "[The CRE is] completely and utterly invaluable. I don't understand how the courthouse could have functioned without one before and it's really depressing and saddening to think that it didn't exist at some point..." (Judge FJ11DEL). Throughout the interviews, judges brought up the need for more CREs in the courthouse, as well as across the nation.

CRE Referral to Litigants

Almost all of the judges interviewed worked with the CRE and relied on the CRE's services heavily, making referrals to them daily at most, and weekly at the least. While many judges wanted to connect with the CRE for many of their cases, they also tried to be mindful of how often they utilized the CRE knowing that their schedule is full, at least two to four weeks in advance. The judges noted that the CRE's time is a valuable resource with limited time, so a referral to the CRE can cause a time lag in the court process. Thus, judges are mindful of not "wasting" the CRE's time and energy on cases that are not appropriate for expediting services. However, in general, the judges would rather wait those multiple weeks to make a decision that is more informed with the CRE's help.

For most judges, when they were working with cases at the emergency stage with any kind of issue surrounding shared children, it was common practice to refer them to the CRE. They would begin by asking if the litigants had children in common, and this alone was often enough for a referral to the CRE. However, some judges preferred to wait until they could identify that "the disputes that led to the petitions claiming violations of the Domestic Violence Act were rooted in the parent's inability to come to an agreement for parenting of the kids" (Judge CJ30MAR). Additionally, if there seemed to be issues around parenting and still a strong desire for the non-custodial parent to have parenting time, the CRE would be brought up as a potential resource.

If the CRE's services seemed applicable to the case, the judges would then share a bit of information about the CRE's process, highlighting that going through this process would help parents to "come to an agreement that [they] both reach" so that they "don't fight about it anymore" (Judge FJ11DEL). After sharing this information, one judge estimated that in about 98% of their

cases the litigants would accept the referral. Cases in which litigants would not accept the referral tended to be when one parent felt that the other parent was a danger to the children.

CRE as a Source of Information

A common theme from the interviews was the judges describing how they use the CRE as a source of information, or as one judge put it, the "eyes and ears" of the judges (Judge FJ10BET). Firstly, the CRE has conversations with the litigants that they may not be comfortable having with the judges in a formal court setting. The benefit of the CRE is that they can share any safety concerns back to the judges without any breach of confidentiality, providing the judges with a "guide" to both inform their practice personally, and continue the conversation with the litigants in the courtroom. Secondly, in these conversations, the CRE goes deeper in the individual situations than a judge can. While both the judges and the CRE have high caseloads, the judges felt that the CRE would learn more detailed information in her expediting sessions than what the judges would learn during their brief hearing times with litigants. Finally, the judges shared how the CRE makes extremely accurate recommendations because of the rich conversations she has with both litigants. One judge shared that they "would get feedback from the CRE on a pretty regular basis and certainly if she discovered something that seemed in any way inappropriate [for the case]" (Judge FJ10BET). Many judges shared the importance of the CRE's ability to gather information about the safety concerns of a case to provide accurate recommendations to the judges and the positive outcomes this would have for the family.

The CRE's Calming Disposition

The judges reflected on their time with the CRE in a highly positive light. They described the CRE as an "asset" and "ally" to the judges who felt very "fortunate" to have their expertise. As a person, the current CRE was described as "the perfect person" for the role: "She brings a

calming influence, she brings an insightful influence, she brings a caring influence, and she's just the perfect person for the job" (Judge FJ10BET). The CRE holds a high level of regard from the judges for what the role provides for the court and for the litigants. Specifically, the judges spoke about the CRE's calming influence on the litigants and judges, specifically in the rigid and quick-paced courtroom setting. Judges described how they would see a visible change in the litigants' demeanor after meeting with the CRE, primarily appearing more calm. A calming presence and disposition, for themselves and the litigants, seemed to be a core value for the judges in an otherwise hectic court environment.

Attorney and Advocate Experience with CRE

Attorneys and advocates alike spoke highly of the CRE and their experiences with the role within the court setting. Key factors in creating these positive experiences were the CRE's ability to make litigants feel seen and heard, to mitigate issues with the judges, and to support attorneys and advocates in their respective roles assisting petitioners with their OPs.

Frequency of Usage

Both attorneys and advocates can utilize the CRE to assist their clients, though they do so at different frequencies. Attorney usage of the CRE seemed to vary, mostly because attorneys felt like they had similar skills and power to the CRE. Attorneys seemed to refer clients to the CRE if (1) there was no opposing counsel or (2) the case needed more time or attention than the attorneys could provide to the litigant.

With advocates, there seemed to be some confusion over who needed to order or request the CRE's services, specifically if their client needed to ask the judge in court or if the judge needed to refer the client directly. This confusion seemed to stem from the variability between judges and courtrooms, showing a lack of clear protocol surrounding the request and usage of the

CRE. Nevertheless, it seemed that the advocates were much more eager to use the CRE than the attorneys.

CRE Centering Litigant Needs

A key theme raised by both advocates and attorneys was the way the CRE encouraged the litigants to be heard and seen within the court system. Attorneys and advocates communicated how the CRE played an integral role in their clients' lives due to the CRE's neutrality and trauma-informed practices. The CRE centers neutral mediation and active listening to the needs and wants of her litigant clients. They further shared that their clients appreciated having someone present specifically for them, especially compared to judges, clerks, or other court personnel who don't always show litigants the same kind of dignity and respect. Across the CRE's work, prioritizing the safety of the survivor and their children was always at the forefront of the process. Advocates and attorneys alike emphasized how their litigants came away from sessions with the CRE feeling validated and empowered. Especially when dealing with such personal trauma, the advocates specifically stressed how important the CRE is in humanizing the court process.

Attorneys especially noted how their clients had better outcomes in their cases because of the collaboration between the CRE and themselves. They primarily thought this occurred because of the CRE's ability to balance out the emotions of litigants and garner direct responses in the courtroom. When clients are nervous or not responding well to the attorneys, often because of an unbalanced power dynamic, the CRE's presence can be beneficial in putting clients at ease. When the attorneys are stressed or overwhelmed, the CRE helps them to feel calmer and more level-headed. Watching how the CRE went about this balancing act was "inspiring" and made the attorneys consider changes to their own practices.

The resounding sentiment from advocates was that the CRE gives voice to the advocates' work and ideas when the judges and other court personnel were not respecting the role of the advocate. When working with clients, the CRE gave the advocates peace of mind because they knew the CRE would prioritize their clients' voice, experiences, and safety. Additionally, they shared that the CRE had gone beyond the role by providing helpful training and guidance to new advocates. Overall, the advocates were overwhelmingly positive about the introduction of the CRE to the courthouse, specifically voicing that they wanted to see more CREs in the building.

Mitigating Issues with Judges

Across the board, attorneys and advocates were very vocal about how the CRE assists them in mitigating issues with the judges. Notably, there seems to be a greater sense of respect and trust given to the CRE than is given to the advocates from the judges. Additionally, the thoughtful preparation of cases with the CRE's help was key for both attorneys and advocates, as they expressed that their clients were consistently receiving better outcomes in less time when the CRE was on the case, compared to a judge handling a case without the CRE's input.

Judge education and knowledge about the domestic violence court and domestic violence in general was an issue primarily shared by attorneys but echoed by advocates. They felt like the judges were lacking education in child-related issues as a result of not having explicit experience and training with family law or domestic violence law. Once the CRE began, the attorneys specifically felt that the knowledge of the CRE compensated for the lack of judge education and information in a way that restored efficient litigation. While attorneys appreciated the effect of the CRE on judge knowledge, the attorneys felt that the CRE's presence enabled the judges to over rely on the CRE and her knowledge rather than educating themselves. Thus, despite the overall benefit of having the CRE work with the judges to support the work of the attorneys and advocates,

there remains higher expectations for judge involvement in cases that encouraged a more efficient court process.

Litigant Experience with CRE

Overwhelmingly, litigants found value in their sessions with the Child Relief Expediter (CRE). When asked about their level of satisfaction in working with the CRE and creating a parenting agreement, 63.3% of parents were 'very satisfied.' Though the session with the CRE was technically a facet of the court, litigants distinguished their experience with the CRE from their experience with judges. Litigants frequently expressed that they were not initially aware of what options were available to them for a parenting plan, however, the CRE then shared and explained their options "nonjudgmentally" to all the parents at the beginning of each session. The CRE was a warm presence in a predominantly "cold" court process. The CRE took time with the litigants, and this was particularly striking to litigants who felt that they were not given much time during their court hearings. Yvonne described that feeling, "I think she was very patient; I didn't feel rushed. You know how sometimes you work with people that are like okay okay, like they are just trying to get to the end, like get the arrangement done. I didn't feel like she was rushing, I didn't feel as though she, like, was concerned about how long it may take her, it flowed very well, I'll say that." Yvonne noted how important it was that someone took time with her, especially when she did not experience that through the rest of the court process when filing for her OP.

Litigants noted that the CRE genuinely listened to them even if they were unable to help the parents achieve all of the aspects of the plan they desired. The CRE validated the litigants' emotions and did not use any "legal talk." Jazz noted how beneficial this validation was to her, "She had a capacity to work with me without appearing to be numb from having so much contact with people... it was a little bit shocking to me and just the—I—again, the approach, I didn't feel

like I was talking to a lawyer, you know?" This petitioner along with others shared similar validating and sensitive experience with the CRE that created an environment open to creating a parenting plan.

The experience of the respondents with the CRE was noteworthy. Many noted feeling that the court system as a whole was biased against them, and their judges were not listening to them or providing them an opportunity to express concerns. However, they felt the CRE's neutrality and compassion with them in a way they did not experience otherwise in their court process. David described it as such, "There's ways that I was going to get through this. There was a compassion that I hadn't seen in especially with the judge that was originally assigned to the case." The CRE was cognizant of treating respondents with humanity rather than stigmatizing them in a way that invalidated their experiences and desires to reach safe parenting options for their children.

Petitioners appreciated meeting with the CRE individually through shuttle mediation. Litigants were physically separated in distinct rooms, whether in person or virtually, and the CRE would meet each parent individually and shuttle between them to ensure litigant safety. Litigants expressed that they felt the CRE focused on and centered the children in their conversations, making it less adversarial and easier to come to a consensus about co-parenting decisions. Petitioners appreciated the ability to be candid with the CRE without the respondent present. Jessica said, "I was like I didn't want to see him; I didn't want to have to talk to him. I very much liked and appreciated the fact that the meeting with the child expeditor and with the mediator, everything was separate." Overall, they expressed feeling emotionally safe and able to share their concerns candidly with the CRE.

Despite generally positive sentiments about the CRE sessions, some litigants expressed frustration that the other parent did not compromise about certain aspects of the plan. Respondents

were likely to share examples of petitioners not compromising during the CRE session. Respondents reported feelings of resignation and "not having a choice" regarding what the petitioner was requesting. Tomas said, "Like [the CRE] would just be able to talk to her and try to persuade the mother, but at the end of the day, it's the mother making all the choices." Similarly, David said, "I told her that I don't care what it takes, I'll do whatever it takes to even just hear their voices. And so, that's pretty much it. It wasn't a choice that I had. It was more of what she was going to let happen." These respondents expressed how limited they felt in being able to voice their own concerns or request alternative options in fear of the other parent further restricting access to their children. For many respondents, they would follow whatever plan was put in place but rarely felt like they could request or receive parenting options centering their needs. While some of these respondents did share these concerns with the CRE, they recognized that there were some decisions that would be out of their control.

Discussion

Overall, it is clear that the role of the CRE is integral to the courthouse and ensuring that litigants with children in common are supported and can receive safe parenting options for their family. As noted above, the feedback about the CRE is overwhelmingly positive and the use of the CRE by various court personnel and litigants exhibits a deep need for specific child-related services for litigants. The CRE's ability to neutrally meet with both petitioners and respondents allows them to gain additional case context and information that are integral for attorneys and advocates to support their clients and to judges when making judicial decisions regarding child-related relief. Ultimately, the CRE provides an empathetic, trauma-informed, and humanizing experience for litigants that ensure improved safety outcomes and overall an improved sense of fairness for litigants moving through an otherwise chaotic, rigid, and often re-traumatizing court

experience. The CRE reiterated the importance of treating both petitioner and respondent parents with genuine concern, deep connection, and respect for all they have experienced and their desire to seek safety and safe parenting options.

Additionally, there is a period of adjustment for new judges to get used to and comfortable with the referral process. This places extra responsibility on the CRE to train judges on the CRE role and referral process. When judges interact with the CRE, the CRE has noticed an air of judgement and stigma around the identities of both a petitioner (survivor of DV) and a respondent (allegations of causing harm to survivor) that complicates the healing process, conversation regarding litigants, and case decision-making. The CRE explained that there needs to be a deeper understanding and commitment to respect for all litigants as human and meeting them where they are at.

It was clear across interviews and focus groups that the CRE as a person was unequivocally exceptional in their role. It becomes difficult then to distinguish between the impact of a specific CRE role created by FCEP and the impact of one individual on the court and cases involving children. It brings up various questions to consider: How much of these positive outcomes are due to the CRE role (structure, job description, role in the court, etc.) and how much is due to the disposition and skills of one individual in the role? This has implications on how to replicate this experience in other courtrooms. Would other people in the CRE role be as effective? What qualities or knowledge must someone in the role have? How can the structure of the role support these needs? Moving forward, these are questions that must be examined as the benefits of the CRE demand an expansion of the position and team.

The CRE made suggestions for ways to improve the court and ways to further support parents with shared children. The CRE is often tasked with playing this crucial role all by

themselves for too large a caseload. The addition of a second CRE to help with workload would be beneficial, as well to provide some sort of workplace community/companionship for the current CRE. The hiring of type of DCFS liaison and/or intern could be an additional staffing support to ensure the court has all pertinent DCFS information on each case and its respective family. There also seems to be some gaps in the types of services that the CRE and court can offer to litigant parents, especially for respondents. The CRE shared that there was a lack of respondent services in civil court. The criminal courts have court-mandated respondent services, but civil court does not request nor provide services for respondents. Additional financial, social, and emotional services for respondent and petitioner parents, especially once they leave the court would be beneficial for parents. Further utilizing Zoom court and meetings as a means of increasing accessibility would be beneficial for the litigants as well as the CRE in their busy schedule. This would also increase their ability to collaborate with court staff and partners who may not be in-house. Finally, creating more initiatives like FCEP and CRE-like roles in suburban Illinois courthouses is important to consider in the future to expand services beyond Cook County.

Chapter 5: Impact of Court Experiences of Parent Litigants on Safe Parenting

Two research questions aimed on examining the long-term impacts of FCEP activities on litigant interactions with the court and behavior after receiving an Order of Protection and parenting plan. We asked, *To what extent do petitioners and respondents perceive, after working with the CRE, that parenting arrangements in the OP are safe and fair three months after the OP is entered?* This question aimed to understand how parent litigants (both petitioners and respondents) engaged with their parenting agreement, how they engaged and felt after their session(s) with the CRE, and their overall court experience with various court personnel. Additionally, we asked: *To what extent do FCEP activities reduce criminal violations of OPs up to six months later?* This question examined how respondents behaved one year after their OP and whether their parenting plan and interaction with the CRE impacted any differences pre- and post-FCEP.

Parent Litigant Experience with OP and Parenting Agreements

In-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with a convenience sample of 30 litigant parents (15 petitioners and 15 respondents) who have children in common, who had met with the CRE, and reached a parenting agreement. The recruitment process allowed for participant self-selection creating a sample while not generalizable captures a range of unique experiences that provide valuable preliminary insights into the experiences of litigants subsequent to their receiving Orders of Protections.

Safety and Parenting Plan Implementation

Each participants created a parenting agreement with the other parents and the CRE that outlined a safe parenting plan detailing communication, safe exchange, and visitation with the shared children. Each parenting plan shared by the parent litigants were different and unique to

each family. However, despite differences, there were overlapping patterns regarding how plans were or were not implemented and the challenges that faced various families with regard to how their plans were utilized at least three months after creation.

Overall Safety and Comfort of Litigant Parents

Parent litigants were all asked whether the parenting plan increased their overall sense of safety and comfort following their experience with the court. The majority of litigants, both petitioners and respondents, felt more safe and comfortable with the parenting plan. Most parents felt some level of safety because of going through the court process, with 26.7% of parents feeling ‘somewhat safe’, 13.3% feeling ‘moderately safe’, and 43.3% of parents ‘feeling very safe’. Additionally, these parents also believed their children were feeling more safe and comfortable with the parenting plan.

For petitioners specifically, the parenting plan allowed for increased safety due to no longer being in contact with the respondent. Petitioners also noted that limited interactions with the respondent also benefited their children from not having to witness a difficult relationship between the petitioner and respondent. Both petitioners and respondents noted the importance of having the parenting plan and OP ordered by the court to provide both parents with legal protections and an established schedule determined by both parents that would limit one parents’ control over the other. These litigants also acknowledged the benefit of the plan’s structure which petitioners especially noted as helpful for respondent parents to follow the plan and determine ways to improve their overall relationship with their children. Both petitioners and respondents noted the importance of the respondent parent having time to spend with their children and deeply contributed to the feelings of overall safety and comfort with the parenting plan.

However, some petitioners shared that they are still feeling unsafe despite having the OP and parenting plan in place. They shared that they have fear that the respondent will make unwanted contact with the petitioner or that the respondent will access their most frequented addresses (home, school, daycare, etc.). For some petitioners, respondents have already made unwanted contact while the OP was active thus actualizing their fears that the OP and parenting plan cannot fully keep them safe from the respondents. One petitioner, Samantha, shared, "I don't think I'm gonna feel safe…I don't think [the children] ever feel safe with [the respondent]…I don't know if that's ever going to go away. For me, in particular, I don't think that's ever going to go away." Samantha noted a common fear shared by other petitioners in that there will always be a fear that the respondent will find ways to make unlawful contact with the petitioners by various means, and that trauma will always be present for some petitioners.

Many of the respondent participants also felt dissatisfied and uncomfortable with the parenting plan in how limiting it felt to their ability to spend time with their children. Respondents overwhelmingly wanted to spend more time with their children but felt limited by the number of visits or amount of time they could spend with their children that was determined by the plan. The parenting plan was often complicated by scheduling issues when determining parenting time for the respondent. For some respondents, it was difficult to compromise on a visiting schedule with the petitioner parent, with a family member that was supervising the visits, or with the supervised visitation centers. The respondent fathers noted how these scheduling issues often resulted in fewer amount of visits or canceled visits due to issues beyond their control.

Plan Implementation by Type of Visitation

Parenting plans were implemented well or faced challenges depending on the type of visitation or parenting time that was set up between a respondent father and their children. The

litigant parents had various experiences based on whether their parenting plans allowed unsupervised visitation, supervised visitation by a family member, or if they were utilizing a supervised visitation center.

Unsupervised Visitation Unsupervised visitation is a visitation arrangement in which respondents able to spend time with their child or children for set times without supervision. Unsupervised visitation was the most common form of visitation utilized by the litigants we interviewed. Some petitioners were content with unsupervised visitation, satisfied that their children could maintain free contact with their fathers while the petitioners retained a safe physical and emotional distance. Jazz noted, “I just was at work today, and she spent her day with him. And they were painting and he had her painting her own little board and she’s—he’s painting his, you know? She’s really excited when I got to see her, so it’s—it’s just been wonderful.” Jazz was happy that her daughter was able to maintain a positive relationship with the respondent, and Jazz remained at a physical distance.

However, three petitioners expressed concerns that the respondent utilized unsupervised visits to manipulate the children. They shared that the unsupervised visits felt like a loss of control over their children and not having the power to mitigate any issues that may arise during the visits. For Yvonne, she could not shield her son from inappropriate conversations with the other parent:

> I even--I have recordings of--[the respondent] called my son on the phone, and he was talking about me, calling me all type of names and saying all this stuff to my son, and he communicates with my son as though my son is an adult and his friend, as opposed to his child. And he is talking and discussing adult-like matters with him. And so my son is carrying that burden, like, he doesn't know what to do. He feels like he needs to be his dad’s counselor, like he has no one else.

Yvonne illustrates the lack of control she has in limiting her son from being exposed to conversations the other parent should not be having with their child. These examples portray the way petitioners often feel a lack of control over their children's safety during unsupervised visits while respondents may take advantage of the alone time with the children to regain control over the visits. For some petitioners, this power play may increase fears of leaving their children unsupervised with the other parent.

Conversely, eight respondents expressed the feeling of freedom spending time with their children while unsupervised. They were able to plan outings with their children and spend time with their children on their terms. They felt a closeness to their children while with them unsupervised that they felt would be absent if they had another form of supervision.

Supervised Visitation Supervised visitation is a visitation option in which respondents are able to visit with their child or children for set times under the supervision of a mutually agreed supervisor. This visitation can occur in a setting familiar to the respondent and/or the children, so long as the supervisor is present. All supervisors in the cases of the litigants we interviewed were family members of either the petitioner or the respondent. While supervised visitation was less common than unsupervised visitation, it proved a positive option for petitioners. Three petitioners expressed relief having a supervisor, specifically having a supervisor who was a family member and known to both parents and the child. In Jessica's case, she noted that she was grateful to have their family member present so both the respondent and her daughter felt more comfortable, while Jessica was assured of her daughter's safety:

> Yes, so I for sure didn't want, I don't see anything wrong with a social worker being present or... I just didn't want to do that to my daughter. I felt like had it been a stranger that would have to be there instead of someone that they both know, I feel like at that point [the

> respondent's] going to be a little, maybe uncomfortable, not want to act, like his true feelings.

Jessica considered using a supervised visitation center, but ultimately decided to use supervised visitation to ensure her daughter was comfortable during visits. Meanwhile, Jessica maintained the feelings of safety knowing visitation was still monitored.

Supervised visitation did present challenges for some parents. Specifically, litigants had to rely on the availability and commitment of their designated supervisor to ensure visits were safe and occurred as scheduled. In some instances, agreed supervisors proved to be unreliable, delaying visitation altogether. Tomas described his frustration:

> But I was able to see him. But the issue was that there's no... there's really no consequences for like example, one day her mom was an hour late, so my time was shortened. There's no consequence for that. Another time her sister couldn't be there, so I can't see him. Like I said, there's really– it's not something that I would recommend– or something that I can say. It's something I can know because, like I said, she wrote the agreement. I can't really do other than just show up at the time that I'm supposed to and see my son [SON] my son. So, for me, it's been very difficult because I haven't had the bond that I wanted with my son, you know?

While having a supervisor aids petitioners' feelings of safety and can be more comfortable than a supervised visitation center for respondents, Tomas' experience shows that unreliable supervisors can chip away at respondents' visitation time with no recourse available.

Supervised Visitation Centers Supervised visitation centers are neutral locations in which respondents can have visitation with their child or children under the supervision of a staff member,

like a social worker. There were mixed responses to the utilization of the supervised visitation centers (SVC). One petitioner and one respondent expressed comfort in the safety of using an SVC. Jay, a respondent, said, “It's a cool place ya know like they have toys and whatever, like I said it's a blessing so like the kids feel safe, I feel safe cause there's a lot of doors everywhere ya know.” However, litigants indicated it took the supervised visitation centers a long time to schedule visits with the litigants. Even when the supervised visitation centers contacted litigants, there were months-long waitlists that resulted in significant delays for respondents to see their children. In one case, a respondent waited over a year to see his children. Eventually, litigants noted the CRE essentially stopped offering supervised visitation centers as a visitation option during plan negotiation. Specifically, during the COVID-19 pandemic, supervised visitation centers limited their services and were not accommodating in-person visits. In some cases, supervised visitation centers did not even contact litigants to schedule intake meetings. In one case where the respondent was able to successfully access supervised visitation, he expressed he felt awkwardness during his visit as there was a person unknown to him and his child present.

Unsafe Communication for Petitioners

Petitioners consistently were faced with challenges surrounding communication while implementing their parenting plans. Parents have the options of no communication (rare when visitation is ordered), communicating through a third party, or communicating via texting, calling, emailing, or Talking Parents. Talking Parents is an app used for communication between parents. There is a free version that litigants can access online or an app for a fee. For a fee, the record of communications can be printed and brought into court. While it does provide some assurance to litigants that they know a judge could eventually read those messages, Talking Parents is not monitored day to day. Some petitioners shared that respondents used Talking Parents to threaten,

harass, and otherwise interact with the petitioner outside of matters pertaining to the children and visits. Despite some respondents using the Talking Parents app to contact the petitioners about their children, some petitioners felt uncomfortable or unsafe communicating with the respondent, even through the designated communication channel. They did not want to talk to the respondent but felt required by the parenting plan to maintain communication about their children. In instances where respondents threatened, harassed, or otherwise misused the Talking Parents app, some petitioners reacted by completely cutting off the respondent, putting their parenting plan in jeopardy but maintaining their emotional safety. Petitioners also expressed concerns that because Talking Parents was not monitored, it became another method for respondents to have "free contact" with petitioners, no different than texting.

Safe Parenting Considerations without Court Intervention

Many litigants indicated that their parenting plan as ordered by the judge no longer aligned with their parenting and safety needs. Specifically, ten litigants explained that they made unofficial changes to their parenting plans without having them modified and ordered by the court. Litigants indicated a variety of reasons for the need to unofficially modify their plans—their plan was inconvenient for their lifestyle, their plan was no longer necessary, or going to the court to change the plan was too difficult to navigate. While some litigants expressed mutual shifts in the parenting plans, others shared how one-sided these parenting decisions were and potential risks it could have on either parent.

Risks with Making Informal Plan Modifications

These unofficial changes put some litigants in a difficult position, as they were aware that not following the ordered plan was violating their Order of Protection. One respondent, Michael, noted that the petitioner had abandoned the plan and felt conflicted over the decision to do so:

> No ma'am, we don't follow the parenting plan. Not at all. I'm-I'm going to tell you the truth right now. We don't follow that. So, what happened was, at first, we were following it, and then now she uses it, in my opinion, for her best interest. If she wants some time, she'll allow me to keep him overnight. I asked her 'Can I keep him overnight?' She tells me no, but if she wants him to spend the night, she'll offer it to me. 'Okay, you can keep him overnight, it's okay.' Or, you know, she'll let me do it when she wants. So, like I said, it's one sided, very one sided. Even when it's like, 'Okay, I gotta get him when I can. I gotta let him spend the night when I can.' But even when we do that, I'm putting myself in danger, you know... I'm not even being able to be around my son, because I want to be around.

Michael was concerned that if he were to confront the petitioner about the unofficial changes the petitioner made to the parenting plan, he would not be able to see his child. He was in fear of violating the court order and of the petitioner using the situation to keep his son from him; therefore, Michael went along with the petitioners' changes to the plan. Michael and other litigants exemplify ways that one parent can continue to control the parenting plan, access to children, and how he plan can be modified in a way that compromises the autonomy and safety of the other parent.

Autonomy in Making Parenting Decisions Among the litigants who made unofficial changes because the plan was no longer necessary, litigants indicated they were able to negotiate a new plan with each other outside of the court. Many litigants made changes to their visitation schedule, frequency of visits, or visitation type that no longer worked for the parents. For litigants who negotiated new times and days of visitation, these unofficial changed to the plan commonly proved to work well for families even without the court's involvement. While parenting plans

serve to empower litigants and return a sense of safety during parenting time, when that safety was established, litigants adjusted as necessary or desired without waiting for an official change from the court. After encouragement from the CRE, one petitioner, Sharon, felt empowered to allow small changes:

> [CRE] said I can expand it if I feel comfortable sometimes, I can give him like an extra hour. Like I can gradually move up the time. So sometimes on the parent app he's like "Can I keep her for another hour or two?" and you know, as the good person I am, sure, I want you to spend time. You know, I don't mind you spending time. I just don't want to be around. And yeah, yeah. So, I do let him do a little extra time sometimes.

The changes Sharon made were within her control and only when she felt comfortable. Though these changes technically in violation of the order of protection, Sharon is demonstrating she has achieved safety and comfort as a result of the plan, and the stringency of the plan is no longer necessary.

Impact of COVID on Safe Parenting Plans

All litigant parents were asked about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their parenting plans. Most parents expressed that their parenting plans were not strongly affected by the pandemic. Specifically, 26.7% of parents felt that the pandemic did not impact their court experience at all, 20% considered slight impacts, and 23.3% felt 'somewhat of an impact from COVID on their court case process.

For litigants that were interviewed earlier in 2021 and prior to the general access to the COVID-19 vaccine, these parents were more likely to follow safety protocols such as wearing masks to visits and quarantine if infected with the virus. These protocols were followed to ensure

safe visitation between the children and parent, and by extension the multiple families that would be exposed to one another. Additionally, some parents shared that visit often had to be canceled or adjusted in response to individuals being infected with the virus. And of the small number of individuals that used the supervised visitation centers, they expressed difficulties in scheduling visits with the centers and noting that many were understaffed, offering limited parenting time, and were unresponsive to scheduling needs during the pandemic.

Children Wellbeing and Experience with Parenting Plan

An integral part of the parenting plans was creating safe environments for the children to spend time with their parents and have safe child-parent relationships. Both petitioner and respondent parents reflected on how their children were reacting to the parenting plan and their experience with parenting time with the respondent parent. When asked about the impact of the OP and new parenting plan on their children's wellbeing, a third of parents (33.3%) shared it had a 'strongly positive' impact. It is important to note that the experience of children are not coming directly from the children's perspective but are reported from the distinct experience of both petitioner and respondent. However, there is weight to how each parent is utilizing the parenting plan to ensure safety in their relationship and care for their children.

Petitioner Reflections on Children Experience with Parenting Plan

For the petitioners, many were learning to foster trust with the respondents to be able to safely spend time with their shared children. Fortunately, many of the petitioners interviewed expressed that they have been developing closer relationships and spending more time with their children following their court experience as well as with the OP and parenting plan in place. Many petitioners noted that their children were more openly sharing details about their lives and feelings with them now that there was more one-on-one time available at home. For the petitioners, this

vulnerability and openness of the children seemed to signal their emotional safety that then strengthened the relationship between mother and children. The children are able to build a strong protective relationship with the petitioner after experiencing harm.

These petitioner mothers prioritized the happiness, safety, and comfort of their children in a way that then allowed them to feel and embrace these same values for their own wellbeing. Many noted the balancing act that surfaced in how petitioners were parenting their children. While many expressed their parenting has not necessarily changed that much, there remained moments that required more firmness, kindness, or joy as a response to how the children were adapting to separated parents, a single parent household, and temporary visits with the other parent. In a way, these mothers shared how they were learning new things about their children in their personalities, their emotional needs, and their changing relationship with their fathers. It allowed the mothers to more fully adapt to the needs of their children and advocate for their children. For example, petitioner Sofia was trying to decide whether her child would be safe having visits with his father, and ultimately made the decision based on her son's direct feelings and needs. Sofia expressed:

> I feel like this really has allowed me to defend my son and be an advocate to my son. Again, not trying to keep my son from his dad. My son— his dad can see him any weekend that he wants if he wants to see him during the week.... But even though it allows me to feel safe for my son, and for my son to feel safe as well...It makes me feel a lot more comfortable knowing that I can secure him that he doesn't have to do anything that makes him feel uncomfortable.

Ultimately, mothers like Sofia found that the parenting plans allowed them to adapt to the needs of their children as they were simultaneously developing a deeper understanding of their

children—allowing the children to voice their feelings and guide their relationships with their parents.

Many of the petitioner mothers shared that they wanted their children to spend time with their respondent fathers and wanted to ensure the child and respondent could maintain a safe relationship together. As many mothers noted, it was important for their children to have the option to have access to and relationship with both parents. One mother, Julie, conveyed that when her daughter was not seeing her father, "I felt a little sad cause I feel like every child needs both of- like should have both of their parents. So, when she was able to see him and the fact that she's seeing him in a safe environment, it made me happy and just seeing how she was reacting towards that made me happy." As Julie implied and as other mothers shared, it was not easy for some of the mothers to see their children struggle with separation from their fathers. It was especially difficult for the children who were not seeing their fathers and were coping with the loss of a paternal relationship. However, for mothers, like Julie, who could allow visits with the father, the joy and connection that children could share with their fathers was important for everyone's wellbeing.

Children's Refusal of Visits

A handful of petitioners indicated challenges with their children refusing to engage in the scheduled visits with the respondent parent. Petitioners felt as though their children's refusal of visits violated their court order. Some petitioners mentioned their children felt hurt by the respondents' behaviors and did not want to spend time with that parent in fear it would lead to more harm. Other petitioners found themselves trying to encourage their children to visit the respondents by expressing the importance of visitation, but their children still refused.

Four petitioners also indicated challenges with inappropriate parenting by the respondent father during visits with the children. In these cases, older children shared that they did not want to visit the respondent father because the respondent was verbally abusive towards the children. This led to imbalanced visits where some children visited the respondent while others stayed with the petitioner—especially with older children refusing to visit while the younger children attended visits. For others petitioners, their children refused to visit the respondent early during plan implementation but eased into attending visits over time. Overall, these petitioners became conflicted as they tried to navigate encouraging their children to visit the respondent fathers while also allowing their children to make their own choices and defend their own sense of safety.

Respondent Parenting Time with Children

Many of the respondent fathers expressed the limited time they had with their children, but they were still adamant about using that time to spend quality time with their children. This narrative was common among the fathers, and as respondent Cristian shared, "I love my time that I spend with [my daughter] even if it's limited. I make the best of it." These fathers want to make the best of their time and show up for their children with their full capacity as fathers. They expressed deep commitment to doing what they can to ensure they can be present for their children. Many of the respondent fathers, like David, ultimately wanted to be a good father to their children:

> We go back to a familiar space which is the time that we spent with each other together. It's just reassuring them that I'm still their dad. I'm here and that I just want to make them happy. I want to do fun stuff with them. I want to be here with them if they're going to cry or if they need to talk or whatever the case is. Even if they need a little bit of space. I just want to be a good father for my kids.

These genuine declarations from the fathers were heartening and indicative of the importance of having parenting plans permit the relationships between fathers and their children. However, these sentiments do not erase how much the fathers were grappling to appreciate the time they had with their children while also struggling with the limitations set at that time. Many of the fathers would share anecdotes of their children asking them why they could not spend more time together or why they could not stay overnight. In telling these stories, the fathers were visibly struggling emotionally to contend with the reality of those time limitations and the strain that they can have on themselves and their children. While not many of the fathers used supervised visitation centers, Jaime expressed how difficult it was to have even tighter time restraints at the visitation center. He shared, "And it was like a crumbs kind of situation where I felt like I'm trying to do all this to see my kids for half an hour, once a week…Like, at the moment, I was like, "You know what, something is better than nothing," but that was me thinking about myself." Not only did Jaime illustrate how little time he had with his children and how he tried to justify that time with them, but he also expressed feelings of guilt for prioritizing himself and his desire to spend time with his children. He exemplified the burden that scheduling visits and restricted parenting time can have on the children.

Overall, many of the litigants expressed the importance of the children having time with their children and time to foster and restore relationships with their children. However, the restraints on parenting time were emotionally difficult for the parents and children despite knowing these restraints were a means to ensuring safety for everyone. This did not diminish the love and care these parents have for their children in cultivating new ways to maintain safe relationships.

Fairness and Procedural Justice with Court System

The interviews with litigant parents also aimed to examine how parents experienced procedural justice and a sense of fairness while going through the court system. It was important to understand how their experiences with the court procedures, their sessions with the CRE, and their interactions with the judges impacted their impressions of fairness at the court whether or not their legal outcomes were favorable. All litigant parents were asked to consider how fairly they felt treated during their court process, and the majority of parents felt some level of fairness: 26.7% 'somewhat fair', 23.3% 'moderately fair', and 43.3% 'very fair'.

Petitioner Experience with Judicial Fairness

For some of the petitioners, they felt a sense of fairness when the judges listened to their experiences and asked them questions to better understand their overall case and concerns. One petitioner, Yvonne, shared that she felt heard by the judge:

> I do feel like, after I was sitting there listening to all the ones they go through, to have to do that all day every day, and to still be able to use sound judgement per case, I thought that they were really good at that. Because I was like, coming down to the end, I was like, 'Oh they're gonna be like tired of hearing the same old stuff,' but they paid attention and listened to the details of my specific case.

Yvonne explained how she felt that the judge listened and noted the details of her case which for her reflected a "sound judgement." Importantly, she was fearful of the judge not having the capacity to judge fairly due to the high number of cases that preceded hers. In this way, the petitioner felt a sense of fairness because she felt that the judge still took time to fully hear her case regardless of time constraints of the court. Other petitioners reiterated similar experiences where

they felt a sense of fairness when the judge appeared balanced, not rushed through their case, and confident in their decision-making.

Other petitioners noted that they felt a sense of fairness when the judge listened and considered both litigants during the court hearing. The respect given to both litigants created a fair environment that ultimately led to better decision-making for their cases. Jazz expressed that this respect increased her sense of fairness with the court: “The fact that they were fair to me, they gave him the same level of respect, to me, plays a big part in how we move forward and whether or not there’s a sense of resentment or a sense of anxiety and distrust because of feeling like a whole system will support you and not me.” Jazz reflected on how common it was for litigants to feel distrustful of the court system or as if it was biased towards one party over the other. However, the judge she interacted with allowed for both litigants to be heard and both parties were considered when making a decision about their shared children. For Jazz, this fair interaction with the judge contributed to ease in moving forward with decisions that both parents were involved in making.

Petitioner Experience of Unfairness

Not Feeling Heard by Judges

Most of the petitioner parents felt like they were not heard by the judges during their court hearings. Many petitioners had difficulty communicating with the judges, often expressing that they were not being listened to, were not acknowledged, and did not have enough time to share their experiences with the judges. A couple petitioners attempted to share their concerns with the judges around communication issues that arose with the respondent. Unfortunately, both petitioners shared that the judges were unresponsive, dismissive about the concerns, and frustrated to the point that they could not openly communicate with the petitioners. As one petitioner, Sharon, repeated, “[The judges] wouldn’t let me talk. They wouldn’t let me talk.” The petitioners were frustrated that they could not fully express their situation and their

needs to the judges. Ultimately, this frustration led to petitioners feeling like they would not receive the support that was best for their families.

Inability to Share Concerns with Judges Many petitioners especially noted how the judges relied fully on the information included in the OP petition and did not leave room or time for the litigants to share or elaborate on additional concerns they had. While judges do typically focus primarily on the information given in the petition and ask additional questions only if relevant, this process felt impersonal and rigid for the petitioners. Samantha shared her frustrations:

> If any judge in their right mind would just take five minutes, even just five minutes, and speak to the parents. I think that these cases would go a lot smoother and you would have a better understanding to where and how these children are getting shuffled. Because at the end of the day, my lawyer's not here, the judge is not here, there is no CRE. Nobody else, just us.

Samantha was adamant about the importance of having the judge listen and ask questions of the petitioners to make the decision-making process easier and to better understand the familial situation. As Samantha noted, the children were moving between parents and these details would be helpful for the judges to fully understand before granting an order. Her last statement was especially indicative of how the petitioners are in need of solutions and parenting options that work for them and their family.

Little Time with the Judges One of the most frequent litigant reflections about their court experience was not having enough time with the judges and feeling rushed to get through their cases as quickly as possible. Again, this left litigants feeling like they could not share their concerns or like their case was important enough to dedicate time to it. Julie shared that "It was so fast for

me, I didn't—I wasn't expecting it. And I felt like…I don't know how to explain it. It wasn't a good experience to me because I felt like they just wanted to get it over with." Brittany also shared similar experiences that the judges were "so incredibly backed up that [the judge] was just more concerned with getting [the case] moving." Both Julie and Brittany illustrated how congested the court was with cases that judges were not able to keep up. While the judges were doing what they could to keep cases moving, it unfortunately resulted in petitioners feeling rushed and unimportant.

Respondent Experiences of Unfairness

Many of the respondents also shared that they often were not given any space to share their concerns or their story with the judges. Many respondents did not even attempt to share their concerns with the judges as they anticipated that the judges would not want to listen to them. David was one respondent that attempted to share his concerns:

> I asked [the judge] if I could say a few words and he let me say what I had to say but that's when right afterwards he mocked me for trying to defend myself. And then from there, he set the next court hearing which is where—he was doing the same thing where he wasn't letting me speak. But by the end of it, I had to say something because my kid—I couldn't just sit there and just let someone else tell me that I couldn't have any contact with my kids. That's when I voiced my concern that [my kids] need me—they need me in their life.

David shared his deep frustrations for how the judge was mistreating him and discouraging his concerns over contact with his children. David and other litigants are noting ways in which poor treatment by the judges led to deeper struggles in having the court assist or control the outcomes for their families.

Overall, many of the respondents felt that the court was one-sided and especially biased against respondent fathers. Many of the respondents were adamant about how unfairly they were treated by the judges and the lack of support provided to men and fathers from the court. These fathers felt that the court would always side with the petitioner mothers and hold more weight for the mothers' statements. Therefore, the respondent fathers felt unfairly judged in court due to a bias towards the mother. As David expressed, "I was never given a fair chance to defend myself or to explain or to be seen by anything other than what was presented to the judge by what she had written." In this way, David and other respondents felt like they were negatively characterized and perceived before having a chance to speak for themselves and their experiences. The fathers shared extensively in the interviews about the various ways men and fathers were stigmatized in the court. Luis noted clearly the various ways that fathers were disadvantaged in the court system:

> I was very disappointed in the way that the court took this case, and made it biased... They took everything at face value by what [the petitioner] said. They never took in consideration anything that I had to say or had to prove. They just took her story and ran with it before I could even have a chance to say my say. And that I think it needs to be changed in the state because fathers are always looked upon as just monetary, financial contribution to the family, but they don't understand that we also have feelings... With the court with the kids and everything, well now you're at the mercy of the ex, you're at the mercy of the judge, and you're at the mercy of everyone that wants to get a piece of you. And I think that that's totally unfair for fathers.

Luis articulated that the judge did not hear nor consider his experiences during the court hearing leading to a deep sense of unfairness with the courts. He continued to share the stigma against fathers and their emotional needs especially in regard to their relationship with their

children. He recognized the way the court made decisions on behalf of fathers without a fair assessment of their needs and experiences.

Litigant Experience with Court Procedures

Experience with Zoom Court

Most petitioners and respondents experienced their court hearings virtually over Zoom. While having court over Zoom was convenient for many and cut down on travel time and childcare, there were various challenges that occurred during Zoom court. The major concern for litigant parents was the hours-long wait time for each court hearing. Litigants had to stay in the breakout room waiting for their turn for many hours and had to stay on the Zoom call during that time to ensure they did not miss their turn or have their case dismissed. Many respondents shared issues such as not receiving the correct Zoom link to the hearing, having technical issues presenting evidence during the hearing, and one saying he was muted and removed from the Zoom call by the judge.

Difficulties with the Zoom logistics were frequent, but there were also issues of discomfort and lack of privacy that came with Zoom court. Many petitioners especially expressed that they were uncomfortable with having the open court over Zoom. They explained that the Zoom hearings displayed all petitioners and respondents on the same call and each case was heard by all those witnessing. While open court in-person also allowed all litigants to be in the courtroom, the physical space allowed for some distance between the judge's bench and litigant seating. It especially made petitioners feel unsafe to share their information publicly without having control over who had access to that information. Yvonne described this Zoom court experience like many other petitioners:

> So I've never been in court, so I didn't know what to expect. But when I talked to other people, I was like, 'Oh yeah that's how it is in person, like in an open court with other

> people.' I just felt as though I was going in with very personal, private situation and matter. And then to have to say that with everyone there, it just felt--that was a little bit like uncomfortable. But I knew like, why I was doing it and I needed to do it so I sucked it up and did it, but that piece of it was just weird to me. But I'm guessing that's just how court is.

Like many others, Yvonne assumed that the court arrangement was typical, but this did not make it any more comfortable for the petitioners. These unexpected experiences with the court only added to many feelings of nervousness, fear, and helplessness that many of the litigants named as feelings they felt entering their court hearings.

Overall Experiences with Courthouse There unfortunately were pervasive negative feelings expressed with the overall court experience that left litigants feeling dismissed and unworthy of legal support. Both in-person encounters with court personnel and virtual interactions with the court procedure were already overwhelming for parents and grew more difficult by feelings of disrespect and lack of support within the court environment. A final experience shared by respondent, Mateo, encompassed the ways many litigants felt when interacting with the court, whether in-person or virtually:

> The experience that I have is me trying to file a court date because when you go there live in person, it's... they don't talk to you in a good way. It's like they talk to you like you're nothing. Like you're just there to waste their time and that feels bad. And I understand that a lot of people that go through that court are probably not already in the best state of mind because they're going through a lot of heavy things, but what I don't like is how they talk to people that are already going through something like that, and they push them down even more.

Mateo emphasized clearly how dehumanizing it was to enter a courthouse and to be treated without respect from court employees.

Discussion

Overall, the majority of parents feel more safe and comfortable with the parenting plans months after they were initially put in place. Petitioners with unsupervised visitation are navigating allowing their children to spend time unsupervised with the respondent fathers while many respondent fathers are enjoying their ability to spend quality time with their children in a safe manner. Many parents with supervised visitation with a family member also are feeling more safe having their children spend time with the respondent fathers, however there continue to be issues with scheduling visits for some respondent fathers. More specifically, the unreliability of selected supervisors are often compromising a parent's ability to see their children consistently and safely. These issues reveal a gap in training and information shared with chosen supervisors and how to responsibly supervise a visitation between a respondent parent and child. There have also been deep limits on the availability of supervised visitation centers that increased with the pandemic. Only a few litigants had experience with an SVC, but almost no one had any long-term experience with visits with an SVC due to understaffing, limited visitation time, and an inability to communicate with the centers.

The issues that arise with chosen supervisors and the lack of supervised visitation center availability further limits the kind of visitation that can be offered to parents that need additional safety restrictions when unsupervised visits are not a safe option. It is especially frustrating for respondent fathers who are unable to see their children for long period of times despite having the right to visit their children as ordered in their parenting plan. These feelings are exacerbated for respondent fathers that already feel as if they have little time with their children as stipulated in

the parenting plan. Despite trying to enjoy the time they do have with their children, there are clear impacts on the ways the fathers can physically and emotionally strengthen their relationship with their children.

While separating children from their parents is not ideal, many of the parents expressed an increased ability to spend quality time with their children and deepen their parent-child relationship without the hostility of both parents together. Petitioner mothers were grateful to be able to have their children safely spend time with their fathers without having to interact with the other parent. And respondent fathers were equally grateful to have dedicated time with their children and having the opportunity to show up for their children in ways they could not prior to the parenting plan. These were ideal experiences for families that could benefit from a parenting plan that centered the children, considered safety options, and nurtured healthier relationships between parents and children.

However, there continued to be challenges with implementing parenting plans that compromised the safety and wellbeing of the parents and children. Unsafe communication between parents as well as between parent and children, children feeling unsafe to attend visits with a parent, and continued unsafe environments for children continue to be barriers for safe parenting time. Many of these issues were concerns that increased fear from petitioners to allow visitation and that often required petitioners to make safety decisions that were beyond the stipulations of the parenting plan. These safety concerns brought up questions around the ability for petitioners to adjust parenting arrangements in urgent or compromising situations without the need to modify or amend their parenting agreement in court. It also brought up for both petitioners and respondents a fear of violating their order by making changes to their plan without court intervention. Primarily, parents were unsure and uninformed of how flexible they could be with their parenting plan

especially when modifying a plan could take a long period of time to go into effect. These situations left parents conflicted in how to best ensure the safety of their children while also balancing the potential risks of violating their court-ordered plan.

For other parents, making adjustments to the parenting plan was a result of both parents being able to compromise and adapt to better fit their familial needs and new situations without relying on the court. These parents were able to assess their safety needs, the shifts in the child-parent relationship, and desires for more autonomous decision-making. In a way, these changes to the parenting plan indicate the parenting gaining the skills to collaborate and compromise on safe parenting options without a third party. It also suggests that the strategies for shared decision-making modeled with the CRE sessions impacted how parents could practice those skills on their own as they grew comfortable with a parenting plan. These experiences reveal possibilities for families to consider the safety needs of each parent and child without losing the opportunity to restore healthy relationships between parents and children.

While the parenting plans increased the safety of many parents, unfortunately many also did not feel supported nor a sense of fairness with the judges, the court procedures, or with the courthouse environment. Across both petitioner and respondent parents, many felt that they were not heard nor had a chance to share their concerns with the judges. Many also felt like the court hearings were rushed, impersonal, and structured to get through large amount of cases with little time dedicated to each case. Together, the court hearings felt stressful, formal, and centering legal procedure rather than litigant needs. Some litigants emphasized how dehumanizing it was to enter a courthouse and to be treated without respect from court employees. It is especially difficult when folks are holding difficult traumatic experiences and are expected to follow court procedures they are likely unfamiliar with.

Additionally, many respondents especially felt stigmatized by the judges and court system that led to frustration and lost trust between the respondent fathers and the court system. Many noted the false, harmful assumptions that the judges had against fathers without sharing their experiences or voicing their own parenting and safety concerns could have deep impacts on their treatment in court and outcomes in their cases. These deep feelings of unfairness were clear for many fathers that led to a hopelessness in the legal system leaving many with little options to restore a safe relationship with their children.

While the court follows strict legal procedure, there is clear desire from the parents for legal services without compromising their traumatic experiences, their safety needs, and their voice. Additionally, these concerns acknowledge that the court system may not be the space that facilitates long-term safety options for parents with shared children. While the CRE role and ability to create a temporary parenting agreement was clearly beneficial to many parents, the long term challenges and barriers with the courthouse indicate a need to consider options beyond the court system that can facilitate safe parenting options for families who have experienced domestic violence. The parents also shared various experiences where they felt like they had little options beyond the court when situations changed, safety needs changed, and additional financial, social, and emotional services were desired. In this way, the parent litigants revealed needs beyond the courthouse that were unattainable for many parents with shared children.

Criminal Violations of Orders of Protection

Cases from 2015 and 2017 were compared to examine the frequency of respondent parents that criminally violated their OP within one year from the originally issued OP and assess the effects of the CRE on their likelihood of violating the order. Cases involving litigant parents with

children in common who utilized the CRE in 2017 (post-FCEP) were compared with cases that did not meet with the CRE in 2015 (pre-FCEP).

According to anecdotal information from judges at the courthouse, respondent litigants have a high chance of violating their civil Order of Protection within the first six months to a year after the OP is granted. However, with the introduction of the Child-Relief Expediter (CRE), our hypothesis was that respondent litigants who meet with the CRE would be less likely to violate their OP due to receiving information and the necessary support from the CRE that were not present in 2015.

When entering the DV courthouse, petitioners and respondents are sent to opposite sides of the courthouse to receive information on how to proceed with their case. Once respondents are served, they can enter the courthouse and receive further instruction on how they can respond to the OP. While they may receive basic information on their OP and the civil process, it is highly likely that this limited information does not set up respondents well for being able to follow their OP without risk of violation.

The CRE works with respondents (and petitioners) to create an individualized parenting plan while also providing any necessary information that can assist the respondents with their court case. Due to this shared time and information, we infer that respondents would be less likely to violate their OP, especially a violation due to a lack of proper information on what actions are considered an OP violation. Through their interaction with the CRE, respondents may feel a sense of procedural justice for the information offered by the CRE. Regardless of the outcomes of their OP or parenting plan, their time with the CRE may impact their likelihood of following the stipulations of the OP. Thus, comparing respondents' criminal behaviors in 2015 and 2017 should

allow us to see whether time spent with the CRE had an impact on their likelihood of violating their OP.

OP Violations by Respondent Litigants

The following data table compares respondent cases that met with the CRE in 2017 and comparable respondent cases from 2015 and their prevalence of criminal violations. The table reports the types of criminal charges filed, the total number of DV-related charges, and the rate and type of OP criminal violations within one year of the granted OP for 2015 and 2017 respondent cases.

Table 17. Criminal OP Violations of Respondent Cases

	NO. (%)			
	PRE- AND POST-FCEP			
	PRE-FCEP (2015)	POST-FCEP (2017)	TOTAL	*P* VALUE
TYPE OF CRIMINAL CHARGES PER CASE LIFETIME	**313 (58.8)**	**219 (41.2)**	**532 (100.0)**	**0.028***
NO CRIMINAL CHARGE	182 (58.1)	136 (62.1)	318 (59.8)	0.360
DV RELATED CHARGE	79 (25.2)	64 (29.2)	143 (26.9)	0.308
NON-DV RELATED CHARGE	52 (16.6)	19 (8.7)	71 (13.3)	0.008*
NUMBER OF DV CHARGES PER CASE LIFETIME	**313 (58.8)**	**219 (41.2)**	**532 (100.0)**	**0.491**
0 DV CHARGES	233 (74.4)	154 (70.3)	387 (72.7)	0.293
1 DV CHARGE	57 (18.2)	49 (22.4)	106 (19.9)	0.237
2 OR MORE DV CHARGES	23 (7.3)	16 (7.3)	39 (7.3)	0.985
OP CRIMINAL VIOLATION WITHIN 1 YEAR OF OP	**313 (58.8)**	**219 (41.2)**	**532 (100.0)**	**0.957**
ANY CRIMINAL VIOLATION WITHIN 1 YEAR OF OP	52 (16.6)	36 (16.4)	88 (16.5)	0.957
CRIMINAL VIOLATION WITH SAME PETITIONER	*46 (88.4)*	*33 (91.7)*	*80 (90.9)*	*0.905*
CRIMINAL VIOLATION WITH DIFFERENT PETITIONERS	*6 (11.5)*	*3 (8.3)*	*9 (10.2)*	*0.630*
NO CRIMINAL VIOLATION WITHIN 1 YEAR OF OP	261 (83.4)	183 (83.6)	444 (83.5)	0.957
TYPE OF OP CRIMINAL VIOLATION WITHIN 1 YEAR OF OP	**53 (59.6)**	**36 (40.4)**	**89 (100.0)**	**0.161**
VIOLATION OF ORDER OF PROTECTION (VOOP)	11 (20.8)	16 (44.4)	27 (30.3)	0.047*
BATTERY/DOMESTIC BATTERY	28 52.8)	10 (27.8)	38 (42.7)	0.057
PROPERTY DAMAGE	3 (5.7)	3 (8.3)	6 (6.7)	0.651
HARASSMENT/ASSAULT	2 (3.8)	2 (5.6)	4 (4.5)	0.713
OTHER	4 (7.5)	3 (8.3)	7 (7.9)	0.919
MULTIPLE TYPES OF CRIMINAL CHARGES	5 (9.4)	2 (5.6)	7 (7.9)	0.502
INDEPENDENT T-TEST FOR OP CRIMNAL VIOLATIONS				
MEAN OF OP VIOLATIONS PER YEAR	0.166	0.164		**0.915**

*** STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT AT $p < 0.05$**

Analysis began by identifying the types of criminal charges (no charge, DV-related charge, non-DV related charge) filed for each 2015 and 2017 case's lifetime regardless of timeframe. Of the 313 pre-FCEP cases, 58.1% did not have any criminal charges, 25.2% had a DV-related charge, and 16.6% had a non-DV related charge. Of the 219 post-FCEP cases, 62.1% of cases had no criminal charges, 29.2% had a DV-related charge, and 8.7% had a non-DV related charge. A Pearson chi-square test revealed statistically significant differences (p-value of 0.028) in the kind of criminal charges filed pre- and post-FCEP. When assessing the individual types of criminal charges, there was a statistically significant decrease in the number of 'non-DV related charges' (from 16.6% to 8.7%) between 2015 and 2017 while there were minimal changes for cases that had 'no criminal charge' or 'DV related charge.' It was common for many of the cases to have multiple criminal charges. While the majority of the cases did not have any DV related charges (74.4% in 2015 and 70.3% in 2017), 18.2% of cases in 2015 and 22.4% of 2017 had only one DV charge filed against them. A small percentage of both 2015 and 2017 cases, 7.3%, had 2 or more DV related charges filed against them. These results did not reveal any statistically significant differences between 2015 and 2017 cases.

Cases were then analyzed to identify whether an OP had a criminal violation within 1 year of the final OP issuance date, which could be a single EOP or a finalized POP. Overall, 16.6% of 2015 cases had a criminal violation while 16.4% of 2017 cases had a criminal OP violation within 1 year after the original OP was issued. Of the cases that had a criminal violation, 88.4% of 2015 cases and 91.7% of 2017 cases had a criminal charge against a complaining witness that was the same petitioner on the original OP. Most of these cases violated their OP due to a battery/domestic battery charge or a specific violation or order of protection (VOOP) charge. Specifically for 2015 cases, 20.8% of OP violations were charged with a VOOP and 52.8% had a battery/domestic

battery charge. For 2017 cases, 44.4% of cases had a VOOP charge and 27.8% had a battery/domestic battery charge violate their OP. There was a statistically significant increase of violation of order of protection (VOOP) charges between 2015 and 2017 (p-value of 0.047) while there was also a borderline relationship related to the percent of cases with battery/domestic battery charges violating their OPs (0.057). Overall, the mean average of OP violations occurring within one year of a granted OP did not reveal significant changes between 2015 cases and 2017 cases that met with the CRE. All specific data and results are reported in Table 13 above.

Discussion

Overall, when comparing the criminal violation rates of respondent litigants within one year of their civil OP, there was no statistically significant difference between pre- and post-FCEP cases. In this way, we cannot confidently attribute a clear impact of FCEP or the CRE on respondent behavior once they left the court with an OP and their likelihood of violating the OP. However, we can see some slight changes in the types of criminal charges that violated OPs between 2015 and 2017. In 2015, OP violations were mainly due to battery/domestic battery (52.8%) whereas in 2017, charges were mainly from violations of order of protection (VOOP) (44.4%).The decline in the percent of cases charged with battery/domestic battery had a borderline statistical significance also worth noting. This highlighted a shift in the type and severity of behaviors that were causing OP violations in 2017 and the cause of unsafe circumstances. Battery or property damage are charges that on their own are inherently unsafe, whereas VOOP charges have a broader range of situations that on their own may be safe but are unsafe due to the nature of the OP. A VOOP charge could be due to a respondent being in contact with a petitioner, not following the court ordered visitation, or physically harming the petitioner. In this way, the VOOP blurs the lines for what was considered safe or harmful based on the situation. This is all to say

that an increase in VOOP charges and decreases in more harmful charges could suggest that litigants may be in more safe situations post-FCEP and after meeting with the CRE than previously in 2015. Overall, these changes pre- and post-FCEP results can suggest to the court to consider additional support and information for respondents to gain more clarity in their OPs and avoid future violations and criminalization.

There were shifts in the types of charges filed for these cases; primarily there was a statistically significant decrease in cases having non-DV related charges between 2015 (16.6%) and 2017 (8.7%). It seemed that the decreased non-DV related charges shifted into more cases with no criminal charges (62.1%) or DV related charges (29.2%) in 2017 although these changes did not result in statistical differences between 2015 and 2017. There were also slight and insignificant changes in the number of DV charges filed against cases in 2015 and 2017, with about a fifth of all cases having just one DV-related charge. While there were small shifts in the kinds of criminal charges and number of charges filed against respondents, these changes were still limited and the two groups did not differ much in many of the areas examined.

The examination of OP criminal violations also aimed to understand the role of procedural justice on the behaviors of respondent litigants. Early hypotheses proposed that the support and information provided by the CRE to respondents would influence their positive view of the court and lower likelihood of the respondents violating their OPs. The slight decrease in OP violations overall between 2015 and 2017 is small and the change was not statistically significant, thus we cannot confidently say this reflected procedural justice. However, the increase in cases not having any criminal charges, the decreased frequency of charges per individual, and changes in the types

of criminal charges do reveal slow changes in the court that may be influenced by the role of the CRE and FCEP.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Discussion of Main Evaluation Findings

The findings from this study indicate that the changes made to the Cook County Domestic Violence court system through Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP) allowed the court to better address the safety and wellbeing of families experiencing domestic violence through civil Orders of Protection (OPs). The study described how court personnel and court practices adapted to FCEP and how changes were made to judicial and legal practices in response to civil Order of Protection (OP) cases that involved children. Additionally, the evaluation examined how parent litigants with children in common experienced the court, how FCEP impacted their engagement with the OP process, how they engaged with their OP and parenting agreement, and over-all how they move through the court system.

Impact of Changes to Court System on Child-Related Remedies and Court Practices

The review of Order of Protection petitions between 2015 and 2017 revealed measurable changes in the type and number of requests for child-related remedies before and after the implementation of FCEP. The most prominent findings were the statistically significant increases in child-related remedy requests made by self-represented pro se petitioners in 2017 as compared to 2015. We attribute these notable changes in requests by pro se petitioners due to the distribution of FCEP informational materials at the Help Desk. The informational materials outlined the types of remedies available to petitioners and how to best request them.

Impact on Pro Se Cases

Access to Informational Materials For many pro se self-represented litigants, the standardized legal forms are complicated and full of unfamiliar legal jargon that is difficult to navigate without legal assistance or guidance. This often results in poorly written petitions that do

not fully express the context and lethality of their abusive experiences and petitions that are received poorly by judges as well (Ajmi, 2022). Unfortunately, these complex court procedures and paperwork often prevent survivors from accessing the court, filing petitions, and not fully understanding or taking advantage of the protections of granted orders (Ajmi, 2022). Although the Cook County DV Court did not expect petitioners to utilize the FCEP informational materials in a significantly impactful way, the handouts were pivotal to petitioners for requesting remedies unique to their families. The availability of concrete, accessible information that walked petitioners through questions to ask, details to include in the petition, and clear explanations of various legal terminology provided petitioners with information that aided their ability to request child-related remedies in 2017 more than in previous years.

Court Culture Prior to FCEP Prior to the introduction of the FCEP informational materials, the Help Desk did not provide any information regarding the Order of Protection, how to request remedies, nor specifics about child-related remedies and when to request them. In fact, prior to FCEP, there was little mention of child-related issues or remedies within the court by the judges, attorneys and advocates, or the Help Desk staff and clerks despite the inclusion of child-related remedies permissible under the Illinois Domestic Violence Act on the petition for the Order of Protection. Therefore, it was not practice for petitioners to request child-related remedies; in fact, attorneys and advocates often dissuaded from advising petitioners to make these requests; and judges rarely granted child-related remedies to petitioners. The court culture and practice deeply discouraged any consideration of child-related issues, abuses, or forms of relief until the development and implementation of FCEP. The creation of the FCEP informational materials not only provided concrete information about child safety to petitioners, but the materials were also a

physical representation and validation for petitioners to communicate and make decisions about child-related relief that was not present prior to FCEP.

Role of Court Personnel on Pro Se Petitioners

The informational materials were definitely an integral resource for petitioners, especially for petitioners without assistance from advocates or attorneys. However, these materials only indicate one impact on how petitioners interacted with their OP petition. The courthouse experienced an overall shift in how court personnel were communicating about child-related issues and their child-centered practices. FCEP introduced the judges, advocates, attorneys, court clerks, and Help Desk staff to more consistent conversations around how to incorporate child-related issues within the petition. This included the Help Desk staff asking more screening questions about petitioners' children and their concerns about child safety as well as court clerks assisting petitioners to best request child-related remedies in their petitions. Attorneys and advocates communicated around best practices for assisting their petitioners to request certain child-related remedies. The judges also slowly considered child-related questions to ask petitioners during court hearing to ensure children were included on their OPs. Overall, there was more information sharing between court personnel around child-related relief and safety. Court personnel did not immediately adopt communication and practices around child-related issues; however, they slowly became normalized and institutionalized in the practices of the court personnel allowing for more open conversations about litigants with children in common.

Impact on Attorney and Advocate Cases

While pro se petitioners drastically increased their requests for child-related relief, the change was not as significant for attorney-represented or advocate-assisted petitioners. Despite having received SAFeR training through FCEP, there were no clear indications that the training

made an impact on attorney and advocate behavior as they assisted their petitioners in requesting child-related relief. Based on the quantitative data, attorney and advocate assisted petitioners were requesting child-related remedies at high rates before (2015) and during (2017) the implementation of FCEP suggesting a "ceiling effect." Thus, the results did not capture any major changes among petitioners receiving legal assistance. Instead, the data revealed a consistency in attorney-represented and advocate-assisted petitioners requesting child-related remedies well before the courthouse officially implemented FCEP.

Attorney and Advocate Practice Prior to FCEP In support of this finding, the advocate and attorney focus groups as well as anecdotal information during FCEP's development stage reveal an earlier impact on attorney and advocate practices regarding child-related issues and requests for child-related remedies. Specifically, there was an 18-month development process prior to 2017 to build FCEP programming in collaboration with the judges, attorneys, advocates, and other court stakeholders to consider various approaches to child-related issues and relief. During this time, court attorneys and advocates were involved in meetings that introduced new approaches to requesting child-related remedies on OP petitions. Additionally, many of these attorneys and advocates had experience practicing at the Domestic Relations Court, which regularly encouraged requests for child-related remedies. Therefore, many attorneys and advocates already had the practice and skills to request child-related remedies with their petitioners.

As conversations around child-related relief increased, attorneys and advocates began requesting child-related remedies once it was permissible within the Domestic Violence Court to do so. Moreover, once the court implemented FCEP, an FCEP-funded specialized attorney received FCEP-referred cases and supervised many of the attorneys at the court representing petitioners with shared children. This attorney provided guidance to the court attorneys in a way

that encouraged consistent practices around child-related relief that permeated child-related practices among other attorneys as well as advocates at the court. Once the court fully implemented FCEP, most of the court attorneys and advocates were well versed in requesting child-related remedies for their petitioners. Therefore, this did not change as much after 2015.

Impact on Judge Practices

Domestic Violence Division judges were also present for many of the FCEP stakeholder meetings prior to FCEP's implementation and they received FCEP SAFeR training in 2016. While there were modest increases in judges asking about child-related issues in 2017 after FCEP implementation, there were no clear changes to child-related remedies granted in OPs by judges. The SAFeR training in 2016 provided judges with ample information and tools to center child-related issues in their decision-making practices, including SAFeR materials to reference while on the bench. Interviews with DV judges revealed that judges in 2017 did utilize these materials to assist them in child-related questioning during hearings and, over time, they adopted child-centered screening questions in their practices. However, this was only true for judges present in 2017 and not for judges who were assigned to the Domestic Violence Court subsequent to 2016 and therefore did not attend this training.

Judicial SAFeR Trainings

Based on anecdotal observations from our court partners during FCEP development, many judges were hesitant to shift towards a focus on child safety and relief for temporary Orders of Protection. Many judges were unsure how useful the SAFeR training and FCEP would be within the context of the court and their own decision-making practices. However, a subsequent SAFeR training was held in 2022 with some of the same judges as in 2016 as well as new judges; the judges were substantially more committed to the training and the focus on child-related relief and safety practices. This informal comparison between 2016 and 2022 indicates

longer-term changes in judge understanding and adopting of SAFeR skills and child-related practices that were not fully realized in 2016 or 2017 when FCEP was first implemented. During interviews with DV judges, it was clear that they frequently receive information from national trainings, from other judges, from the Child Relief Expeditor (CRE), etc. that may further influence changes to the types of child-related questions they ask and how they grant child-related relief as well. Consequently, it is difficult to claim that FCEP training or materials were the sole impact on how each judge responded to child-related safety issues.

These reflections on the SAFeR trainings point to further discussion about the impact and implications of training on direct decision-making practices for judges. Perhaps the training did not have an impact on judge practices immediately, but rather the training, the availability of resources, and changes in overall court discussions around child-related relief together brought about longer-term impacts. While more consistent training for judges may be an option, it begs the question of whether training is the best form of information sharing and skill building for judges that already have limited time off the bench.

Additional Factors Impacting Judge Practices It is also important to note that there are various other factors that could affect judge decision-making practices beyond SAFeR training and FCEP resources that would also be difficult to capture in a measurable way. Mainly, each judge will undoubtedly respond to each OP case and make decisions differently than the next judge. While there are obvious statutes each judge must abide by, each judge will still have their own practices and biases that influence how they interact with litigants, how they ask questions about children, the remedies they grant for each case, and the types of cases they hear while on the bench.

Additionally, the constant turnover of judges within the court has affected the consistency of FCEP resources and information shared among judges thus impacting how each judge addresses child-related safety and relief. Throughout the time period on which this research focused, judges have left, shifted roles, and new judges have been appointed to the court. Thus, it is difficult to conduct an accurate comparison pre- and post-FCEP when the judges have been different. However, this is also a real reflection of how common judge turnover is within a court and the need to have a model sustainable enough to withstand changes among judges and their practices. The goal then is to create a strong and flexible model that can be adopted by new judges in a way that will not completely alter the progress of the model within the court environment. With FCEP, this looked like engaging new judges by holding a modified, informal SAFeR training, sharing FCEP resources, and having consistent communication with the CRE about child-related issues and cases. While the current court environment may not reflect the original goals as anticipated by FCEP, the court and judges have concretely engaged child-related safety and relief in ways that were not present pre-FCEP.

Impact of Child-Relief Expediter (CRE) on Court Processes

The Child-Relief Expediter was a pivotal role introduced into the Domestic Violence Court through FCEP. Across interviews with judges and focus groups with attorneys and advocates, there was resounding high praise for the CRE and her role navigating cases with children in common between litigant parents. For many of these court personnel, the CRE developed parenting plans with parents and centered the safety needs of litigants in ways that judges, attorneys, and advocates were unable to do within the limits of their own practices. The CRE also played a role in sustaining the goals of FCEP by sharing information and guidance around child-related relief to various court personnel. In a way, her consistency throughout the time of FCEP and beyond allowed for child-

centered approaches to withstand any drastic changes to the court (e.g., the pandemic, judge turnover, etc.). The judges saw her as a resource for providing additional case context that directly informed their decision-making around safety concerns and child-related relief. Advocates and attorneys also found the CRE to be a representative for litigant needs around child safety in ways that they were not always able or allowed to be in court. Overall, the CRE has brought cohesion between the various court personnel in a way that centered litigants and their safety.

Judge Experience with CRE While the judges have benefited from having the CRE present in the court, the judge interviews revealed slight inconsistencies in how judges were/are referring cases to the CRE. Some judges asked a series of child-related questions to determine which cases to refer, some judges automatically referred any child-involved case, and others still struggled to refer appropriate cases to the CRE. Although an FCEP resource that outlines the CRE referral process for cases with children was distributed, some judges remember receiving the resource and utilizing it while others did not really engage with the resource. It was especially likely for the newer judges to refer all child-involved cases; however, the CRE noted that this can lead to many cases that are inappropriate for expediting. While many judges are asking various screening and risk-assessment questions, there is still inconsistencies across judges in how and to what extent they are referring cases to the CRE that may need to be addressed. Particularly, updating the CRE referral protocol to ensure all judges are aware of which cases warrant referral and best practices for when to refer cases to the CRE. This is especially important as new judges often enter the court and as the CRE process shifts over the years.

Overall Litigant Experience with CRE The CRE has also been a strong resource for the litigant parents that move through the expediting process. The majority of the interviewed litigant parents were very satisfied with their experience creating a parenting plan with the CRE. The

litigants consistently shared that they felt heard and listened to by the CRE in a way that was very distinct from their experiences with the judges and other court personnel. Many litigants shared that the CRE's compassion and warmth were especially reassuring for them as they moved through very difficult court processes. The CRE sessions provided a space for litigants with shared children to navigate their relationship in a way that shifted power dynamics and empowered both parents to seek safe contact with their children. The goals of the CRE sessions around safety and child-centered care reflect an overarching path towards litigant empowerment that focuses on meaningful parenting goals, self-efficacy around co-parenting, and shifting towards equitable power dynamics, especially for the survivor parent (Cattaneo et al., 2016).

CRE Safety Considerations While both petitioners and respondents shared these reflections, the respondents still expressed feeling like they did not have much choice and had to compromise their wants and needs during sessions. While the CRE is quite intentional about listening to both petitioners and respondents and trying to incorporate both parents' needs, it is also important to note the CRE's distinct role in prioritizing safety concerns rather than trying to appease both parents. We can infer that the respondent fathers had to compromise child-related remedies often due to safety concerns that needed to be addressed, even if the plan was not ideal for one of the parents. The CRE's prioritization of safety reflects a clear distinction between the CRE process and traditional mediation. Traditional mediation focuses on reaching agreement between parents and compromising on their wants. While the CRE is listening to the needs and concerns of both parents, the CRE is primarily committed to and responsible for the safety of all parties during the session and the safety of the plan. The CRE is actively confronting, offering, and responding to safety concerns for the parents and children that may arise with the parenting agreement (Defining Child-Related Relief in Civil Protection Orders to Enhance Safety). Thus,

the expediting process is both litigant and child-centered in a way that reassures parents that risk and safety considerations *are also* litigant needs even if it may feel like there is less choice or ability to compromise equally in a session.

Impact of Court Experiences of Parent Litigants on Safe Parenting

Overall, the majority of interviewed parent litigants felt more safe and comfortable with their parenting plans in place after meeting with the CRE. A key highlight from the interviews was seeing each parent litigant center their children in their discussion of the parenting plans and goals. Whether a petitioner or respondent, many of the parents appreciated the parenting plans and having opportunities to spend quality time with their children. For many, the parenting plan and separation from the other parent created an opportunity for each parent to foster their own relationship with their children. Researchers have noted the importance of having the OP court process as a strategy to better navigate a relationship between a petitioner and respondent parent, especially when there is continued contact between litigants with shared children (Cattaneo et al., 2016). Both the OP and the additional parenting plan thus encourage parents to build co-parenting skills as well as sustainable relationships with their children and the other parent as a means towards safer parent-child relationships. Petitioners especially noted that knowing that their children could have safe visits and a personal relationship with the respondent parent was a source of safety for themselves as well.

Informal Modifications to Parenting Agreements

While many litigant parents benefited from their parenting plans, many also made informal modifications to their parenting plans without involving the court or legal procedures. These modifications were primarily made to increase visitation times and access for the respondent parent in contexts where parenting time was going well. Many noted that these informal modifications were primarily due to not knowing how to

proceed with legal modifications through the court, avoiding the inefficiency and time constraints of the court, or simply not wanting to return to the court to make parenting decisions. The decision not to involve the court suggests both frustrations with the court process as well as a desire to determine parenting decisions between parents without the need for a third-party. In any case, the modifications made to parenting plans also signified limitations to the usage of plans when plans required modifications as needs changed and as parents became comfortable determining plans for themselves and their children. Parents' engagement with the plans and comfort in changing parenting goals reveals a progress and autonomy in co-parenting skills that empower both parents to seek long-term positive parenting goals (Cattaneo et al., 2016). However, these informal modifications also brought on anxieties about potential risk for violation for both parents. These concerns reflect a clear confusion by litigants around how the OP and parenting plan function as well as who has responsibility or ability to change the OP. This confusion requires more clear guidance and language from judges about legal obligations surrounding the granted OP and parenting agreement.

Litigant Experiences with Courthouse Unfortunately, many litigants also expressed deep frustrations and poor experiences with court personnel, especially with the judges, that influenced their sense of procedural justice. Many shared that they were not feeling heard by the judges during their court hearing, they were not treated respectfully by court staff during their various court procedures, and both petitioners and respondents felt stigmatized and stereotyped by court personnel based on their gender, their race, or their perceived behaviors. The pandemic and subsequent changes to the court deeply exacerbated these experiences, including limited time in court with judges, limited litigant-facing staff in the courthouse to assist litigants, and overall issues with Zoom court that disrupted communication between litigants and the court. While it is

understandable that these changes to the court were unprecedented, it does not diminish the insensitivity felt by litigants moving through an unfamiliar courthouse and legal system while also holding difficult and traumatizing experiences that "could negatively impact their ability to make appropriate choice in their legal matters" (Ajmi, 2022).

It is important for judges and other court personnel to recognize that litigants are interacting with a courthouse that "they are not necessarily prepared for or have the experience to handle" (Ajmi, 2022) and these challenging court interactions directly impact their perceptions of the court and legal systems. These types of harmful experiences also often discourage individuals from returning to the court or utilizing legal services to address their safety concerns (Mazzotta et al., 2021). Ultimately, these difficult experiences influence how individuals view the role and effectiveness of the court and whether it is safe to seek out legal responses to harmful and abusive situations. While many of the litigants interviewed highly appreciated the role of the CRE and receiving a parenting plan, their experiences with other court personnel weakened their expectations and view of the court system and sense of procedural justice.

Impact of FCEP on OP Violations

The examination of OP criminal violations also aimed to understand the role of procedural justice on the behaviors of respondent litigants. Early hypotheses proposed that the support and information provided by the CRE to respondents would influence their positive view of the court and lower likelihood of the respondents violating their OPs. The slight decrease in OP violations overall between 2015 and 2017 is small and the change was not statistically significant, thus we cannot confidently say this reflected procedural justice. However, the increase in cases not having any criminal charges, the decreased frequency of charges per individual, and changes in the types

of criminal charges do reveal slow changes in the court that may be influenced by the role of the CRE and FCEP.

Culture Shift in the Courthouse and Court System

The Domestic Violence Courthouse saw a culture shift in the courthouse and court system as a result of the Family Court Enhancement Project. There have been increased discussions of child-related issues, requests for child-related remedies, and approaches to decision-making and advocacy that have slowly become a universal practice in the court among judges, attorneys, advocates, court staff, and litigants. While the research and evaluation present impacts associated with the FCEP model, the court experienced other transformations that were immeasurable and spanned beyond FCEP implementation in 2017. The model included the SAFeR trainings, the CRE, and informational materials, but the impact of the development, implementation, and sustainability of the FCEP model cannot be fully captured just in these three elements nor within the short timeframe of its first year in the courthouse.

Long-Term Development of FCEP The process of developing the FCEP model included much time spent holding conversations, stakeholder and management meetings, interviews/focus groups with court personnel, and technical assistance that all contributed greatly to the slow shifts that occurred within the court. These conversations considered current practices and policies around child-related relief as well as identifying needs within the court that would improve information sharing and deliberation of child-related issues. The FCEP planning began in 2013 and continued until its implementation in 2016/2017, so judges, advocates, and attorneys were primed to start considering child-related issues and relief well before FCEP was finally implemented within the courthouse. While the comparison of OP petitions and court hearings between 2015 and 2017 did not fully capture the change in attorneys, advocates, and judge

engagement with child-related relief, recognizing the impact of the FCEP development phase clarifies why many of the indicators we used to consider change in practices between 2015 and 2017 were not statistically significant. Rather, we can infer that the change in knowledge and practice around child-related relief began earlier than 2015 since there was a time in which attorneys and advocates were not requesting child-related relief, and judges were not asking nor granting child-related remedies. Therefore, the changes within the court with regard to considering child safety, having petitioners request child-related relief, and having judges ask child-related questions occurred over a longer period of time and became institutionalized once FCEP was fully implemented at the court. The culture change within the court environment and acceptance of child-related considerations in court policies were nurtured over the larger span of FCEP development and subsequent implementation in the court.

Impact of Pandemic on Courthouse It is important to also state the disruptions that occurred within the courthouse during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the start of the pandemic in 2020, the court shifted to limited capacity within the courthouse and shifted most court hearings to virtual Zoom hearings. Court hearings were backed up for months, especially POP hearings, and many EOP orders and parenting plans were extended consistently for months with occasional status hearings. Due to these major delays as well as increases in domestic violence during the pandemic, the judges as well as the CRE were overwhelmed with cases beyond their capacity. Delayed court hearings limited litigant time with judges, and various CRE sessions scheduled in advance presented a burden of work that was not sustainable for court personnel at the time. However, these changes also brought about changes to protocol, including the expediting process for the CRE. A clear shift for the CRE was setting up sessions with litigants during their EOP hearing, often weeks in advance, and having multiple CRE sessions over the course of their case rather than one short

session often after the POP hearing. While the procedures may have changed, it is important to recognize the flexibility of the CRE services to adapt to the differing needs that arose during the pandemic while still ensuring the objectives of the CRE did not change and child safety continued to be centered.

Shifts in Court Personnel Additionally, it was during the pandemic that the court experienced a transformation as the Presiding Judge changed and there was a turnover of judges and court personnel as well. The shift of judges and hiring of new judges required particular attention to ensure that judges were versed in FCEP and were knowledgeable about child-related relief. Fortunately, the new Presiding Judge was familiar with FCEP and enthusiastic about sustaining the policies and practices developed through FCEP, including holding a SAFeR training again in 2022. Together the new Presiding Judge, present and new judges, and the CREs are working to adapt and sustain the learnings from FCEP as the court continues to adapt with hybrid court hearings and always changing judicial and legal procedure. One of the most difficult shifts with the court during the pandemic was a drastic decrease in litigant-facing court personnel, attorneys, and advocates. It is clear from the interviews with litigants that the limitations that come with Zoom court—poor connection, little information-sharing and minimal privacy—affect overall court experiences. For many litigants, the limitations and safety precautions instilled during the pandemic drastically impeded safe access to OPs and other legal resources that often were already difficult to access or insufficient for their needs (Ajmi, 2022; Weisz, 2020). Whether it be the present role of the CRE, the physical informational materials, or physical presence of court employees, it is important and beneficial to offer physical support and accessible resources for litigants that often face compounded barriers to legal services.

Sustainability of FCEP

After reflecting on the research and evaluation of the Family Court Enhancement Project, it is important to consider elements of the FCEP to sustain within the Domestic Violence Court.

SAFeR Curriculum The SAFeR curriculum is at the crux of the FCEP model and molds the child-related practices implemented throughout the court. While the original model included training for court personnel and physical resources to utilize in the courtrooms, many of the court personnel had trouble remembering the training or only utilized the training materials for short periods of time. It was clear that judges, attorneys, and advocates gained new skills and practices over longer periods of time and through engaged discussions with other court personnel rather than strictly from one training. On the one hand, there is value to having the SAFeR training and materials available and accessible for court personnel to refer to beyond the one-day training. On the other hand, consistent discussions among judges, attorneys, and advocates over longer periods of time seemed to have a greater impact on streamlined practices in the court around child-related relief and approaches.

Informational Materials The surprising impact of the informational materials on petitioners, especially pro se petitioners, revealed the strength of physical reminders and sources of information for individuals unfamiliar with the court. Maintaining the presence of the informational materials will be integral for the sustainability of FCEP and will provide petitioners with avenues towards child-related relief. However, there can be improvements such as creating additional materials in various languages and considering more accessible language for folks who may have lower literacy levels. The research also revealed the importance of having court staff physically present to assist petitioners in addition to the informational materials. Whether it be Help Desk staff, court clerks, or advocates, it is integral to have both written and verbal explanation

for how to fill out an OP petition to increase accessibility and understanding among petitioners completing an otherwise daunting and hard-to-understand legal form.

Child Relief Expediter The most beneficial and powerful aspect of the FCEP model was creating the role of the Child Relief Expediter (CRE). The CRE provides a neutral yet empathetic space for parents to develop a safe parenting plan for their children with ease. The CRE also models conflict resolution and co-parenting skills with parents during their sessions in a way that encourages parents to engage in safe parenting and empowers them to compromise on parenting decisions beyond the court and legal processes. The high volume of cases and clients that move through the expediting process are overwhelming, thus an additional CRE was hired and ideas for suburban CREs are moving forward as well. The CRE has been especially impactful through their communication with judges, attorneys, and advocates that encourages discussion around child-related issues, offers information about SAFeR approaches, and practices litigant and child-centered skills within the court.

Replication of FCEP The sustainability of the FCEP model is also related to its ability to be replicated in other settings and other courthouses. An important reflection on the FCEP model in the Cook County Domestic Violence court is the long-term investment in developing and implementing the program. While FCEP technically was a pilot program funded for one year, the model spanned various years of technical assistance; stakeholder meetings with various court personnel, legal and advocacy agencies, and other DV networks; development of FCEP roles and policies; implementation within the court system; and research and evaluation of the program with court personnel and community members. This means that successful replication requires a model that is collaborative and adaptable to changes that occur within the court and court personnel, to litigants, and to external changes, such as the pandemic. The pandemic allowed the court to adapt

to virtual modes of civil OP litigation and parenting agreements; however it revealed the importance of litigant-facing staff that support litigants as they move through an unfamiliar legal process. Any replication of FCEP should consider ways to best support litigants during and after OP procedures through physical resources and staff, sources of information, and referrals for post-court services and resources. The model is also deeply committed to child safety as well as safe parenting options for both petitioners and respondents, and the sustainability of these values are engrained in how judges, attorneys, advocates, Child-relief Expediters, and other court personnel incorporate these values within their practices and in their work directly with litigants and their children. Any ongoing model must also take this into account. Finally, having structures for research and evaluation of the model will allow for long-term methods of assessing and improving the model as the court, legal policies, and litigant needs change over time. Overall, to replicate the FCEP model is to engage various stakeholders, to have the flexibility to adapt to ongoing changes in the court, a commitment to the child-centered values of FCEP, and a long-term investment in maintaining and evolving the model.

Recommendations for the Court

While the presence of FCEP has majorly improved the Domestic Violence Court and its civil OP procedures, there are still recommendations for the court based on the research and evaluation. It is also important to note that these recommendations may require additional funding, partnerships, or court infrastructure that may not be present currently within the court.

Increase Court Capacity The primary recommendation for the court is to increase and build capacity among court personnel. It is clear from the review of court hearing transcripts, interviews with judges, and interviews with parent litigants, that there are an overwhelming number of cases coming through the court each day and not enough staff present to offer quality service. Appointing

additional judges could increase capacity for judges to dedicate more time to litigants during court hearings and in turn improve the quality of time spent with litigants to ensure they are respected, heard, and receiving their needed remedies. It would be equally important to appoint new judges that specialize in domestic violence and risk assessment to better engage with parents experiencing domestic violence as well as to center child safety and values aligned with SAFeR approaches.

The court could build capacity by including additional litigant-centered staff within the courthouse that support safe parenting options as well as additional resources, legal and otherwise. The research clearly illustrated the pivotal role and impact of the CRE on the court since FCEP's implementation. Fortunately, the courthouse has already hired an additional CRE and could benefit from additional CREs in other county courts as well to accommodate the high volume of litigant cases with children in common that seek safe parenting agreements. It would also be of great benefit to have more clerks, Help Desk staff, and advocates physically present within the courthouse to assist petitioners filing their OP petitions. There has been a massive decrease of in-person supports and direct information shared with litigants since the pandemic, thus increasing the in-person, litigant-centered staff available to provide support and accessible information within the legal system would alleviate barriers for litigants struggling to understand and move through their court procedures. It may also be beneficial to take advantage of technological options that aid litigants through their petition filing. For example, having a litigant-facing kiosk or other digital options to walk petitioners through their OP petitions could offer litigants additional support. These self-guided interviews could walk litigants through various questions and explanations directly related to the OP petition and generate a properly filled out form ready for their court procedures (Ajmi, 2022). These are all options that could more accessibly engage litigants with the information they need to successfully move through their court case.

Referral System for Litigants Many litigant parents noted a lack of information and resources around their OP, their legal options, and post-court support. Thus, the court could develop a more robust system of referrals and resources for litigant parents moving through the civil court process and beyond their court procedures. Many litigants interviewed shared their needs and desires for additional resources such as financial support, housing options, legal resources, counseling, parenting groups, and childcare after going through their OP process. Many of the litigants were struggling with meeting their basic needs and required social and emotional support to manage the trauma from their personal and legal circumstances. Many did not know how to best proceed legally or personally once they had their OP and parenting plan. Unfortunately, it is common for litigants, especially self-represented litigants, to lack the financial resources or the knowledge to navigate "housing [options], child support, medical care, or other resources necessary to ensure their ability to free themselves of [their abusive] relationships" that are also accessible (Ajmi, 2022; Weisz, 2020). Therefore, it would be beneficial for the court to have a system for litigants to receive information not only on their OP, their parenting plan, and any subsequent legal options but also on local partner service providers and advocacy agencies that could assist litigants beyond their legal needs. Ideally, placing a social worker in the courts could facilitate this process. Studies have shown that litigant experiences are enhanced when civil justice systems work collaboratively with advocacy or social service agencies to provide additional avenues of assistance, individualized care, and options for safety planning that ultimately empower litigants facing abuse (Messing et al., 2017).

Training for Visitation Supervisors In addition to a broad referral system, it would be helpful to have resources for parents who have opted for visitation supervised by a family member. During the litigant interviews, many shared their concerns about supervised visits with family

members who were not informed of how to properly supervise a parental visit nor the legal requirements of the visits. We would recommend having the required training, meeting, or discussion between the court and the family members supervising visits to ensure that they are aware of the responsibilities required for supervising a court-ordered visitation time. This would provide both the visiting parent and supervising member all the necessary information to ensure the visits can occur within the legal stipulations of the OP and parenting agreement while also having a resource to refer to if any future issues came up once visits have begun.

Consistent Communication among Court Personnel The court went through various changes for the duration of the research and evaluation of FCEP, whether internally related to judge turnover or externally related to the onset of the pandemic. Given that changes continue to be likely, we recommend that there be mechanisms for consistent communication, reflection, and education among court personnel. This could include instilling consistent meetings among judges, attorneys, advocates, CREs, and Help Desk staff that consider how FCEP and child-related issues are addressed with litigants. The meetings could be modeled from *interprofessional education* that seeks to engage different professionals to improve collaboration and the quality of work done within the courthouse (Guraya & Barr, 2018). This model encourages different learning strategies, "problem-based, exchange-based, simulation-based, observation-based, and practice-based," that court personnel could utilize to increase team-based approaches to engaged learning, skill acquisition, and relationship-building (Guraya & Barr, 2018). These meetings could be a space for all court personnel to reflect on child-related issues, consider new court policies and procedures, share best practices when working with litigants, and problem-solve issues that arise in court when considering child-related relief. The goal would be to create a communal space for court personnel

to learn and adapt their court practices together as well as having consistent and streamlined sources of information that align with SAFeR curriculum.

Judge Education and Feedback Further education could also look like requiring judges to engage in yearly DV training to provide current knowledge about domestic violence issues and resources to refer to during their decision-making process. It may also be helpful to create structures for judges to reflect and receive feedback on their practices and engagement with litigants. Many litigants were struggling to appear in front of judges, and it negatively affected their experience and perception of the court. While many structural factors may influence how a judge is moving through numerous court cases, holding the judges accountable for their actions and having them reflect on their engagement with litigants will ultimately improve the court experience for litigants experiencing domestic violence.

Evaluation of Court Practices Finally, it is important that the court continue to invest in and instill systems for consistent evaluation of the FCEP model and subsequent structures put in place as a result of FCEP. This may look like opportunities for litigants to offer their feedback on their experiences in the court, specifically related to filing their petition, and in front of the judge during their court hearings. Additional evaluation practices can be continued through the CRE to identify litigant need as well as gaps across various advocacy agencies, visitation centers, and partnering social service agencies. Evaluation measures, such as pre-post surveys, could also be implemented for any trainings or consistent meetings used to share information or learn new skills related to child-related procedures and practices. Overall, there should at least be yearly reviews among the court personnel to collaboratively reflect on how the court is functioning, how cases with children in common are addressed, and remaining gaps or challenges that impede any court process or litigant-centered service.

Appendices

Appendix A: FCEP Informational Materials

Frequently Asked Questions: When the OP is Against the Other Parent

Frequently Asked Questions: When the OP is Against the Other Parent

What does the judge need to know before I ask for protection for my kids in the OP?

The judge needs to know the children's names. The words *Minor Children* on the OP mean that the Respondent is the legal or biological parent of your kids.

NOTE: You can protect all your kids on the OP. They don't have to be the kids of the person you are getting the OP against (called the *Respondent*) But, if the Respondent is the other parent, there are certain things you can ask for.

How do I know if the Respondent is the *Legal Parent* of my kids? When the judge asks, "Has the Respondent established parentage (*Legal Parent*)?" you can say yes, if one of these things is true:

- You were married to the other parent when your kids were born
- The other parent's name is on the birth certificate
- Another court has already entered an order about the kids, like parentage, child support, or visitation.

Who takes care of the kids most of the time? This is called *Primary Caretaker*. If this is you, tell the judge. If it is the Respondent and you want that to change, you have to tell the judge why this is important for the safety of everyone.

Can I ask to keep the other parent away from my kids?

Yes, you can ask for some or all of the following on your petition for the order of protection:

Kids are *Protected Parties* on the OP: This means that you and the kids have the same level of safety. Their names must be written under *Protected Parties*, in addition to *Minor Children*.

Kids live with you (*Physical Care and Possession*): If they already live with you, everything stays the same. If they live with the other parent, you will need to tell the judge why you want this to change. If the judge agrees, special arrangements can be made with the sheriff to get the kids back safely.

You make all decisions about the kids (*Temporary Legal Custody*): This means you are the only parent who decides about school, doctors, religion, and other things. The other parent decides nothing.

***No Contact* with other parent:** This means the kids get no calls, texts, emails, or visits from the Respondent.

Visitation *Denied*: *Denied* means that as long as the OP is in place, there are no visits.

Visitation *Reserved*: *Reserved* means that no decision on visits is made right now. If your kids are *Protected Parties* and you mark *No Contact*, this could mean that no visits will happen unless you or the Respondent asks for them later. To do that, a *Motion* can be filed with the clerk. If you decide to start a divorce or parentage case in Domestic Relations Court, you can file the motion there. (See flier about Domestic Relations Division)

No going to school or day care (*Prohibited from Entering or Remaining at*): This means the other parent can never go to the address of anyone who takes care of your kids or to the school. The addresses have to be listed on the OP.

No information about schools or doctors (*Denied Access to School or Any Other Records*): This means the other parent can't get any reports from the school or the doctor. This helps to keep the other parent from knowing where the kids go to school or to the doctor. If the other parent knows where these places are, it still stops the sharing of information about these things.

Can the kids still see the other parent if there is an OP?

Yes. There are many ways for the OP to help make everyone feel safer during visits.
It depends on what you ask for and what the judge allows:

Kids are *Protected Parties* on the OP: This does not stop them from having visits with the other parent. It just helps keep those visits safer.

Kids live with you (*Physical Care and Possession*): The kids can live with you and can still visit the other parent.

You make all decisions about the kids (*Temporary Legal Custody*): The kids can visit the other parent and you still make major decisions about them. This includes things like
school, doctor's appointments, religion, and activities.

Other parent has limits on when and how they contact the kids: This can be part of the rules about visits. You can ask that calls to the kids be on certain phones and at certain times. That way, you don't have to talk to the other parent and the kids are called at a time when they are able to talk.

No hiding the kids or taking them out of Illinois: This makes sure that the other parent knows they have to return the kids to you and not take them someplace where they can't get back to you.

Other parent can go to school or daycare as long as no contact with you: If your kids have school activities, the other parent can be allowed to go to them. This is for things like sports, meetings with the teacher, and parties.

Visitation *Restricted*: That means that there are a lot of rules for visits to help make them safer.

What kinds of things can make visits "Restricted"?

Specific times and dates: You can ask for visits to be on certain days and at certain times. If you ask for that, you have to make sure that schedule works for everyone.

Safer ways for pick-up and drop-off of the kids: This can happen in a few ways:

- **At curbside:** When the other parent arrives, the kids go out to the car so the other parent can't talk to you. This works best for older kids.
- **At a public meeting place:** You meet the other parent in a public place and the other parent gets the kids there. This works best if you aren't worried that the other parent will do or say things to you in public.
- **Someone else helps:** A specific friend or relative takes the kids to the other parent and brings them back. This person must be willing to do this and agree to it in court.
- **At an agency that does *Safe Exchange*:** This is a place where you bring the kids and the other parent gets them, but you never see each other. (See flier about *Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange*)

Supervised visits: The other parent is never alone with the kids. This can help if you are worried that the kids might get hurt or be in a dangerous place. It also helps stop the other parent from saying things that might scare the kids or might not be proper for them to hear. There are two ways to do this:

- **Someone else helps:** Visits are done in front of a person you trust. The person that does this must agree to do it and sign a paper for the court.
- **At an agency that does *Supervised Visits*:** There are free services that can do this. Remember, if you want an agency to do this, the schedule cannot change. It has to be at a fixed time that the agency is available. (See flier about *Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange*)

What if I need help figuring out visitation details?

Here are some ways to do that:

Talk to someone about visitation before you go to court: The court has a person called a *Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Liaison*. She can tell you about some visitation options. If you have an advocate, they can help, too.

Expediter Services: The court has a person that can work with you and the other parent to figure out the details of visits. You must ask the judge for this help in court. (See flier about *Expediter Services*)

Work it out with the other parent: There are ways to communicate with the other parent and still feel safer. You can get a special kind of free email account. It can keep track of all messages between you and the other parent. No one can delete or change a message. Also, if you need copies of the emails for court, you can get them for free if you have an OP. *www.talkingparents.com* is one of these email accounts you can try.

How do I talk to the other parent about the kids if there is an OP?

Sometimes you still have to tell the other parent important things about the kids. There are ways to make it safer:

Phone calls: The judge can limit what you and the other parent talk about over the phone. Examples include visitation times and doctor visits. This works best if the other parent does not threaten you or try to control you verbally.

Texts: Texts can be limited, too. This helps because there is a written record of what BOTH of you say to each other.

Special email accounts: (like *www.talkingparents.com* described above) You can use accounts like this to arrange for visits.

Can I get money for the kids?

Yes. You can ask for *Child Support* on your petition.

Even if you only want certain expenses paid for, you still have to ask. It helps to have proof of the other parent's income.

Can I change what is in my Order of Protection later?

Maybe. You can ask to have your OP *Modified* and then the judge will decide.

To do this, you have to file a *motion* with the clerk and mail a copy to other parent. Then at a court date, you can tell the judge why you want to change it. Remember, the protections in your OP end when it expires.

Produced by the Domestic Violence Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County

Legal Disclaimer: This is an educational and informational guide; it may not be used for any other purpose.
This guide confers no legal rights and creates no legal remedies and may not be used in any legal proceeding.

Victim Information Packet

VICTIM INFORMATION
Welcome to the Circuit Court of Cook County Domestic Violence Division

This court is a safe space where people who may have been abused by an intimate partner, family or household member can get help, including:

- Seeking criminal charges against the person who committed the abuse and/or
- Requesting an Order of Protection, a court order that orders the person who may be abusing you (the abuser) to do or stop doing certain acts.

You can get an Order of Protection in criminal or civil court. Both courts are located in this building.

Check in with the Help Desk

If you have a police report you may be able to file criminal charges and get an Order of Protection. The Help Desk will send you to the State's Attorney's Office for a decision if a criminal charge will be filed today.

- If criminal charges are filed, the court will issue a warrant or summons for the abuser. The State's Attorney's Office will help you ask for the Order of Protection in criminal court.
- If no criminal charges are filed, return to the Help Desk if you want to ask for an Order of Protection.

If you do not have a police report or no criminal case has been filed and you want an Order of Protection, the Help Desk staff will ask you more questions so that you can be linked for further help. When you are linked for help, you can more fully discuss your needs and complete the steps to ask for an Order of Protection.

1. Complete the Petition

To complete the paperwork (a Petition) for an Order of Protection, the Help Desk will link you to one of the following:

- a free lawyer,
- a law student or advocate who will help you with your paperwork, or
- the Clerk's office, where you will receive information about filling out the papers yourself.

2. File the Petition

- Once your paperwork is completed the Clerk's Office will assign you to a courtroom.
- Go to that courtroom immediately.

If you have children with you they will not be allowed in the courtroom. There is a free Children's Room on the first floor where your children can be safe while you are in court.

3. Hearing

- Go into the assigned courtroom, and check-in quietly with the Clerk at the front of the courtroom (even if the judge is hearing a case), then take a seat.
- When your case is called, go up to the judge's bench and answer the judge's questions about your situation. If the judge grants you an Emergency Order of Protection, wait until you get a copy before you leave the courtroom. The Clerk will call your name again and you will get the copy.
- After court, the Sheriff will try to give ("serve") the abuser a copy of the Order of Protection and the Petition at the address you provided. Once the abuser is served, he/she must obey the order of protection or he/she could be arrested.

Who can request an Order of Protection?

You can ask the court for an Order of Protection if you are being abused by someone:

- You are or were married to;
- You are or were dating;
- You have a child with;
- Who is your adult child;
- Who is your parent; or,
- Who is your sibling;
- Who is your "step" parent, adult child, or sibling;
- With whom you share a blood relationship through a child;
- With whom you are or were related through marriage;
- You live with now or in the past; or,
- Who is your caretaker, if you are disabled.

What is an Emergency Order of Protection?

An EMERGENCY ORDER OF PROTECTION is an order the court gives without first telling the abuser that you are asking the court for protection. To get an Emergency Order of Protection, you must be in an emergency situation.

- If you are afraid and/or you think the abuser might harm you or prevent you from getting the Order of Protection if he/she knew you were trying to get it, tell the judge.
- If there has been a delay in getting to the court, explain why your need for protection remains a current emergency.
- If there has been more than one incident, make sure your petition includes that information.

In an Emergency Order of Protection you can ask the court for the following orders:

- Prohibit abuse—includes physical abuse, harassment, stalking, and interference with personal liberty, intimidation of a dependent or willful deprivation
- Grant of exclusive possession of a residence to you
- Stay away order

- Physical care and possession of a minor child given to you
- Prohibit removal or concealment of a minor child from you
- Order the person who is abusing you to appear in court alone or with a minor child
- Protect property--prohibit transferring, damaging or concealing property
- Protect pets
- Prohibit entry in residence by the person abusing you while under the influence
- Prohibit access to records related to a child
- Other injunctive relief—such as no unlawful contact or no contact of any kind

An Emergency Order of Protection lasts up to 21 days. During that time, the Sheriff will try to give ("serve") abuser the petition you filed and the Order of Protection. You must give a specific address where this person can be located so the Sheriff can serve the papers.

If the judge decides that you do **not** have an emergency, he or she will not give you an Emergency Order of Protection but may still give you a court date to return to decide if you should receive a longer (final) Plenary Order of Protection. After the hearing today, the Sheriff will try to give the abuser a copy of the petition you filed.

If you are afraid that you might be harmed if your abuser learns that you are asking the court for help and you decide you don't want an Order of Protection at this time, you must ask to **withdraw** your petition immediately before leaving the courtroom.

A Plenary Order of Protection lasts longer than an Emergency Order of Protection, and has more protections. A Plenary Order of Protection can last up to 2 years, covers more issues and gives more protections. In addition to the protections available in the Emergency Order, the Plenary Order can also contain the following:

- Counseling for abuser
- Temporary legal custody
- Child Visitation
- Possession of personal property
- Payment of support
- Payment of losses
- Prohibit firearm possession
- Payment for shelter services

How do I get a Plenary Order of Protection?

- The abuser must be served for you to get a Plenary Order of Protection. If the Sheriff cannot serve the abuser at the address you gave them on your first court date, the judge will ask you for a different address for the abuser. This is called an "alias summons." The Emergency Order of Protection can be continued for another 21 days.
- If you do not return, even if you know the abuser has not been served, your order will end.
- If you are late for court your case could be dismissed.

- When the abuser has been served, the judge may have a hearing. The hearing is your chance to tell why you need an Order of Protection, the abuser tells his/her side of the story, and the judge decides whether to grant a Plenary Order of Protection.

How do I enforce the Order of Protection?

Keep your order of protection with you at all times. If your children are also protected on the Order, make copies for their schools, day care center, babysitters, etc. The Clerk's Office can also notify your child's school that the Order is in place if you complete an additional form.

If the abuser harms or harasses you or any protected person, comes to a protected address or contacts you in any way, call 911 / the police immediately. The police will have a record of your Order of Protection and whether it has been served. The abuser must be served with the Order for it to be enforceable.

- If the abuser is **present** when the police arrive, he or she will be arrested for a criminal charge of violation of Order of Protection (VOOP).
- If the person has fled, the police should complete a police report. Bring the police report (or the report number) to court the next working day or as soon as possible, and the State's Attorney will review the facts to determine if criminal charges will be filed.

This information is provided for educational purposes only and does not confer any legal rights or remedies.

OTHER SUPPORT

Do you need to talk to someone for more information or support?

- **City of Chicago Domestic Violence Help Line**
  The Help Line operates 24 hours, 7 days a week. Your conversation with the Help Line Advocate is confidential. The advocate will give you information and support and/or link you to shelter, counseling, supervised child visitation services, legal services and other free community-based sources of assistance. **The toll free number is 1-877-863-6338. A direct line to this Help Line is available for use while you are at the courthouse. The Help Desk can tell you where it is.**
- **Cook County State's Attorney's Office Domestic Violence Resource Center**
  The Resource Center is located in Room 1600 on the first floor. The Center can identify and link victims with needed services, including help with education or employment.

Do you need help understanding your options? Would you like help with the court proceedings or with planning for your safety?

- **Domestic Violence Legal Advocates**
  Non-lawyer Legal Advocates are available to explain court proceedings, assist you in dealing with court personnel and support you during the court case. The Help Line (see above) can refer you this service or you can seek the assistance of advocates in suite 1500 on the first floor or Metropolitan Family Services or Family Rescue Legal Advocates, who have offices on the second floor at the courthouse.
- **Senior Service Legal Advocate**
  The City of Chicago offers support to those victims who are 60 years of age or older and are Chicago residents. The Help Desk can direct you to this service.

Have you lost money as a result of being a crime victim?

- **Crime Victim Compensation**
  You may be eligible for financial assistance through the Illinois Attorney General's Office for expenses incurred as a result of being a victim of a crime. For more information call 1-800-228-3368.

Do you and the abuser have children together?

- **Supervised Child Visitation and Safe Exchange**
  If you and the abuser have children, he or she may be granted visitation. If you are afraid that you or your child would be in danger during the visitation or exchange, the judge may order supervised visitation or exchange. The Help Line can link you to free supervised visitation centers so that you can determine if this might be a resource that the court might consider in your case.

Danger Assessment Tool The attached tool may help you evaluate the danger that you are in so that you might seek necessary support and protection. If, after completing the assessment, you have questions or additional concerns about your safety, contact the Help Line for support **or ask to speak to an advocate.**

Ways to Feel Safer about the Kids

WHEN YOU WANT AN OP AGAINST THE OTHER PARENT:
Ways to Feel Safer About the Kids

FIRST:
Is the other parent's name on the birth certificate or have you been to court to prove who the parent is?

Yes	No
You can ask for certain things to help you and your kids feel safer. Remember, the judge will be the one who decides.	The other parent may have no right to see the kids and cannot be ordered to pay support for them. If you want that to change, please read the flier about the Domestic Relations Division

NEXT: Have the kids been physically abused?

Yes	No
You can ask the judge to have the other parent stay away from the kids or ask to put safety measures in place.	You can still protect the kids. If you are OK with visits, there are ways make visits safer.

FINALLY: Have the kids seen you get abused?

Yes	No
Kids act out in a lot of ways because of this. Feeling safer can help.	Even if the kids were not in the room, they probably know about the abuse and can act out, too.

You Can Ask For Things To Help You and Your Kids Feel Safer

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Does the other parent:

- Hurt the kids?
- Know how to take care of the kids?
- Use the kids to upset or hurt you?
- Make the kids keep track of you and report back?
- Question the kids about you?
- Not let you make decisions about your kids?
- Abuse drugs or alcohol when the kids are there?

Or maybe:

- The other parent is fine with the kids
- The other parent watches them for you
- It is safer for everyone when there are visits
- Your kids really want to have visits

YOU CAN ASK FOR:

- No visits until the OP ends or the other parent does certain things
- Visits with ways to help everyone feel safer
- No decisions about visits until a later court date

There Are Things You Can Ask for That Help Make Visits Safer for Everyone.

Some ways to Help Visits Feel Safer for Everyone

If You...	You Can Ask for ....
Don't want visits right now but may want them later... ⟹	**Visits** to be "reserved". That means the judge won't decide anything about visits for now. You can think about it and ask for something different at the next court date.
Need exact times and days for visits... ⟹	**Visits** only at certain times and days. It can be hard to figure out these details when you don't want to talk to the other parent. There is help for that at court. (See flier on Expeditor Services)
Worry about your own safety when the other parent picks up the kids... ⟹	**Visit** pick-ups and drop-offs that have special ways to keep everyone safe. (See flier on Safe Exchanges & Supervised Visits)
Know that it may be unsafe for the other parent to be alone with your kids? ⟹ **Think** the other parent will quiz the kids about you and your activities?	**Supervised visits** to be done with a person you trust. That person must agree to do it and sign a paper for the court. There are also free services that can do this. (See flier on Safe Exchanges & Supervised Visits)
Worry that the other parent will hide the kids and not bring them back? ⟹	**The other parent** not to take the kids out of Illinois or hiding them in any way
Only want some of your kids to see your abuser and not others? ⟹	**Visits with only some of the kids:** If you only want some kids to visit, make sure you write in your papers why you don't want all of the kids to have visits. Be ready to tell the judge in court.

What About School or Daycare?

If You...	You Can Ask for ....
Worry the other parent will take the kids from school or daycare without you knowing... ⟹	**The other parent** not to remove kids from you or school or daycare
Don't want the other parent to know where the kids go to school or daycare... ⟹	**The other parent** to be unable to get records from the school or daycare
Want the other parent to go to the kids' school or daycare... ⟹	**The other parent** to be able to go to school or daycare if you are not there

Need Money for the Kids?

The forms have a place to ask for "child support." If you want the other parent to give you money for the kids, you can ask for it. Even if you only want certain things paid for, you still have to ask for it.

You Decide What to Ask for But the Judge Has the Final Say

You will fill out papers today that tell the judge why you need an OP. If you want some protections for your kids, make sure you write down why. The judge might ask you more questions in court. Be ready to explain why you and the kids need these safety measures. If the judge wants to give you an OP that does not have the safety measures you need, you can withdraw your petition in the courtroom before the order in entered. That means you will not have an OP.

How Do I Ask for These Things?

Anything you want the judge to order must be asked for today. Some things can't happen until you come back to the next court date, but you still have to ask for them today. You can ask for things to be in place now. Changes can be made later. You can ask for all the things you want but the judge decides what is on your order. The judge might think about what the other parent wants and

- give you EVERYTHING you want OR
- give you NONE of the things you want OR
- put MORE safety in place than you want OR
- give you only SOME of the things you want

Also: OPs have an end date.

The safety measures in your order will end when the order expires. If you want to keep some of these things in place longer, please read the flier about the Domestic Relations Division

Want to Know More?

Look at our Frequently Asked Questions page. It can help you with some of the words that you will see on your paperwork and which boxes to check.

Produced by the
Domestic Violence Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County

Legal Disclaimer: This is an educational and informational guide; it may not be used for any other purpose. This guide confers no legal rights and creates no legal remedies and may not be used in any legal proceeding.

This project was supported by Grant No. 2014-FJ-AX-K003 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women

Child Relief Expediter Program

Circuit Court of Cook County: Domestic Violence Division
Child Relief Expediter Program

Are you interested in working with a neutral third party to develop a safe and effective visitation plan for your children? If so, the Child Relief Expediter may be able to help!

Who is the Child Relief Expediter?
The Expediter is an employee of the court who is trained in domestic violence and conflict resolution.

The Expediter provides a process that may help you and the other parent reach an agreement on a visitation plan and other child-related issues.

What should you know about the expediting process?

Your participation is voluntary. Both parents must agree to participate before the process can begin. You may end the session at any time.

Your Expediter is neutral. S/he will not take sides, will not give legal or other advice, will not make decisions about your case, and will not make recommendations to the judge.

The process is confidential. The information discussed during the session will not be willingly disclosed to anyone outside of the session, including the judge.

There are exceptions to confidentiality. The Expediter will report to the judge about any agreements that are reached. If the expediter is concerned about imminent risk of substantial harm to anyone inside or outside of the session, s/he may need to disclose that to the appropriate persons.

THE EXPEDITER WILL MEET WITH YOU SEPARATELY. You are never required to be in the same room as the other parent during this process.

You will meet with the Expediter the same day as court, and go back before the judge after the session.

If you reach an agreement, it will become a part of your court order once reviewed by the judge.

If you don't reach an agreement, or if you reach a partial agreement, the judge will make the decision on the remaining items.

Who participates in the expediting process?

In addition to parents, attorneys and advocates are welcome, but not required, to participate. If you have other individuals here for support, they may participate in portions of the session, depending on the Expediter's assessment of the situation. Minors do not participate in the expediting process.

How do you get your case referred to the Expediter?

Once both parents are in court, the judge may offer the service of the Expediter. If you have an attorney, your attorney can request this process. ***You may also personally tell the judge that you would like to work with the Expediter.*** However, the judge will make the final determination as to whether the case is appropriate for referral to the Expediter.

For more information, please contact the Child Relief Expediter Program line at 312-325-9096 or visit Suite 2100 in the Domestic Violence Courthouse (555 W. Harrison).

Supervised Visitation Center Liaison

Do you want the kids to see their other parent? If yes, Supervised Visitation may be an option

Supervised Visitation & Safe Exchange Program Services - Questions and Answers for Parents

Why use Professional Supervised Visitation and/or Safe Exchange Services?

Most parents tell us that they want their children to have a relationship with their other parent but they also tell us they want children to be safe from harm and they don't want to put themselves at further risk from their abusive partner.

Supervised visitation & safe exchange programs:

- Provide parents and their children with a comfortable and safe facility for court-ordered visitation.
- Protect the physical and emotional safety of the parent who has been a victim of domestic violence and their children, safeguard against further harm, and maintain parent and child connections.
- Have professional, highly trained, and knowledgeable staff that understand how abuse affects a family and values the background, unique needs and culture of your family.

What is Supervised Visitation?

Supervised visitation is a time-limited visit between a non-custodial parent and their child(ren) at a safe, secure , and supportive facility in the presence of trained staff. Supervised visitation staff work to observe parent-child contact and protect children and the parent who has been abused from physical and emotional harm by enforcing ground rules and ensuring safety measures are followed.

What is Safe Exchange?

The supervised transfer of children from one parent to the other parent where parents are prevented from having any physical or visual contact with each other. Safe exchange programs can offer a safe location for parents to pick-up and drop-off their children when the courts determine that the non-custodial parent may have unsupervised visits.

Scheduling Services

To establish supervised visitation or safe exchange services with a professional provider, each parent will need to complete an orientation appointment. This is an opportunity for both parties to let the visitation center staff know any important information. During the orientation you can expect to: tour the facility, discuss safety concerns, learn about the services, and have time to ask questions. After completing the orientation, all parties will work with the staff to establish a visitation schedule. Please note that it may take up to two weeks to receive an appointment and completing an orientation appointment does not guarantee placement in the program.

If you think you want Supervised Visitation

Go to the second floor, room 2100, to speak with the Supervised Visitation Court Liaison to get more information. If ordered, the liaison will work with you and the other parent to connect you to the visitation center that meets your needs.

Appendix B: Review of OP Coding Tool (RQ 1)

What time period is this case from?
Continuing Case Review with Transcripts

1. **Was this case already reviewed for RQ 1.1 or 1.2?**

Yes ○ No ○

2. Case ID #

3. Coder

○ Yasmeen ○ Christine ○ Gina
○ Jaspreet ○ Susan ○ Other
○ Emily

4. What question does this case qualify to answer FIRST?

1.3 (attorney's argumentation) ○ 1.4 (judge's probing) ○ 1.5 (not needed in 1.3 or 1.4) ○

Basic Descriptors

5. Basic Descriptors for All Cases

6. Coder

○ Jaspreet ○ Christine ○ Gina

Yasmeen ○ Susan ○ Other ○ [ ]

Emily ○

7.

2015/16 *Pre-FCEP* ○ 2017 *Post-FCEP* ○

8. Case ID #

[ ]

9. Which helper group(s) were involved in this case?

	At any point
Pro-Se	☐
Advocate	☐
Law Student	☐
Attorney	☐

10. Sex/Gender of Petitioner

Male/Man ○ Female/Woman ○ Other or could not be determined ○

11. DOB Petitioner (mm/dd/yyyy)

[ ]

12. DOB Child 1 (mm/dd/yyyy OR 01/01/age listed subtracted from OP year if only age is given)

13. DOB Child 2 (mm/dd/yyyy OR 01/01/age listed subtracted from OP year if only age is given)

14. DOB Child 3 (mm/dd/yyyy OR 01/01/age listed subtracted from OP year if only age is given)

15. DOB Child 4 (mm/dd/yyyy OR 01/01/age listed subtracted from OP year if only age is given)

16. DOB Child 5 (mm/dd/yyyy OR 01/01/age listed subtracted from OP year if only age is given)

17. DOB Child 6 (mm/dd/yyyy OR 01/01/age listed subtracted from OP year if only age is given)

18. A. Is zip code of the petitioner's residence listed?

Yes No

19. What is the petitioner's residence zip code?

20. A. Is zip code of the petitioner's address omitted pursuant to statute?

Yes No

21. C. Respondent's relationship with Petitioner (select all that apply)

- Spouse
- Former spouse
- Parent
- Child
- Having or allegedly having a child in common
- Stepchild
- Sharing/formerly sharing a common dwelling
- Having or having had a dating/engagement relationship
- Other person related by blood or marriage
- Sharing a blood relationship through a child
- Personal assistant to person with disabilities or a person who has responsibility for a high-risk adult with disabilities

22. D. Are there other pending cases?

Yes No Unknown/Unspecified

23. D. What court is the pending case in?

- Criminal
- Family-Divorce
- Family-Paternity
- Family-Custody
- Family-Child Support
- Family-Unspecified/other
- Dependency Court
- Other
- Unknown/Unspecified

24. F. No "father and child relationship" has been established with any named child? (is the box checked?)

Yes No

25. F. Are all minor children in common listed here that are named in the petition, or only some?

- All
- Not all, but some.
- Missing information
- Not applicable (No on Q24)

26. G. Is the petitioner named as the primary caretaker of the minor child/ren?

Yes No Left Blank/Unknown Other (co-parent or foster)

RQs 1.1-1.2: Remedies Requested

27. RQs 1.1 and 1.2: Remedies Requested

28. Which "focus remedies" were requested at the original or amended petition?

	Yes in Original	Yes in Amended/Subsequent (if applicable)
E. (p2 xref p4) Minor Child(ren) named Protected Parties	☐	☐
2. Exclusive Possession of Residence	☐	☐
3a. Stay Away from Petitioner/Protected Parties	☐	☐
3b. Stay Away from Other Addresses (include if address listed but not checked)	☐	☐
*3n/a. Stay Away not-specified	☐	☐
5a. Physical Care and Possession (PCP) of Minor Children	☐	☐
5b. Return to/Non-removal of Children from Petitioner	☐	☐
***5n/a. PCP or return not-specified**	☐	☐

	Yes in Original	Yes in Amended/Subsequent (if applicable)
Click to write Statement 18	☐	☐
6. Temporary Legal Custody	☐	☐
7a. Granted visitation	☐	☐
7b. Restricted visitation	☐	☐
7c. Reserved Visitation	☐	☐
7c. Denied Visitation	☐	☐
***7n/a. Visitation no-type**	☐	☐
8. Prohibited removal from IL/Concealment of Children	☐	☐
12. Child Support	☐	☐
17. Respondent further enjoined (summarize all issues; separate multiple with ";"	☐	☐

29. Is a transcript currently available for this case?

Yes I have it	No, but one is available and it is ordered or will be ordered	No, there are no transcripts available for this case
○	○	○

RQ 1.3 Attorney argumentation in petition and hearings

30. RQ 1.3 Attorney argumentation in petition and hearings

Q86. Was an attorney present for the ENTIRE case?

○ Yes
○ No

31. At what point(s) in the case is the attorney/711 assisting/representing the petitioner in this case? (select all that apply) REFER to PASSPORT

☐ EOP (Petition and/or EOP hearing) ☐ Post-EOP

32. What is the respondent doing to the petitioner?

	Acc. to the petition(s)	Acc to the ATTORNEY/petitioner in hearing(s)
Physical abuse	☐	☐
Sexual abuse	☐	☐
Emotional abuse	☐	☐
Economic abuse	☐	☐
Spiritual/moral abuse	☐	☐
Interfering with resources	☐	☐
Intruding into daily affairs	☐	☐
Interfering with work/school	☐	☐
Interfering with immigration status	☐	☐
Interfering with parenting	☐	☐
Isolating social/cultural ties	☐	☐
Stalking, monitoring, surveilling	☐	☐

33. What is the respondent doing to child(ren)?

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to the ATTORNEY/petitioner in hearing(s)
Exposing developing fetus in utero	☐	☐
Permitting child to witness IPV	☐	☐
Prompting child to intervene in IPV	☐	☐
Exposing child to aftermath of IPV	☐	☐
Physical/sexual abuse or neglect	☐	☐
Emotional abuse or neglect	☐	☐
Using child as a tool of abuse	☐	☐

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to the ATTORNEY/petitioner in hearing(s)
Refusing to take responsibility for IPV	☐	☐
Failing to respond to child's needs	☐	☐
Interfering with petitioners rel'p with child	☐	☐
Undermining petitioner's authority	☐	☐

34. What is the impact of abuse on child(ren)?

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to the ATTORNEY/petitioner in hearing(s)
Developmental problems	☐	☐
Behavioral problems	☐	☐
Emotional problems	☐	☐
Cognitive problems	☐	☐
Relationship problems	☐	☐
Health problems	☐	☐
Economic problems	☐	☐

35. What is the impact of abuse on Petitioner's...?

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to the ATTORNEY/petitioner in hearing(s)
Ability to care for child	☐	☐
Ability to protect child	☐	☐
Control over own parenting	☐	☐

36. What is the impact of abuse on daily life in terms of...?

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to the ATTORNEY/petitioner in hearing(s)
Safety	☐	☐
Economic stability	☐	☐
Housing stability	☐	☐

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to the ATTORNEY/petitioner in hearing(s)
Employment stability	☐	☐
Social/cultural connectedness	☐	☐
Personal individuality & autonomy	☐	☐
Health and well being	☐	☐
Immigration status	☐	☐

37. Are the following risk factors brought up?

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to the ATTORNEY/petitioner in hearing(s)
Recent or current separation of parties	☐	☐
Access to guns/weapons	☐	☐
Threats to use weapons	☐	☐
Respondent is unemployed AND not seeking employment	☐	☐
Rape	☐	☐
Abuse during pregnancy	☐	☐
Respondent controlling all or most of petitioner's daily activities	☐	☐
Respondent threatened or tried to commit suicide	☐	☐
Petitioner believes respondent will re-assault or attempt to kill the petitioner	☐	☐
Escalating violence over past year	☐	☐
Excessive jealousy	☐	☐
Abuser's mental state	☐	☐
Avoidance of consequences	☐	☐
Threats to kill	☐	☐
Strangulation	☐	☐
Animal abuse	☐	☐

RQ 1.4 Judge's probing in hearings

38. RQ 1.4 Judge's probing in hearings

39. Was this case selected as part of the sample for RQ 1.4?

Yes ○ No ○

40. What is the respondent doing to the petitioner? (as control for depth of pleadings/verbal arguments)

	Acc. to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing(s)
Physical abuse	☐	☐
Sexual abuse	☐	☐
Emotional abuse	☐	☐
Economic abuse	☐	☐
Spiritual/moral abuse	☐	☐
Interfering with resources	☐	☐
Intruding into daily affairs	☐	☐
Interfering with work/school	☐	☐
Interfering with immigration status	☐	☐
Interfering with parenting	☐	☐
Isolating from social/cultural ties	☐	☐
Stalking, monitoring, surveilling	☐	☐

41. Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the abuse of the petitioner? (in hearing(s))

Yes ○ No ○

42. What is the respondent doing to child(ren)? (as control for depth of pleadings/verbal arguments)

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing(s)
Exposing developing fetus in utero	☐	☐
Permitting child to witness IPV	☐	☐
Prompting child to intervene in IPV	☐	☐
Exposing child to aftermath of IPV	☐	☐
Physical/sexual abuse or neglect	☐	☐
Emotional abuse or neglect	☐	☐
Using child as a tool of abuse	☐	☐
Refusing to take responsibility for IPV	☐	☐
Failing to respond to child's needs	☐	☐
Interfering with petitioner's rel'p with child	☐	☐
Undermining petitioner's authority	☐	☐

43. Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the exposure of child(ren) to abuse? (in hearing(s))

Yes No

44. What is the impact of abuse on child(ren)? (as control for depth of pleadings/verbal arguments)

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing(s)
Developmental problems	☐	☐
Behavioral problems	☐	☐
Emotional problems	☐	☐
Cognitive problems	☐	☐
Relationship problems	☐	☐
Health problems	☐	☐

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing(s)
Economic problems	☐	☐

45. Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the impact of the abuse on child(ren)? (in hearing(s))

Yes ○ No ○

46. What is the impact of abuse on Petitioner's...? (as control for depth of pleadings/verbal arguments)

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing(s)
Ability to care for child	☐	☐
Ability to protect child	☐	☐
Control over own parenting	☐	☐

47. Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the impact of abuse of the petitioner's abilities to care for/protect their child or control their own parenting? (in hearing(s))

Yes ○ No ○

48. What is the impact of abuse on daily life in terms of...? (as control for depth of pleadings/verbal argument)

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing
Safety	☐	☐
Economic stability	☐	☐
Housing stability	☐	☐
Employment stability	☐	☐
Social/cultural connectedness	☐	☐
Personal individuality & autonomy	☐	☐
Health and well being	☐	☐

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing
Immigration status	☐	☐

49. Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty about the impact of abuse of daily life? (in hearing(s))

Yes ○ No ○

50. Are the following risk factors brought up? (as control for depth of pleadings/verbal arguments)

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty (NOT prompted by judge) in hearing
Recent or current separation of the parties	☐	☐
Access to guns/weapons	☐	☐
Threats to use weapons	☐	☐
Respondent is unemployed AND not seeking employment	☐	☐
Rape	☐	☐
Abuse during pregnancy	☐	☐
Respondent controlling all or most of petitioner's daily activities	☐	☐
Respondent threatened or tried to commit suicide	☐	☐
Petitioner believes respondent will re-assault or attempt to kill the petitioner	☐	☐
Escalating violence over past year	☐	☐
Excessive jealousy	☐	☐
Abuser's mental state	☐	☐
Avoidance of consequences	☐	☐
Threats to kill	☐	☐
Strangulation	☐	☐
Animal abuse	☐	☐

51. Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty about the red flags/risk factors? (in hearing(s))

Incl: Recent or current separation of the parties

Access to guns/weapons

Threats to use weapons

Respondent is unemployed AND not seeking employment

Rape

Abuse during pregnancy

Respondent controlling all or most of petitioner's daily activities

Respondent threatened or tried to commit suicide

Petitioner believes respondent will re-assault or attempt to kill the petitioner

Escalating violence over past year

Excessive jealousy

Abuser's mental state

Avoidance of consequences

Threats to kill

Strangulation

Animal abuse

Yes No

RQ 1.5 Remedies granted alignment with best practices and info provided

52. RQ 1.5 Remedies granted alignment with best practices and info provided

53. Was this case selected as part of the sample for RQ 1.5?

Yes No

54. Was the respondent present in any of the hearings?

Yes No

55. Was the end result a DEFAULT POP order because of lack of respondent appearance?

Yes No

56. What is the respondent doing to the petitioner?

	Acc. to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing(s) transcript(s)	Respondent Disputes	Respondent provides any other information (besides disputes)
Physical abuse	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sexual abuse	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emotional abuse	☐	☐	☐	☐
Economic abuse	☐	☐	☐	☐
Spiritual/moral abuse	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interfering with resources	☐	☐	☐	☐
Intruding into daily affairs	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interfering with work/school	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interfering with immigration status	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interfering with parenting	☐	☐	☐	☐
Isolating from social/cultural ties	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stalking, monitoring, surveilling	☐	☐	☐	☐

57. What is the respondent doing to child(ren)?

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing(s) transcript(s)	Respondent Disputes	Respondent provides any other information (besides disputes)
Exposing developing fetus in utero	☐	☐	☐	☐
Permitting child to witness IPV	☐	☐	☐	☐
Prompting child to intervene in IPV	☐	☐	☐	☐
Exposing child to aftermath of IPV	☐	☐	☐	☐
Physical/sexual abuse or neglect	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emotional abuse or neglect	☐	☐	☐	☐
Using child as a tool of abuse	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing(s) transcript(s)	Respondent Disputes	Respondent provides any other information (besides disputes)
Refusing to take responsibility for IPV	☐	☐	☐	☐
Failing to respond to child's needs	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interfering with petitioner's rel'p with child	☐	☐	☐	☐
Undermining petitioner's authority	☐	☐	☐	☐

58. What is the impact of abuse on child(ren)?

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing(s) transcript(s)	Respondent Disputes	Respondent provides any other information (besides disputes)
Developmental problems	☐	☐	☐	☐
Behavioral problems	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emotional problems	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cognitive problems	☐	☐	☐	☐
Relationship problems	☐	☐	☐	☐
Health problems	☐	☐	☐	☐
Economic problems	☐	☐	☐	☐

59. What is the impact of abuse on Petitioner's...?

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing(s) transcript(s)	Respondent Disputes	Respondent provides any other information (besides disputes)
Ability to care for child	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ability to protect child	☐	☐	☐	☐
Control over own parenting	☐	☐	☐	☐

60. What is the impact of abuse on daily life in terms of...?

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing(s) transcript(s)	Respondent Disputes	Respondent provides any other information (besides disputes)
Safety	☐	☐	☐	☐
Economic stability	☐	☐	☐	☐
Housing stability	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employment stability	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social/cultural connectedness	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personal individuality & autonomy	☐	☐	☐	☐
Health and well being	☐	☐	☐	☐
Immigration status	☐	☐	☐	☐

61. Are the following risk factors brought up?

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing(s) transcript(s)	Respondent Disputes	Respondent provides any other information (besides disputes)
Recent or current separation of the parties	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access to guns/weapons	☐	☐	☐	☐
Threats to use weapons	☐	☐	☐	☐
Respondent is unemployed AND not seeking employment	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rape	☐	☐	☐	☐
Abuse during pregnancy	☐	☐	☐	☐
Respondent controlling all or most of petitioner's daily activities	☐	☐	☐	☐
Respondent threatened or tried to commit suicide	☐	☐	☐	☐
Petitioner believes respondent will re-assault or attempt to kill the petitioner	☐	☐	☐	☐
Escalating violence over past year	☐	☐	☐	☐
Excessive jealousy	☐	☐	☐	☐
Abuser's mental state	☐	☐	☐	☐
Avoidance of consequences	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Acc to the petition(s)	Acc to petitioner/atty in hearing(s) transcript(s)	Respondent Disputes	Respondent provides any other information (besides disputes)
Threats to kill	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strangulation	☐	☐	☐	☐
Animal abuse	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q88. During the hearing, did the respondent ask about/dispute any of the remedies offered in the OP?

Yes No

62. Which "focus remedies" were requested IN THE HEARINGS but NOT in the petitions?

	Req in hearings (not in petition)
Minor Child(ren) named Protected Parties	☐
2. Exclusive Possession of Residence	☐
3a. Stay Away from Petitioner/Protected Parties	☐
3b. Stay Away from Other Addresses	☐
5a. Physical Care and Possession (PCP) of Minor Children	☐
5b. Return to/Non-removal of Children from Petitioner	☐
6. Temporary Legal Custody	☐
7a. Granted visitation	☐
7b. Restricted visitation	☐
7c. Reserved Visitation	☐
7c. Denied Visitation	☐
8. Prohibited removal from IL/Concealment of Children	☐
12. Child Support	☐

	Req in hearings (not in petition)
17. Respondent further enjoined (summarize all issues; separate multiple with ";"	☐
	☐

63. Which "focus remedies" were GRANTED?

	Yes in EOP	Yes in Interim/POP
2. Exclusive Possession of Residence	☐	☐
3a. Stay Away from Petitioner/Protected Parties	☐	☐
3b. Stay Away from Other Addresses	☐	☐
5a. Physical Care and Possession (PCP) of Minor Children	☐	☐
5b. Return to/Non-removal of Children from Petitioner	☐	☐
6. Temporary Legal Custody	☐	☐
7a. Granted visitation	☐	☐
7b. Restricted visitation	☐	☐
7c. Denied Visitation	☐	☐
7c. Reserved Visitation Judgment to later	☐	☐
8. Prohibited removal from IL/Concealment of Children	☐	☐
12. Child Support	☐	☐
17. Respondent further enjoined (summarize all issues; separate multiple with ";"	☐	☐

64. What type of restrictions on supervision of visitation were granted?

☐ No restrictions on supervision
☐ Supervised at Center

☐ Supervised by family member

☐ Other supervision restriction

65. Were any specifications/restrictions made for exchange (such as exchange intermediary or location)?

Yes No

66. What type of exchange was specified?

☐ Location: Exchange center

☐ Location: Exchange other public place

☐ Location: Other

☐ Intermediary: Family Member

☐ Intermediary: Other

Block 6

67. How many times did the petitioner come to the court (can include EOP extensions, continuances, amendments, motion, return of service, etc.)? (Reference passport system for this)

Powered by Qualtrics

Appendix C: CRE Coding Tool

Child Relief Expediter Report

Case Number: _____ Date: _____

Referring Judge: _____ Courtroom: _____

Case Type (circle one): Civil/Criminal Wait time before session: _____

Timing of Referral (circle one): EOP Temporary/ POP Agreed Order/ POP Hearing/ Modification
If Modification (circle one): Court-driven/ Client-driven

Judicial Instructions (circle one): Yes/No If yes, list instructions: _____

Re-referral (circle one): Yes/No If yes, previous date: _____
Scheduled previously due to wait time (circle one): Yes/No

Total number of sessions in this referral: _____ Length of each session: _____
If multiple sessions, list reason: _____

Session Status (check one):

- ☐ Session occurred
- ☐ Session did not occur (specify reason below):
  - ☐ Caseload/wait time
  - ☐ Other (please specify): _____
- ☐ Session terminated (specify reason below):
  - ☐ Case not appropriate for expediting at this time
    - Reason not appropriate: _____
  - ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Additional Session Participants (check all that apply):

- ☐ Attorney for Petitioner
- ☐ Attorney for Respondent
- ☐ Advocate
- ☐ Petitioner's Family
- ☐ Respondent's Family
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Topics Discussed/Outcomes (check all that apply):	Full Agreement	Partial Agreement	No Agreement	N/A
☐ Visitation	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Supervised Visitation (by family)	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Supervised Visitation (by center)	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Neutral Exchange	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Supervised Exchange (by family)	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Safe Exchange (by center)	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Communication	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Financial Matters	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Physical Care/Custody	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Restrictions During Visits	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Belongings/Documents	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐ Other (please specify): _____	☐	☐	☐	☐

Reassessment scheduled (circle one): Yes/No If reassessment, list status date: _____
Next hearing date: _____

Interpreter requested (circle one): Yes/No Interpreter provided (circle one): Yes/No
Language conducted: _____ Program staff interpreted session (circle one): Yes/No

Referrals and/or educational materials provided to clients (circle one): Yes/No

CONFIDENTIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE
(Do Not Share This Information with the Other Parent)

Circuit Court of Cook County – Domestic Violence Division
555 West Harrison, Chicago, IL 60607
Telephone (312) 325-9097 FAX (312) 325-9017

Participant Role: Petitioner/Respondent *Case Number:* _____
Custodial Parent/Non-Custodial Parent
Grandparent/Legal Guardian

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Names/DOB of child(ren): _____

_____Number of Children: _____

Date Parents' Relationship Began___/___/___ Date Parents' Relationship Ended___/___/___

Parents' current relationship status (circle one): Married Civil Union Divorced Never Married

Have you ever lived with the other parent? _____ Do you currently live with the other parent? _____

Distance between parent's homes (time): _____

Other people who live with you (Names, Relationships, Ages): _____

_____

Other marriages/re-marriages (Spouses' Names/Dates): _____

Your children from other relationships (Names, Ages, Who They Live With): _____

_____

Are you currently employed? _____ Do you work full-time or part-time? _____

What is your work schedule (days and hours)? _____

What is your primary language? _____ Do you need an interpreter (circle one)? Yes/No

Are you represented by an attorney (circle one)? Yes/No Do you have an advocate (circle one)? Yes/No

What is a contact number where we can reach you? ( ) _____

For statistical purposes, we ask that you please provide the following additional information:

Gender (circle one): Female Male Other

Education completed: _____ Zip code: _____

Race/ethnicity (circle one): American Indian or Alaska Native Asian
Black or African American Hispanic or Latino
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander White
Unknown

© Circuit Court of Cook County, Domestic Violence Division. Not for further distribution without permission.

The project was supported under Grant No. 2014-FJ-AX-K003 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women

Appendix D: Help Desk Interview Guide

Family Court Enhancement Project: Research & Evaluation

Help Desk Staff Interview Guide

AIM

- To understand the function and process of the Help Desk at the DV court led by the help desk staff and clerks.
- To share observations on the impact of FCEP on the Help Desk and support for litigants at the court over the last few years.
- To understand the relationship between the Help Desk and the CRE, judges, attorneys, and advocates.

Introduction

Hello, thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview about your time as an employee at the Cook County Domestic Violence Court. We really value the work you do at the courts and value the time your taking today to share your experience with us. The purpose of this interview is to better understand the impact of the Family Court Enhancement Project, or FCEP, on the court and how the Help Desk supports litigants with shared children through the court system.

I am a researcher from Loyola University Chicago's Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) and I will be completing the interview with you. CURL has partnered with the Circuit Court of Cook County Domestic Violence Division to complete an evaluation of FCEP's impact on the court and this interview is a component of our evaluation.

To begin, we would like to provide you with some background information on FCEP and the purpose of this interview. FCEP was implemented at the DV Court in 2016 with the intent of improving outcomes for Order of Protection (OP) cases where the litigants had children in common. To accomplish this, FCEP implemented trainings for judges, attorneys, and advocates; added the role of Child Relief Expediter to the court; and provided additional support staff and materials at the Help Desk for petitioners.

For the purpose of this interview, I will be asking questions about your time at the court working at the Help Desk, how FCEP may have impacted the Help Desk support with petitioners, and the relationships between the help desk and different court personnel, like the CRE, judges, attorneys, and advocates.

As a reminder, we will keep your identity anonymous and as confidential as possible (create unique ID). We want to be transparent about how this information will be used once we start

writing our reports. We can decide how you'll want this information used and to make sure anything we report on does not compromise your position in any way. This interview is not an evaluation of you as an individual employee of the court but for you to inform us of how the help desk and staff like yourself have observed changes in the court.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. You are free to participate or refuse to as you wish. Even if you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or to withdraw from participation at any time without consequences.

Do you have any questions for me before I start the recording and the interview questions?

Do you consent to participating in this interview? Do you consent to being audio recorded during this interview?

START RECORDING: "This is an FCEP interview with an employee of the DV court held on [DATE]. The participant has consented to this interview and has consented to be audio recorded."

Background

1. To start us off, can you share with me what your exact role is at the DV court?
    a. When did you begin working at the DV court?
    b. How many other Help Desk staff employees work with you? Do they have similar or different roles as you?

Help Desk Process

2. Could you share with me how the Help Desk functions within the court system and what it exactly does?
    a. Specifically, how do you all support petitioners when they come into the court? What kind of information do you share with them? What processes do you walk them through?
        i. Does the Help Desk interact with respondents at all? If so, what does that look like?
        ii. Do you know what kind of information is provided to the respondent on the other side?
3. How does triage process work to determine whether petitioners are connected with advocates or attorneys or remain as pro se?
    a. How does the triage process work to determine whether petitioners are connected with advocates or attorneys or remain as pro se?
        i. Is there a triage protocol set in place that the Help Desk follows to make these determinations?
        ii. What kind of requirements or case characteristics do you look for when deciding how to triage a petitioner?
4. How is the database utilized to track how petitioners are connected with different helper groups?

   a. Is this database still being used currently? Has is changed over the last few years? The kind of information that is collected on the database?
5. What is the role of the Help Desk in supporting petitioners with children in common?
   a. To what extent do you and other Help Desk staff support petitioners with child-related relief?
   b. Do you all support and answer questions about requesting child-related relief?
6. Is there any use of technology that the petitioners can use with the Help Desk?
   a. Are petitioners filing their petitions manually on paper or are they using computers in the Help Desk office?
7. How has the process of working with litigants at the Help Desk changed over the years?
   a. Have there been differences before or after FCEP? Or before and after the pandemic?

FCEP and Informational Materials

8. Do you remember being informed about the Family Court Enhancement Project?
   a. What were you told about FCEP in 2016/2017? Did your supervisor explain FCEP to you all?
   b. Do you remember participating in an FCEP training or meetings about FCEP?
      i. If so, what do you remember and what was the most impactful thing from that training/meeting?
      ii. How did FCEP influence how you all interacted with petitioners? Did your behavior or practices change at all?
9. *FCEP was a program that was implemented in 2016/2017 and included various initiatives, but most relevant to you would be the introduction of the Help Desk materials and new Spanish speaking staff.*
   a. There was a series of Help Desk materials that were to be shared with petitioners:
      i. Victim Rights Information Sheet
      ii. FAQ Information Sheet
      iii. Safety Handout for Petitioners
      iv. CRE Handout
   b. Do you remember sharing any of these materials with petitioners?
      i. What was/is the process of sharing those materials with petitioners?
   c. Do you all still share any of these materials with petitioners still?
      i. Are there other materials shared? What is the impact of the new petition form like for petitioners?
10. *CURL reviewed hundreds of petitions and how child-related relief was requested by petitioners pre- and post-FCEP and we compared the different helper groups (pro se, advocates, attorneys). We found that pro se petitioners increasingly asked for more child-related relief in their petitions and we think this is due to the informational materials they were given.*

   a. Do you think there was a difference in having information shared with the petitioners?
   b. How do you think the culture of the Help Desk may have changed from FCEP?
   c. Our data revealed that pro se petitioners *increasingly asked for exclusive possession of residence, stay away from petitioner, respondent further enjoined, and there was a decrease for child support*
      i. Would you happen to know why these specific remedies would have changed this drastically in 2017? Was Help Desk staff encouraging petitioners to request these remedies more frequently?
   d. Are there other things that were happening with the Help Desk that you think would have explained that drastic change for petitioners?
11. What was the impact of the new Spanish-speaking staff on the help desk?
   a. How do you think that impacted Spanish-speaking petitioners?

Help Desk and Court Personnel

12. What is the relationship between the Help Desk and the Child Relief Expediter?
   a. Is there any reason for Help Desk staff to interact with the CRE?
   b. Do Help Desk staff ever share information about the CRE to petitioners?
   c. Do you want to share any observations you've had about the CRE and her interaction with petitioners?
13. What other court personnel does the Help Desk directly interact with?
   a. Attorneys, Advocates, Law Students, States Attorney, Sheriff, Security, County Clerks, Judges
   b. What do those relationships look like and how do they impact the work of the Help Desk in assisting petitioners?

COVID and Beyond

14. How has the Help Desk changed since the pandemic onwards in comparison to pre-2020?
15. How has the set-up of the Help Desk changed since the pandemic?
16. Do you think there is anything since the start of FCEP that has continued until recently with the Help Desk?
17. Any last comments you want to share about the functioning of the Help Desk?

Appendix E: Litigant Interview Materials

Litigant Interview Recruitment Flyer

Are you a parent who met with the Expediter at the Cook County Domestic Violence Court?

We're looking for parents who have worked with the Expediter at the DV Courthouse to examine parents' experiences creating visitation and custody arrangements in order of protection cases.

Are you eligible?

- 18 years or older
- Was or are involved in order of protection proceedings at the DV Courthouse with co-parent of a minor child
- Met with the DV Courthouse Expediter at least once
- Reached an agreement on child-related remedies during the meeting with the Expediter

You will be asked to participate in a recorded interview for 45-60 minutes. All interviews will be individual and confidential. You may choose to participate in the interview without the other parent taking part. Interviews will be separate from the other parent, if both choose to participate.

Location: All interviews will take place in quiet private spaces in Chicago, IL that the interviewer will arrange with you.

You will receive $50.00 cash as compensation that will be provided at the time of the interview.

To participate, please complete the form provided to you by the Expediter.

If you're unsure of the requirements or have any questions, please contact Loyola University Chicago researchers Dr. Christine George by email at cgeorg@luc.edu or phone 773-508-8533 or Yasmeen Khayr at ykhayr@luc.edu or (773) 508-8547.

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

Litigant Interview Recruitment FAQ

FAQs: Litigant Recruitment & Interview

Why are they doing this research?

The purpose of this research project is to find ways to improve the court system for parents and their children. Researchers will interview both litigants and court personal, including judges and lawyers, in order to learn what is working well and what is not working with the court. We hope this will improve the court system for the future.

Who are the researchers?

They are **external** researchers from Loyola University Chicago.

Who can participate in this research study?

You are eligible to participate in this research if you:

- Are 18 years or older
- Are involved in an Order of Protection case at the DV Court with your co-parent of a minor child
- Have met with the Child Relief Expediter at least once
- Reached an agreement on child-related remedies during the meeting with the Expediter

What will I be asked in the interview?

You will be asked about your overall experience with the DV court, your experience with the Expediter, and the parenting arrangements you have made. Researchers are interested in how your parenting arrangements are working for you and your children.

Does my partner/spouse need to sign up too?

No. And he/she will not be aware, unless you tell him/her that you are being interviewed.

Will my partner/spouse know that I did an interview?

No, the interview is completely **confidential**. The other parent will not know if you participated or not. Your name and personal information will be kept private.

Are these interviews confidential?

Yes, the interviews are confidential. Interviews will be recorded but recordings will have no personal information attached. The recordings will then be transcribed by a researcher without using your real name. When the researchers are done transcribing the recording, the recording will be deleted. Also, all interviews will take place in a private location. Researchers will not notify anyone of your participation.

Will the court know if I do an interview?

No, your participation is confidential and your individual responses will not be shared with the court – only the larger findings from the study will be shared.

How will my participation in this research affect my case at the court?

Your participation in this research will not affect your case or your current or future involvement at the court. You will not be asked to give information or disclose any activity related to any other current or past court cases.

So what do I do if I'm interested?

All you have to do is complete the contact form, fold it and put it in this box, and a researcher will collect the forms every week. They will contact you within a couple of weeks to arrange a time and place for the interview.

If I sign this form, will I be committed to an interview?

No, you are not committing to an interview. Signing this form only grants permission for a researcher to contact you. When the researcher contacts you, you can discuss any questions or concerns you have and decide whether or not you want to participate. You may choose not to participate at any time.

Is this form confidential?

Yes, this form is confidential. The researcher are the only ones who will have access to your responses. The Expediter and court will not have access to your form, and your responses will not affect your case or your involvement with the court in any way.

Can I withdraw at any time during the interview?

Yes, you can withdraw at any time before or during the interview. However, you will not be compensated for a partially completed interview.

When will I get the $50?

You will receive compensation at the time of the interview. You will be compensated at the end once you've completed the interview.

Where will the interview be?

A quiet private space in the city of Chicago. You and the researchers will arrange the meeting place when the researchers contact you. Both you and the researcher can suggest possible locations that are convenient for you.

How will this information be used?

This information will be used to examine how the DV court creates parenting arrangements, an overall sense of safety and fairness, and the role of the Expediter in your experience. Information will be used to inform future court practices and study findings.

Litigant Interview Recruitment Contact Form

Litigant Contact Form

Researchers from Loyola University Chicago are doing a study and would like to interview parents who have worked with the Child Relief Expediter at the Domestic Violence Court. The private, confidential interview will cover your experience with the Expediter and your parenting plans as part of your order of protection. Interviews will take about 45-60 minutes. All interviews will be individual, and your participation is not dependent on the participation of the other parent. Your participation will not affect your court case in any way. For taking part you will get $50 in cash at the time of the interview. After completing this form, a researcher will contact you to answer any questions and arrange a time and place for the interview. By completing this form, you are not committing to the interview, but you are allowing the researchers to contact you. This form and all of your responses are confidential and will only be accessed by the researchers.

Please provide your contact information below:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Cell phone: (_____)_____

Home phone: (_____)_____

Which phone number(s) or email do you prefer researchers to contact:

_____

When would be a good time to contact you?

_____

_____

Were you the respondent or petitioner in this case?

- ❑ **Petitioner** (the person who filed the Order)
- ❑ **Respondent** (the person who the Order is against)

_____ _____

Signature Date

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact CURL researchers Dr. Christine George at cgeorg@luc.edu or (773)508-8533 or Yasmeen Khayr at ykhayr@luc.edu or (773)508-8547.

When you complete the form, please drop it in the secure box. Thank you for filling out the form, you will be contacted by a researcher soon.

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

Litigant Interview Recruitment Contact Form Survey

English

Introduction

FCEP Litigant Contact Form

Researchers from Loyola University Chicago are doing a study and would like to interview parents who have worked with the Child Relief Expediter at the Domestic Violence Court. The private, confidential interview will cover your experience with the Expediter and your parenting plans as part of your order of protection. Interviews will take about 45-60 minutes. All interviews will be individual, and your participation is not dependent on the participation of the other parent. Your participation will not affect your court case in any way. The interviews will also be held virtually over Zoom (video, audio-only, or call-in telephone). After the interview, you will receive $75 for your participation. For more information on the study and the interviews, please refer to the Recruitment Flyer and FAQ below. After completing this form, a researcher will contact you to answer any questions you may have and, if you are interested, arrange a date and time for the interview.

Please refer to our recruitment flyer below for more information on the interviews.

FCEP Interview Flyer

FCEP Folleto de las Entrevistas

If you still have questions about the research and participating in the interviews, please look through the FAQ below for more information.

FAQs: Litigant Interview

FAQs: Entrevistas de Litigantes

Please continue on to the next page if you would like to fill out a contact form.

If you are interested in participating or would like to talk to a researcher directly to learn more about the project, please fill out the following form. By completing this form, you are not committing to the interview, but you are allowing the researchers to contact you. This form and all of your responses are confidential and will only be accessed by the researchers.

Full Name

Email Address (please include an email only accessible to you)

Cell Phone

Home Phone

Which phone number or email do you prefer the researchers to contact you through?

When would be a good time to contact you?

Are you the petitioner or respondent in this case?

- ○ Petitioner (the person who filed the Order of Protection)
- ○ Respondent (the person who the Order of Protection is against)

By submitting this form, you consent to being contacted by a CURL researcher. You are not committing to participating in an interview. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact CURL researchers Yasmeen Khayr at ykhayr@luc.edu or (773) 234-3725 or Dr.Christine George at cgeorg@luc.edu or (773) 508-8533.

Powered by Qualtrics

Protocol for Conducting Virtual Interviews

FCEP Parent Litigant Interviews

The following document aims to establish a protocol for conducting interviews with parent litigants virtually and remotely that ensures the safety, privacy, and confidentiality of our participants. This protocol will include a pre-interview screening, protocol for during the interview, and information on the Zoom videoconferencing platform.

RECRUITMENT CONTACT WITH PARTICIPANTS

Participants who have confirmed their participation will be called by phone to schedule the time and date for their interview. During this call, the researcher and participant will schedule a time for the full interview as well as determine a time for a screening meeting prior to the scheduled interview.

This screening meeting will screen participants to determine safety, whether the participant will prefer to have the interview over Zoom video or phone, and other information regarding the interview process.

Participants will be notified of this information during this initial call and will be asked to schedule a time for this screening phone meeting.

Script

Hello, this is [NAME] from the Center for Urban Research and Learning at Loyola University Chicago regarding the domestic calling about the interviews regarding orders of protection and the domestic violence court. We spoke previously and you agreed that you were interested in participating in these interviews.

- Is this a safe time to talk or would you prefer we discuss this another time or over email?
  - *If yes,* is this phone number still a safe number to contact you with in the future or is there another number we should call you at?
  - *If no,* would you like to reschedule another phone call or would you prefer to discuss over email?
    - *If yes to email,* what is a safe email address only accessible by you that we can contact you at?
- Moving forward, these interviews will be conducted virtually over Zoom video or telephone. Do you confirm that you still want to participate in an interview?
  - *If yes:* Let us schedule a date/time for when we would have this interview.
    - Determine best time for both participant and interviewer based on schedules.
  - *If no:* Thank you and I appreciate you for letting me know you would not like to participate.
- Before having our interview, I would like to set up a pre-meeting phone call to determine how we want to conduct the interview remotely. In this meeting we would discuss video or telephone options and go through procedures to ensure your safety and privacy are maintained during these interviews.
  - When would be a good time to have this pre-meeting phone call?
    - Determine best time for both participant and interviewer based on schedules.

Now that we have scheduled both the interview and pre-meeting, do you have any other questions? If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at [EMAIL] and [PHONE NUMBER].

SCREENING MEETING

Prior to the scheduled interview, the researcher and participants will have a screening meeting to determine safety, whether the participant will prefer to have the interview over Zoom video or phone, and other information regarding the interview process.

Safety Screening

The following questions will be asked to determine if the participant can speak freely and safely:

- Is this still a good time to speak? Is it safe for you to talk right now?
    - *If no,* is there a better time when you can talk freely and safely?
- Is talking over the phone safe, or would you prefer to communicate another way?
    - Is this phone number still the best number to contact you at?
    - Regarding voicemail, do you have any safety concerns if we left you a voicemail about the interview?
- Are you in a private space where you can have an open/honest conversation for the next 15-20 minutes?
    - *If no,* is there a better time when you could speak in a private space?
    - If *yes,* will you be able to use this private space during the hour-long scheduled interview?
        - *If no,* is there another private space that you could use for the interview?
- Is there anyone else in the room with you?
    - *If yes,* would you be able to move to a private room?
    - Is there anyone else living with you at the moment?
        - *If yes,* are you able to maintain your privacy despite someone else in the house with you?
            - *If no,* is there another option or location where you could speak privately?
- Are your children living with you currently?
    - *If yes,* are you able to have this conversation privately without them overhearing?
    - *If yes,* do you have any concerns regarding your children and participating in this private interview?
        - *If yes, the researcher will address these concerns with the participant or reschedule the meeting.*
- Do you have any other concerns regarding your safety or privacy that may arise during our interview?
    - *If yes, the researcher will address these concerns with the participant or reschedule the meeting.*
    - Is there a word or phrase you could say to me during our conversation to let me know if you no longer feel safe?

If the participant indicates fear or risks associated with conducting this interview remotely, and those risks cannot be ameliorated, then the remote interview will not be conducted.

Technological Capacity

The following will be used to determine whether a participant would prefer to have the scheduled interview conducted over Zoom Video, Zoom Audio Only, or Zoom Call-In Telephone as well as their technological capacities.

- We are offering to have these interviews either through a Zoom Video call or Zoom Call-In phone call, do you have a preference for how you would like to have the interview?
    - *NOTE: Zoom Audio Only and Phone options may limit the researcher's ability to gauge the safety and privacy of the participant during an interview due to not seeing the participant.*

If Zoom Call-In Telephone:

- Is the phone you plan to use during the interview a cell phone or a landline?
- Do you have concerns about the length of time you can use your phone (limited minutes or limited phone carrier plan)?

The researcher will explain how the Zoom Call-In Telephone works and answer any questions prior to the scheduled interview:

- Participants will be given the option to receive the Zoom Call-In Telephone number either over the phone or to receive an email with the Zoom Invitation and Telephone number.
    - The researcher will explain how the participant will call-in the Zoom call via the telephone number provided.

If Zoom Video:

- Do you have a cell phone, tablet, iPad, computer, or laptop you could use to connect to the internet?
- Do you have a reliable Wi-Fi internet connection or an internet data plan that would support your connection time?
- Do you have concerns about the length of time you can use your internet or phone data (limited Wi-Fi or limited phone data plan)?
- Have you ever used a video calling application, like Zoom, before?
- How comfortable are you in using a video calling application for this interview?
- Do you have an email address that I could send a Zoom link to?
    - *If yes,* is this email address only accessible by you and no one else?
    - *If no*, would you be willing to set up an email address or would you prefer to conduct the meeting over the phone instead?
- Would you be interested in a live Zoom tutorial with me prior to our scheduled interview?
    - *If yes, the researcher and participant will schedule a time for a Zoom tutorial*

The researcher will explain how the Zoom platform works and answer any questions about the platform prior to the scheduled interview:

- The following information regarding zoom will be further explained to participants:
    - How to access the meeting and password

    - How to download Zoom
    - Information regarding the waiting room, chat function, and other functionality
    - Changing zoom background and using headphones if there are safety concerns
- Participants will be reminded to test the audio and video on their device in advance to the scheduled interview.
- Participants will also be given the option of a live Zoom tutorial prior to the scheduled interview and will also be provided an additional Guide to Zoom document which outlines how to access and utilize Zoom.

Compensation

The researcher will discuss with the participant how they would prefer to be compensated:

- Participants will be compensated $75 for their participation in this interview
- Three options will be offered for how participants may receive the stipend:
    - Mail-in check (requires W-9 information and email address)
    - Electronic Visa gift card (requires email address)
    - Mail-in Visa gift card (requires mail-in address)

At the end of the screening session, the researcher will create a unique Zoom meeting and send the invitation (including link, call-in number, password) and a Guide to Zoom to the participant via email. An additional reminder email will be sent to the participant the day before the scheduled interview.

SCHEDULED INTERVIEW

Participants will enter the remote/virtual interview either via Zoom Video Call, Zoom Audio Only, or Zoom Call-In Telephone. If calling through Zoom Video Call/Audio Only, participants will be placed in a private waiting room until the researcher permits them access to the meeting. All participants will be asked various questions to ensure safety, confidentiality, and consent before beginning the formal interview.

Zoom Procedures

If Zoom Call-In Telephone:

- Participants will be provided a Zoom Call-In number via phone or email prior to the scheduled interview
- On the day of the interview, participants will call the Zoom Call-In number from their phone and will enter the Zoom meeting
    - The researcher will notify participants that Zoom will mask the phone numbers of the participant to further ensure confidentiality of their contact information.
- The researcher will then ask questions (stated below) regarding safety, confidentiality, and consent prior to beginning the formal interview.

If Zoom Video or Audio Only:

- Participants will receive a Zoom email invitation prior to the scheduled interview which includes the unique meeting ID, link, and password necessary to access the meeting.
    - A Guide to Zoom and an optional Zoom tutorial will be provided to all participants prior to the interview as well.
- When participants join the zoom meeting, they will be immediately placed in a private waiting room until the researcher grants them access into the meeting.
    - Once the participant enters the meeting, the researcher will ensure that the participant's name does not appear in the video recording.
- The researcher will also take some time to discuss the potential for technical issues that could occur, including challenges with connection delays, disconnection, and charged devices.
    - The researcher will also review what the participants should do in case the call disconnects or if they lose service/connection.
    - Participants will also be reminded to ensure that their device is fully charged and/or a charging cable is available during the interview.
- The researcher will then ask questions (stated below) regarding safety, confidentiality, and consent prior to beginning the formal interview.

Safety and Privacy

Once participants have entered the video or telephone call, the researcher will ask various questions around safety and privacy.

- Is this still a good time to speak? Is it safe for you to talk right now?
    - *If no*, is there a better time when you can talk freely and safely?
- Are you in a private space where you can have an open/honest conversation for the next 45-60 minutes?

    - *If no,* is there better time when you could speak in a private space?
    - If someone enters the space, the interview conversation will pause until the individual is no longer in the same room as the participant.
    - Do you have any concerns regarding your children and participating in this private interview?
        - *If yes, the researcher will address these concerns with the participant or reschedule the meeting if necessary.*
- Do you have any other concerns regarding your safety or privacy that may arise during our interview?
    - Is there a word or phrase you could say to me during our conversation to let me know if you no longer feel safe?
    - If the participant no longer feels safe enough to complete the interview, the interview will end and potentially rescheduled.
        - *If yes, the researcher will address these concerns with the participant or reschedule the meeting if necessary.*

Confidentiality, Consent, and Compensation

A statement of informed consent would have been sent to participants via email prior to the scheduled interview.

- The researcher will verbally read through informed consent statement and offer participants an opportunity to ask any questions or state concerns before agreeing to participate.
    - Detailed interview procedures and processes to ensure the confidentiality of the information they share will be discussed with participants.
    - The researcher will share the compensation preference the participant made previously and ensure that this method of payment is still suitable to the participant.
    - The researcher will also ask for consent regarding recording of the interview and the procedures to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of their identity and the information they share during the interview.
        - Researcher will notify participants that the Zoom call is encrypted and cannot be digitally tracked.

ZOOM PLATFORM INFORMATION

Downloading Zoom

- Interview participants will be provided with a unique Zoom meeting ID and password that will be sent via email
- Participants will have a few options for joining the Zoom meeting:
    - Downloading Zoom
        - Zoom will download automatically when first joining a Zoom meeting
        - It is also available for manual download here: https://zoom.us/download#client_4meeting
    - Email Invite
        - Participants can click directly on the Zoom link that was sent through an email invite
        - They will be prompted to download or open the Zoom app
    - Manually Entering Meeting ID
        - For participants who already have Zoom downloaded, they can click on "Join Meeting" and manually enter the Meeting ID to join the meeting
    - Call-In Number
        - Participants who only want to use the phone option can access the call-in number from the Zoom email invitation
        - Participants will have to call the number from their personal phone, enter the meeting ID and pound key (#) into the keypad to access the meeting

Zoom Security Features

- The LUC Zoom account provides a secure and encrypted remote connection, and the meeting can be locked once the interview begins.
- Each meeting has a unique ID number and a password will be required to enter the meeting.
- Participants will be placed in a waiting room when they enter the call in which the researcher can control when and how the participant can join the larger meeting
    - The researcher will disable the "join before host" function prior to the meeting
- Zoom can mask the call-in number of participants who use the phone-only option in order to maintain their privacy and confidentiality
    - The researcher will mask the personal phone number of the participant
- Chat features will be allowed with the host only.
- Only the researcher will have access and ability to screen-share.
- Participants will be encouraged to use headphones and to change their Zoom background.
- For interviewing and data collection purposes, the meeting will be audio recorded through Zoom and transcribed by a CURL research assistant.
    - Meetings will be audio recorded and transcribed via the Zoom platform and saved to the researcher's password-protected laptop to ensure privacy and confidentiality of the participant and interview contents.

Possible Technical Issues & Concerns

- If a participant is using their phone and things are slow, check if they're using Wi-Fi or data - one can be faster than the other.
    - Note: Participants may have data limitations, so make sure in screening that they are able to use either Wi-Fi or data
        - Offer additional compensation to participants that can be used exclusively for data usage
- Running Zoom can drain a phone battery. If using a cell phone, parties will likely need to be able to charge their phone during the call or keep it plugged in during the call.
- Remind participants at the beginning of the interview to be aware if either the interviewer or interviewee are lagging to problem solve as delays occur:
    - Try switching to data usage
    - Exit and enter the meeting again
    - Switch to telephone instead if the delays interfere with the interview

For Further Assistance with Zoom

- Zoom offers a one-hour training tutorial and overview of how to utilize their platform here.
- Zoom also offers a Live Tutorial Training, you can register here.

Participant Guide to Zoom

Participant Guide to Using Zoom

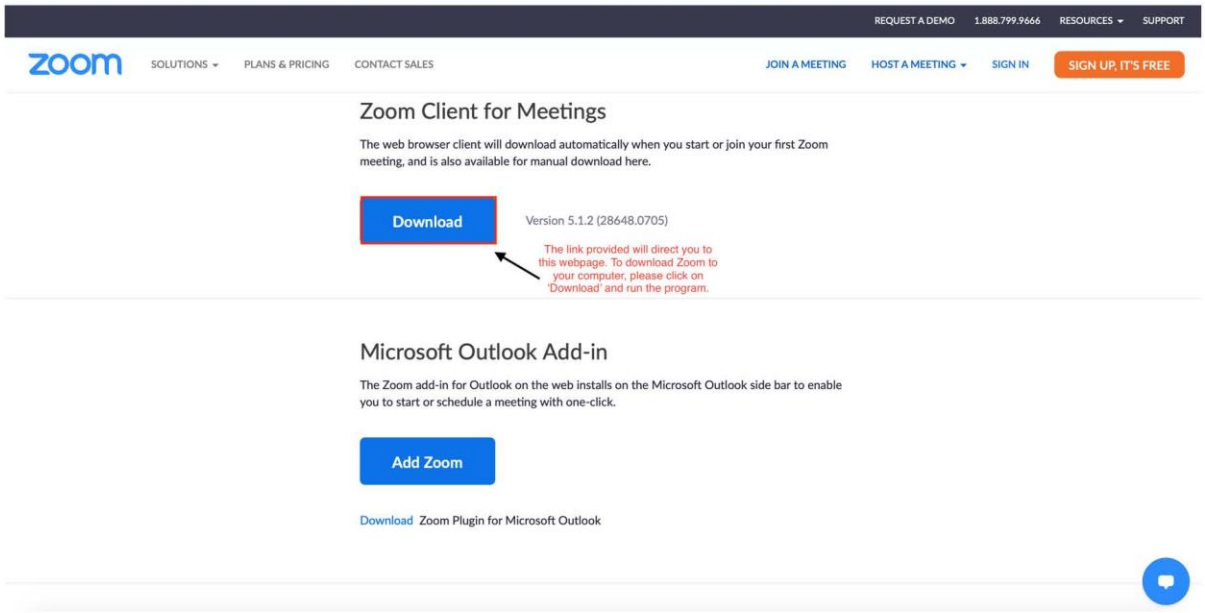
FCEP Parent Litigant Interviews

You have agreed to participate in virtual interviews focused on your court experience and parenting time with your children. The interviews will be held through Zoom, a virtual platform for video and telephone conferencing. This guide will help you navigate how to download and use Zoom in preparation for the upcoming interview. We appreciate you taking the time to familiarize yourself with Zoom and for participating in an interview with us!

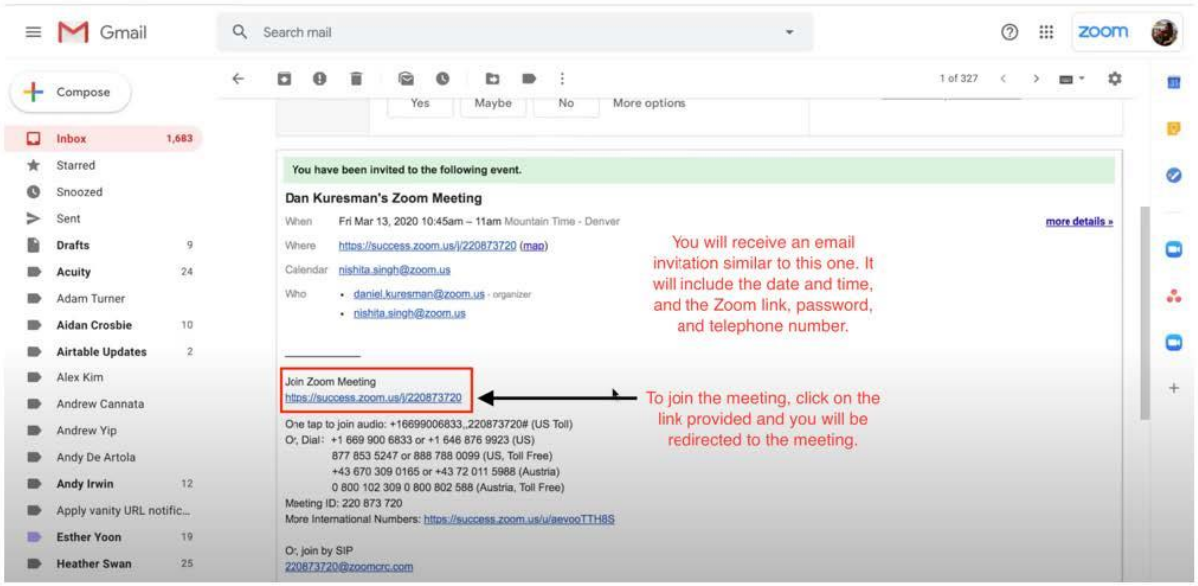
Video or Audio Only Meeting

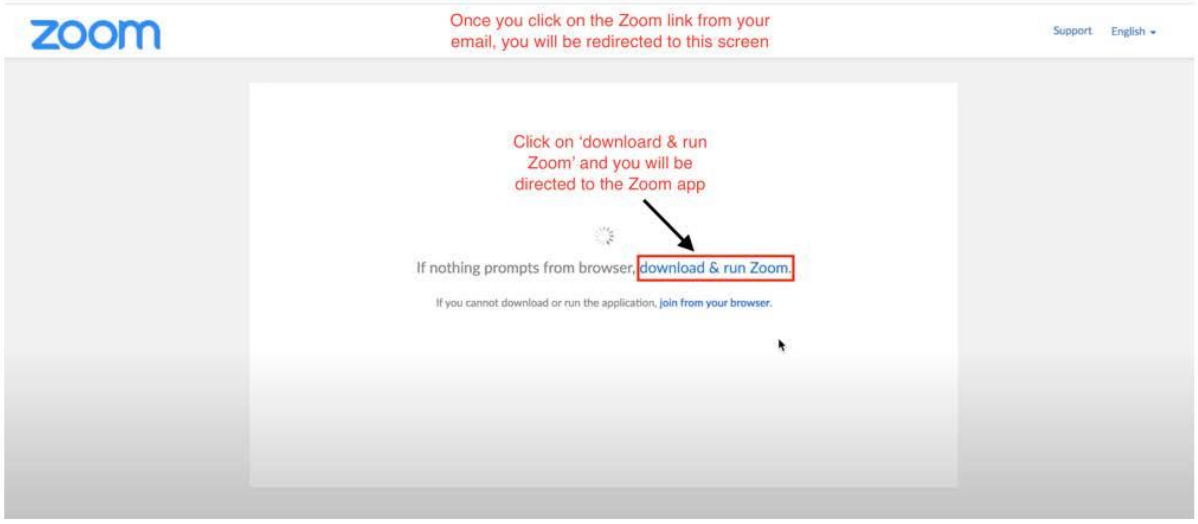
Downloading Zoom and Joining a Zoom Meeting

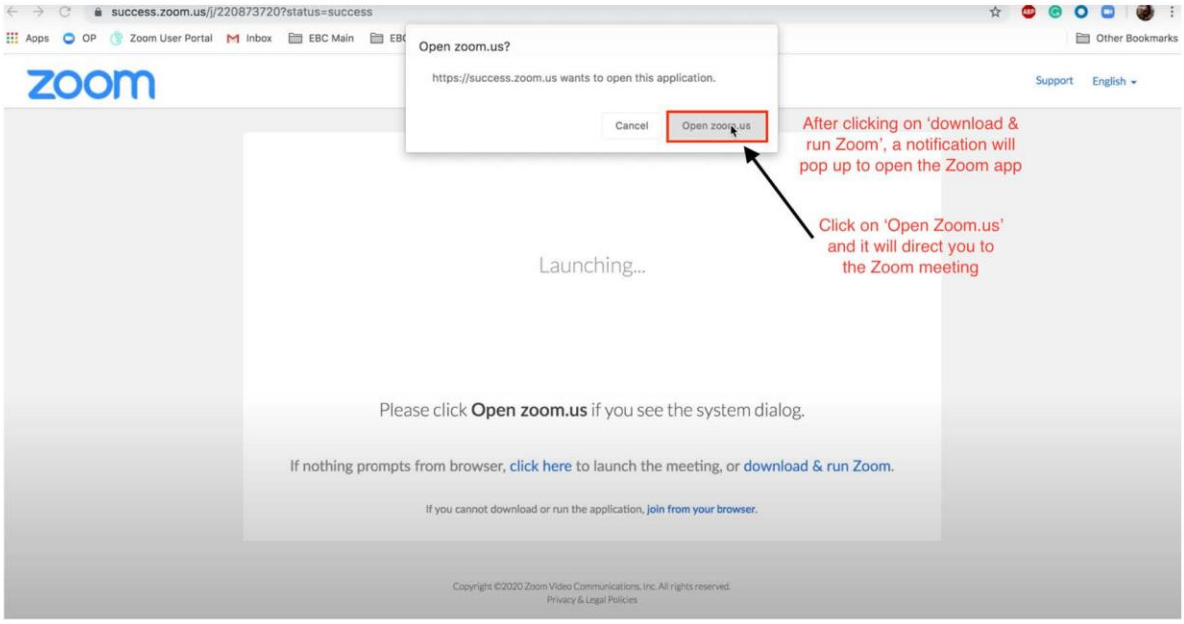
- Once you've scheduled an interview time with the researcher, you will be provided with a **unique Zoom meeting ID and password** that will be sent to your email
- You will have a few options for joining the Zoom meeting:
    - Downloading Zoom
        - You can manually download Zoom here: https://zoom.us/download#client_4meeting



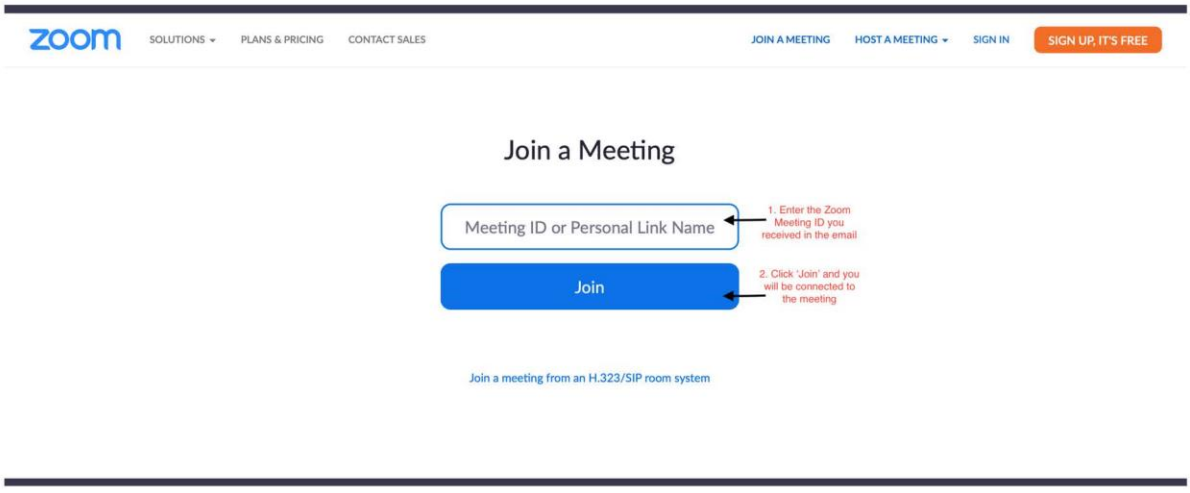
- Email Invite
  - You can click directly on the Zoom link that was sent through an email invite
  - You will be prompted to download or open the Zoom app





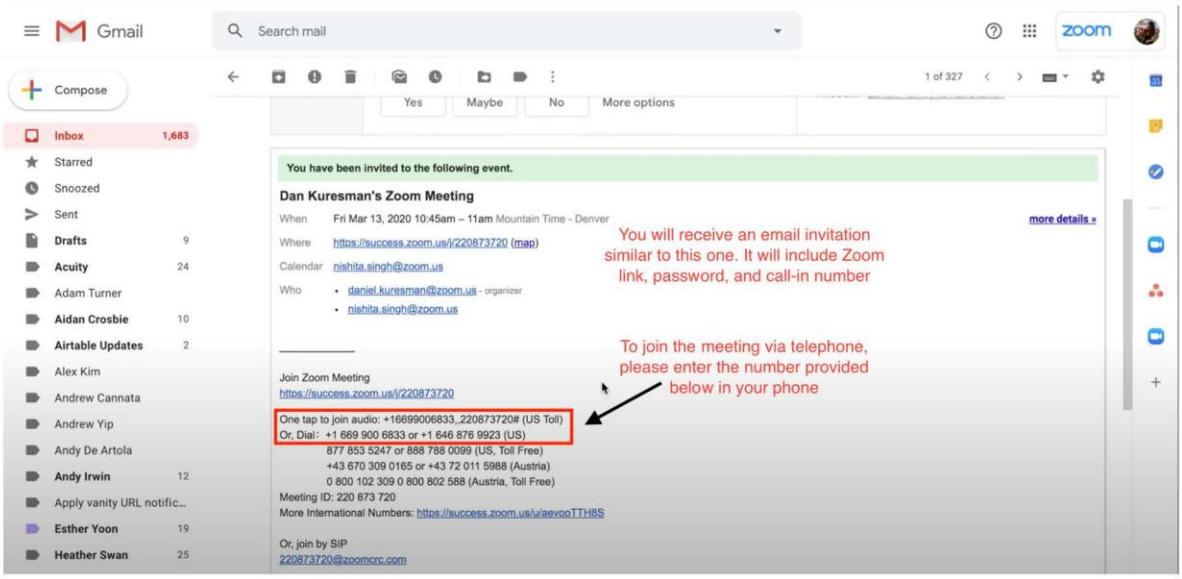


- Manually Entering Meeting ID
  - If you already have Zoom downloaded, you can click on "Join Meeting" and manually enter the Meeting ID to join the meeting



Zoom Call-In Number

- If you prefer to participate in this interview over phone rather than video, you also have the option to call into the meeting through a **Zoom call-in number**
    - The call-in number either can be provided to you prior to the meeting or it can be accessed through the Zoom email invitation



    - When it is the time of your scheduled interview, please dial the call-in number on your phone
        - Once connected, you will be asked to enter the meeting ID and pound key (#) into the keypad.
        - You will be asked to enter a participant ID or just the pound key (#) into the keypad, you only need to enter the pound key (#) and you will have access to the meeting.
- If you use the phone-only option, Zoom will mask your personal phone number to ensure your privacy and confidentiality

Zoom Security Features

- In addition to the Zoom link and ID number, you will be provided a **password** (located in the Zoom email invitation)
    - After clicking on the Zoom link and/or entering the ID number, you may be prompted to enter the password to gain access to the meeting.
- Once you've successfully gained access to the meeting, you will be placed in a **waiting room**
    - Please wait until the researcher (host) grants you access into the video meeting

Additional Zoom Features

- Chat
    - Chat features will allow you to privately chat with the researcher host
- Screen-share
    - Screen-share access will be limited to the researcher (host) only, so you will not have access to share your screen during the meeting
- Zoom recording and transcription
    - As discussed during the consent process, the meeting will be audio recorded and transcribed and only the researcher (host) will have access to these recordings
    - Recordings and transcriptions will be deleted from the Zoom platform and will be stored solely on a password-protected laptop

Possible Technical Issues & Concerns

- If you're using your phone and things are slow, check to see if you're using Wi-Fi or cellular data - one can be faster than the other.
- Running Zoom can drain a phone battery. If using a cell phone, you will likely need to be able to charge your phone during the call or keep it plugged in during the call.
- If during the interview the connect begins to lag, please consider:
    - Try switching to data usage
    - Exit and enter the meeting again
    - Switch to telephone instead if the delays interfere with the interview

For Further Assistance with Zoom

- Zoom offers a one-hour training tutorial and overview of how to utilize their platform here.
- Zoom also offers a Live Tutorial Training, you can register here.

Litigant Interview Consent Form

Consent Statement to Participate in Research

Project Title: Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Family Court Enhancement Project in the Domestic Violence Court, Chicago, IL

Introduction:

You are being asked to take part in a research study evaluating the Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP) at the Domestic Violence Court. In particular, this interview will ask about your parenting arrangements and your experience working with the Child Relief Expediter and the Court to create that plan. This study is being conducted by researchers from Loyola University Chicago's Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) in partnership with the Cook County Circuit Court Domestic Violence Division. The Primary Investigator for this research project is Dr. Christine George.

Purpose:

CURL plans to conduct this research in order to better understand the impact of the FCEP on the court procedures and the outcomes of litigants with children in common in civil orders of protection. The goal of this interview is to better understand the experience of litigants who have filed an order of protection at the court and who have children in common.

Procedures:

This interview will take approximately 45-60 minutes. During the interviews, the researcher will ask you about your parenting arrangements and your experience working with the Child Relief Expediter and the Court to create that plan.

Interviews will be conducted remotely either by Zoom video, Zoom audio only, or Zoom call-in telephone. At this point, you have taken part in a safety and technology screening to assess if and how you can participate in this interview. You were also offered a Participant Guide to Zoom as well as an optional live orientation to Zoom prior to the scheduled interview.

The researcher may be taking notes during the interview but will not record your name or any other personal, identifiable information, except for once during the beginning of the interview during the informed consent process. Also, with your permission, we do intend to audio record the interview via Zoom. Only the researcher and research assistants will have access to the audio recordings, and they will be transcribed. The audio files and transcripts will be initially saved to the Zoom cloud and then uploaded/saved on a secure LUC network drive only accessible to the researcher accessed only on a password-protected device. The audio and original transcript files will be deleted from the Zoom cloud once uploaded to the secure LUC network drive to ensure data privacy. The completed transcripts will be stored on a Loyola secure OneDrive project folder with no names or other identifying information. At the end of the study, the audio files will be destroyed but the transcripts will be kept. The transcripts will be stored on a secure Loyola secure OneDrive project folder with no identifying information for possible future use.

Risks/Benefits:

There are no foreseeable risks beyond those experienced in everyday life. Researchers will make

every effort to keep your identity and responses private. You will also be asked to choose a pseudonym rather than sharing your name during the interview.

You will not receive any direct benefit for participating. However, the information that you provide to researchers will significantly help understand the impact of the FCEP on court procedures and the outcomes of litigants with children in common who file for orders of protections.

Compensation:
You will receive a $75 stipend if you participate in the study. This stipend is meant to compensate you for your time, potential transportation and/or childcare you may need, and for any cellular data, internet, or general technology used during these interviews. You have been offered three options for how you would like to be compensated: mail-in check, mail-in Visa gift card, or electronic Visa gift card. You will be compensated at the end of the interview.

Confidentiality:
Confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. Your participation in this remote interview involves risks similar to a person's everyday use of the Internet. The LUC Zoom platform provides a secure and encrypted remote connection. Confidentiality and privacy on the Zoom platform will be maintained through a password-protected unique meeting ID and link. If you are using the Zoom call-in number, the number you are calling from will be masked to the researcher to further protect your privacy. Aside from the researcher/interviewer and notetaker, only you, the participant, will have access to this private Zoom meeting. If you agree to be audio recorded, the recording and transcription will only be shared among CURL researchers and research assistants, they will not include any identifying information, and they will be saved on a secure password-protected device.

If you agree to participate in this study, the individual information you tell us will be kept private and, when a report is published, your individual responses will not be connected to you by name. As noted above, aside from one time we will not record your name when we take notes during the interview and your name will not appear in any report or other public document connected to this study. The fact that you participated in the study will not be shared with any person outside the research staff. Particularly, your participation will not be shared with the other parent of your child(ren), the Child-Relief Expediter, or the courthouse, and your participation will not impact your current or past court case(s).

Voluntary Participation:
Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. You are free to participate or refuse to participate as you wish. Even if you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or to withdraw from the interview at any time without penalty.

Contacts and Questions:
If you have questions about this research study, please feel free to contact Loyola University Chicago researchers Yasmeen Khayr at ykhayr@luc.edu or 773.234.3725 or Dr. Christine George at cgeorg@luc.edu or 773.508.8533. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Loyola University Office of Research Services at 773.508.2689.

Statement of Consent:

Please respond to the following two questions:

Do you consent to participating in the interview?

□ Yes, I consent to participating in this interview.

□ No, I do not consent and will not participate in this interview.

Do you consent to being audio recorded during this Zoom interview?

□ Yes, I consent to being audio recorded during this interview.

□ No, I do not consent to being audio recorded during this interview.

Answering 'yes' to the above questions indicates that you have read or the researcher has read you the consent statement. It also indicates that you have had an opportunity to ask questions and agree to participate in this research study. You will be emailed a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Loyola University Chicago:Lakeside Campuses
Institutional Review Board for
The Protection of Human Subjects

Date of Approval: 12/01/2021

Approval Expires: 08/02/2022

Family Court Enhancement Project: Research & Evaluation

Petitioner Interview Guide

Research Question 2.1: *To what extent do petitioners and respondents perceive, after working with the CRE, that parenting arrangements in the OP are safe and fair three months after the OP is entered?*

AIM

- To understand from the perspective of petitioners and respondents, how FCEP impacted their:
  - Visitation arrangements and co-parenting plan
  - Safety and the safety of their children
  - Overall sense of fairness or procedural justice

Introduction:

- *Introduce yourself and your role as researcher/interviewer*
- *Thanking the participant for taking time to talk about their experience with their OP and the DV court*
  - *Acknowledge the difficulty of going through the court to seek an OP*
  - *Valuing their experience and uplifting their voice to help us try to improve the court process for others*
- *Share the types of questions we will ask:*
  - *Experience with parenting plan for themselves and their children*
  - *Experience with court personnel (CRE, judges)*
  - *Overall court process*
- *Share that this is a safe space to share their thoughts, feelings, and story with us*
  - *Recognize that some questions may be difficult or sensitive*
  - *Prioritize their comfort—they can take a pause or a moment if they need to and always have the opportunity to end the interview if they cannot continue*
- *Once they are ready to begin the official interview questions, and they have consented to record, begin the recording and state the following:*
  - *"This is an FCEP interview consultation with [PSEUDONYM], it is [DATE]. The participant has consented to this interview and has consented to be audio recorded."*

Warm Up Questions:

Option 1: Before we delve into the specific questions about your experience at the court, tell me a bit about you and your children. How do they bring you joy?

Option 2: Before we delve into the specific questions about your experience at the court, I want you to think about the courthouse, your experience there, the personnel you interacted with, and anything else related. Now that you have thought a bit, ***what are some adjectives that come to mind? What words would you use to describe that experience****?*

Screening Questions

Thank you for sharing that, I want to first start with some contextual questions about your OP and the agreement you created with the CRE...

1. Could you tell me how you came to create your parenting agreement? (YES OR NO IS ENOUGH)
    a. Was this plan negotiated between you and the other parent?
        i. Was the plan ordered by a judge or did you go to a hearing?
    b. Did you have an advocate or attorney present with you during your court process?
    c. How did you get connected with the CRE?
        i. Did the judge offer the CRE as an option? Or did your advocate or attorney refer you?
    d. Has there been any DCFS involvement with your case?
        i. If yes, has the DCFS involvement influenced the type of plan you came up with?

*Parenting Plan/Agreement**

**Each interview will have unique questions about the specific parenting time, communication, and exchange depending on the specificities of their agreement. We will have access to this agreement prior to the interview*

Thank you for sharing that, I want to now start talking a bit about your current experience with the parenting plan you created a few months ago...

1. Can you walk me through the specifics of your current parenting plan?
    a. What plan did you create around communication about your children (ie. text, phone calls, video chatting, etc.)?
        i. And how has that been working?

   b. What kind of exchange plan was agreed upon (location of drop off/pick-up, time, frequency, etc.)?
      i. How has it been exchanging your children with the other parent before and after a visit?
   c. What kind of visitation plan is set in place (unsupervised, supervised, visitation center, etc.)?
      i. How do you think the visits or parenting time has been going between your children and the other parent?
2. How, if at all, has the COVID pandemic impacted your parenting plan?
   a. How has it impacted how you can follow through with the plan?

"Anything else you would like to add/elaborate more about the parenting plan/agreement?"

Parenting Time (Same as "visitation")*

**Distinctions will be made based on whether the OP has granted unsupervised visitation, supervised visitation by a family member, supervised visitation at a center, or a variation of these options. But, generally, the following questions will be asked across all interviews:*

1. *Clarify parenting time or visitation;* What has your experience been with the current plan for parenting time?
2. Have you had any concerns about this parenting arrangement?
   a. Does the agreement address any of those concerns?
3. Have you and your family felt safer because of this parenting plan?
   a. Have you had any safety concerns for yourself or for your children?
   b. Have any of these safety concerns been specifically due to COVID-related issues?
4. What has been going well?
5. Have there been any challenges? What has not been going well?
6. Have any of these challenges been specifically due to COVID-related issues?

If unsupervised visitation:

7. Did your children previously have supervised visitation with the other parent?
8. If so, could you describe the experience of returning to having parenting time without supervision?
9. How, if at all, has parenting time been impacted by COVID?
   a. Have you had to make any adjustments to visitation due to COVID?

If supervised visitation by a family member:

10. How has your experience been with having your children visit the other parent with a family member present?
11. How, if at all, has parenting time been impacted by COVID?
    a. Have you had to make any adjustments to visitation due to COVID?

If supervised visitation at a center:

12. How has your experience been using the supervised visitation center?
13. Have you felt safe bringing your children to the visitation center?
14. How, if at all, has parenting time been impacted by COVID?
    a. Have you had to make any adjustments to visitation due to COVID?

"Anything else you would like to add/elaborate more about your visitation plan?"

Children

1. How many children do you have? How old are they?
2. What do you think your children's experience with the other parent has been like over the past couple months?
3. How do you think your children were feeling when you first started with this parenting plan (including communication, exchange, visitation)?
    a. What makes you think that?
4. How do you think your children are feeling about the plan now, a couple months later?
    a. What makes you think that?
5. How have your children been behaving when you drop off or pick up your children from the other parent/visitation center/etc.?
6. How have your children usually behaved after visiting with the other parent?
    a. How have your children reacted to their time with the other parent?
7. How has this parenting arrangement impacted *your* relationship with your children? *(changes, improvements difficulties)*
8. How, if at all, has your child's experience with parenting time been impacted due to COVID?
    a. Has the pandemic impacted your children's behavior in any way?

"Anything else you would like to add/elaborate more about your children?"

Parenting

1. How has this parenting arrangement impacted how you parent your children?
2. What parts of the parenting plan are going well?
    a. How did this plan meet your expectations? How has it not met your expectations?
3. Have there been any issues with the overall parenting plan? Or have there been issues with following this parenting plan?
    a. *If the plan hasn't gone as planned*, how do you think the plan could be improved?
    b. Are you aware that you can modify your parenting plan?
        i. Have you requested a modification or made any changes to this plan over the past three months?
        ii. If yes, why were those changes made? How have those changes impacted you and your family?
4. Did you have to make any modifications to your parenting plan due to COVID?

a. If yes, why were those changes made? How have those changes impacted you and your family?

"Anything else you would like to add/elaborate more about your parenting plan?"

CHECK-IN WITH PARTICIPANT HERE: *ARE YOU FEELING OK WITH MOVING FORWARD?*

Experience with Child Relief Expediter

Now that we've gone through your current parenting plan, I want you to think back to your experience with the Child Relief Expediter (CRE) and creating the parenting plan with her...

1. Could you please describe to me how you first knew or were told about the CRE?
2. What kind of plan (parenting time; exchange; communication) were you hoping to discuss and create with the CRE?
    a. How did you become aware of the kinds of child-related and parenting issues you could bring up in your OP and parenting plan?
3. What was the overall experience like for you?
    a. Can you name some concerns that you wanted to bring up during the session?
4. Did you feel that you could openly share your concerns with the CRE?
    a. Did you feel that you could include those concerns in the parenting plan?
5. What went well during your meeting? What was helpful?
6. Were there any barriers that got in the way of coming up with a parenting plan? Did you both meet separately, or together?
7. Did the plan you created meet your expectations for what you wanted for you and your children?
8. Have you been in contact virtually with the CRE during the pandemic?
    a. If so, how was that experience?

"Anything else you would like to add/elaborate more about your experiences with Stephanie?"

*Experience with the Judges**

**Petitioners may have seen multiple judges at EOP, POP, or other hearings.*

Now I would like to talk with you about your experience with the judges that you interacted with during the court process...

1. How many judges did you interact with at the court? How were your overall interactions with the judge(s)?
    a. Could you describe those experiences?
2. Were you able to bring up any of your concerns with the judge(s)?
    a. *If yes*: Was the judge responsive to these?
3. More specifically, did you bring up any concerns regarding visitation with the judge(s)?

   a. *If yes*: Was the judge responsive to these?
4. Did you have an attorney or advocate present with you during this process?
   a. *If advocate:* how did having an advocate impact your interaction with the judge?
      i. How did having an advocate impact your overall court experience?
   b. *If attorney:* how did having an attorney impact your interaction with the judge?
      i. How did having an attorney impact your overall court experience?
   c. *If no:* How was it going in front of the judge by yourself, without representation?
5. Have you been in front of a judge virtually during the pandemic?
   a. If so, how was that experience?

"Anything else you would like to add/elaborate more about your experience with the judges?"

Overall Court Experience

1. *Overall, thinking about your visits to the courthouse, your experience with the CRE, and creating a parenting agreement,* do you feel safer now?
   a. Do you think your children feel safer now? Why or why not?
2. *Looking back at the whole process*, how did your court experience impact your parenting over the past few months?
3. Tell me a bit about how you did or did not get what you wanted from the court? (Order of protection; parenting plan; safety for you and children)
4. Was there anything you wish were different with the court process – something that would have made things safer for you?
5. Over the last couple months, how has it been navigating this court process and your parenting plan during the ongoing COVID pandemic?

"Anything else you would like to add/elaborate more about your experiences with the court?"

Closed-Ended Questions
(Read each statement and the options once, and give choice to not explain each answer)

Thank you so much for sharing your experiences with me. I just want to end the interview with a few questions that I would like you to rank from 1 to 5 and explain why you ranked it that way:

1. Thinking about your experience in creating a parenting agreement with the CRE, on a scale of 1 to 5, overall, how satisfied were you with this experience.
   a. 1: not at all satisfied; 2: not satisfied; 3: somewhat satisfied; 4: moderately satisfied; 5: very satisfied
2. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, how safe did you feel as a result of going through the entire court process?
   a. 1: not at all safe; 2: not safe; 3: somewhat safe; 4: moderately safe; 5: very safe
3. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, to what extent did the OP and parenting plan positively or negatively impact your child's well-being?

   a. 1: strongly negative; 2: slightly negative; 3: neither negative nor positive; 4: slightly positive; 5: strongly positive
4. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, how fairly did you feel treated throughout the entire court process?
   a. 1: not at all fair; 2: not fair; 3: somewhat fair; 4: moderately fair; 5: very fair
5. Thinking about the ongoing pandemic, to what extent has COVID impacted your experience with the entire court process?
   a. 1: not at all; 2: slightly; 3: somewhat; 4: moderately; 5: a great deal

In Closing

Thank you for being sharing your experience with me. I will now stop the recording. ***I really appreciate the time you took to have this conversation with me, it will be very useful in improving the court process and experience moving forward.***

I want to be as open with you, do you have any questions for me?

I will be sending you an email with a resource guide and confirming your compensation for this interview. If you have any questions about this interview, please feel free to reach out to me via email or by phone. Thank you again!

If a participant asks a question or has a concern that we, as researchers, cannot directly provide advice or help, then respond with the following and provide the resource guide:

Thank you for asking that question, that is an important and valid concern. Unfortunately, as a researcher, I do not have the expertise, nor am I authorized to give you that kind of advice. However, I do have a list of resources and individuals you can contact for more information and could help you with those questions/concerns. I will be sending you a Resource Guide directly after this interview.

Family Court Enhancement Project: Research & Evaluation

Respondent Interview Guide

Research Question 2.1: *To what extent do petitioners and respondents perceive, after working with the CRE, that parenting arrangements in the OP are safe and fair three months after the OP is entered?*

AIM

- To understand from the perspective of petitioners and respondents, how FCEP impacted their:
  - Visitation arrangements and co-parenting plan
  - Safety and the safety of their children
  - Overall sense of fairness or procedural justice

Introduction:

- *Introduce yourself and your role as researcher/interviewer*
- *Thanking the participant for taking time to talk about their experience with their OP and the DV court*
  - *Acknowledge the difficulty of going through the court, especially if it was not voluntary (for respondents)*
  - *Valuing their experience and uplifting their voice to help us try to improve the court process for others*
- *Share the types of questions we will ask:*
  - *Experience with parenting plan for themselves and their children*
  - *Experience with court personnel (CRE, judges)*
  - *Overall court process*
- *Share that this is a safe space to share their thoughts, feelings, and story with us*
  - *Recognize that some questions may be difficult or sensitive*
  - *Prioritize their comfort—they can take a pause or a moment if they need to and always have the opportunity to end the interview if they cannot continue*
- *Once they are ready to begin the official interview questions, begin the recording and state the following:*
  - *"This is an FCEP interview consultation with [PSEUDONYM], it is [DATE]. The participant has consented to this interview and has consented to be audio recorded."*

Warm Up Questions:

Option 1: Before we delve into the specific questions about your experience at the court, tell me a bit about you and your children. How do they bring you joy?

Option 2: Before we delve into the specific questions about your experience at the court, I want you to think about the courthouse, your experience there, the personnel you interacted with, and anything else related. Now that you have thought a bit, what are some adjectives that come to mind? What words would you use to describe that experience?

Screening Questions

Thank you for sharing that, I want to first start with some contextual questions about your OP and the agreement you created with the CRE...

1. Could you tell me how you came to create this parenting agreement?
    a. Was this plan negotiated between you and the other parent?
        i. Was the plan ordered by a judge or did you go to a hearing?
    b. Did you have an advocate or attorney present with you during your court process?
    c. How did you get connected with the CRE?
        i. Did the judge offer the CRE as an option? Or did your advocate or attorney refer you?
    d. Has there been any DCFS involvement with your case?
        i. If yes, has the DCFS involvement influenced the type of plan you came up with?

*Parenting Plan/Agreement**

**Each interview will have unique questions about the specific parenting time, communication, and exchange depending on the specificities of their agreement. We will have access to this agreement prior to the interview*

Thank you for sharing that, I want to now start talking a bit about your current experience with the parenting plan you created a few months ago...

1. Can you walk me through the specifics of your current parenting plan?
    a. What plan did you create around communication about your children?
        i. And how has that been working?
    b. What kind of exchange plan was agreed upon (location of drop-off/pick-up, time, frequency, etc.)?
        i. How has it been exchanging your children with the other parent before and after you have parenting time?

   c. What kind of visitation plan is set in place (unsupervised, supervised, visitation center, etc.)?
      i. How has parenting time with your children been going?
2. How, if at all, has the COVID pandemic impacted your parenting plan?
   a. How has it impacted how you can follow through with the plan?

*Parenting Time**

**Distinctions will be made based on whether the OP has granted unsupervised visitation, supervised visitation by a family member, supervised visitation at a center, or a variation of these options. But, generally, the following questions will be asked across all interviews:*

1. *Clarify parenting time or visitation;* How has parenting time with your children been?
   a. How often do you see your children? How do you like to spend time with your children?
2. Have you had any concerns about this parenting arrangement?
   a. Does the agreement address any of those concerns?
   b. Have any of these safety concerns been specifically due to COVID-related issues?
3. How have you felt following these parenting time arrangements?
   a. Have you felt comfortable following the parenting plan?
   b. Has COVID impacted how you are keeping up with the parenting plan? If so, how?
4. What has been going well?
5. Have there been any challenges? What has not been going well?
6. Have any of these challenges been specifically due to COVID-related issues?

If unsupervised visitation:

7. Did you previously have supervised visiting time with your children?
8. If so, could you describe the experience of returning to having parenting time with just your children?
9. How, if at all, has your parenting time with your children been impacted by COVID?
   a. Have you had to make any adjustments to visitation due to COVID?

If supervised visitation by a family member:

10. How has spending time with your children been like with a family member present?
11. How, if at all, has your parenting time with your children been impacted by COVID?
    a. Have you had to make any adjustments to visitation due to COVID?

If supervised visitation at a center:

12. How has spending time with your children been like at a supervised visitation center?
13. How, if at all, has your parenting time with your children been impacted by COVID?
    a. Have you had to make any adjustments to visitation due to COVID?

Children

1. How many children do you have? How old are they?
2. What do you think your children's experience during parenting time has been like over the past couple months?
3. How do you think your children were feeling when you first started with this parenting plan (including communication, exchange, visitation)?
    a. What makes you think that?
4. How do you think they are feeling about the plan now, a couple months later?
    a. What makes you think that?
5. How have your children been behaving when you pick up or drop off your children?
6. How have your children behaved when they are with you during parenting time?
7. How do you think your children have felt during the visits? What makes you think that?
8. How has this parenting arrangement impacted *your* relationship with your children? *(changes, improvements, difficulties)*
9. How, if at all, has your child's experience with parenting time been impacted due to COVID?
    a. Has the pandemic impacted your children's behavior in any way?

Parenting

1. How has this parenting arrangement impacted how you parent your children?
2. What parts of the parenting plan are going well?
    a. How did this plan meet your expectations? How has it not met your expectations?
3. Have there been any issues with the parenting plan? Or issues with following this parenting plan?
    a. *If the plan hasn't gone as planned*, how do you think the plan could be improved?
    b. Are you aware that you can modify your parenting plan?
        i. Have you requested a modification or made any changes to this plan over the past three months?
        ii. If yes, why were those changes made? How have those changes impacted you and your family?
4. Did you have to make any modifications to your parenting plan due to COVID?
    a. If yes, why were those changes made? How have those changes impacted you and your family?

Experience with Child Relief Expediter

Now that we've gone through your current parenting plan, I want you to think back to your experience with the Child Relief Expediter (CRE) and creating the parenting plan with her...

1. Could you please describe to me how you first knew or were told about the CRE?

2. What kind of plan (parenting time; exchange; communication) did you hope to discuss and create with the CRE?
    a. How did you become aware of the kinds of child-related and parenting issues you could bring up in your OP and parenting plan?
3. What was the overall experience like for you?
    a. Can you name some concerns that you wanted to bring up during the session?
4. Did you feel that you could openly share your concerns with the CRE?
    a. Did you feel that you could include those concerns in the parenting plan?
5. What went well during your meeting? What was helpful?
6. Were there any barriers that got in the way of coming up with a parenting plan?
7. Did the plan you created meet your expectations for what you wanted for you and your children?
8. Have you been in contact virtually with the CRE during the pandemic?
    a. If so, how was that experience?

Experience with the Judges

Now I would like to talk with you about your experience with the judges that you interacted with during the court process...

1. How many judges did you interact with at the court? How were your overall interactions with the judges?
    a. Could you describe those experiences?
2. Were you able to bring up any of your concerns with the judge(s)?
    a. *If yes:* Was the judge responsive to these?
3. More specifically, did you bring up any concerns regarding visitation with the judge(s)?
    a. *If yes*: Was the judge responsive to these?
4. Did you have an attorney present with you during this process?
    a. *If yes:* How did having an attorney impact your interaction with the judge?
        i. How did having an attorney impact your overall court experience?
    b. *If no:* How was it going in front of the judge by yourself, without representation?
5. Have you been in front of a judge virtually during the pandemic?
    a. If so, how was that experience?

Overall Court Experience

1. *Overall, thinking about your visits to the courthouse, your experience with the CRE, and creating a parenting agreement*, do you feel more comfortable with your parenting arrangement now?
    a. Do you think your children feel more comfortable? Why or why not?
2. *Looking back at the whole process*, how did your court experience impact your parenting over the past few months?
3. Tell me a bit about how you did or did not get what you wanted from the court? (Order of protection; parenting plan; comfort for you and children)

4. Was there anything you wish were different with the court process – something that would have made the experience more positive for you?
5. Over the last couple months, how has it been navigating this court process and your parenting plan during the ongoing COVID pandemic?

Closed-Ended Questions

Thank you so much for sharing your experiences with me. I just want to end the interview with a few questions that I would like you to rank from 1 to 5 and explain why you ranked it that way:

1. Thinking about your experience in creating a parenting agreement with the CRE, on a scale of 1 to 5, overall, how satisfied were you with this experience.
    a. 1: not at all satisfied; 2: not satisfied; 3: somewhat satisfied; 4: moderately satisfied; 5: very satisfied
2. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, how safe did you feel as a result of going through the entire court process?
    a. 1: not at all safe; 2: not safe; 3: somewhat safe; 4: moderately safe; 5: very safe
3. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, to what extent did the OP and parenting plan positively or negatively impact your child's well-being?
    a. 1: strongly negative; 2: slightly negative; 3: neither negative nor positive; 4: slightly positive; 5: strongly positive
4. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, how fairly did you feel treated throughout the entire court process?
    a. 1: not at all fair; 2: not fair; 3: somewhat fair; 4: moderately fair; 5: very fair
5. Thinking about the ongoing pandemic, to what extent has COVID impacted your experience with the entire court process?
    a. 1: not at all; 2: slightly; 3: somewhat; 4: moderately; 5: a great deal

In Closing

*Thank you for being sharing your experience with me. **I will now stop the recording.** **I really appreciate the time you took to have this conversation with me, it will be very useful in improving the court process and experience moving forward.***

I want to be as open with you, do you have any questions for me?

I will be sending you an email with a resource guide and confirming your compensation for this interview. If you have any questions about this interview, please feel free to reach out to me via email or by phone. Thank you again!

If a participant asks a question or has a concern that we, as researchers, cannot directly provide advice or help, then respond with the following and provide the resource guide:

Thank you for asking that question, that is an important and valid concern. Unfortunately, as a researcher, I do not have the expertise nor am I authorized to give you that kind of advice. However, I do have a list of resources and individuals you can contact for more information and could help you with those questions/concerns. I will be sending you a Resource Guide directly after this interview.

Litigant Resource Guide

Resource Guide

HOTLINES

National Domestic Violence Hotline

- Hotline: 1-800-799-7233
- Textline: Text LOVEIS to 22522
- Website: https://www.thehotline.org

National Sexual Assault Hotline

- Hotline: 1-800-656-4673
- Website: https://www.rainn.org/about-national-sexual-assault-telephone-hotline
- Online Chat: https://hotline.rainn.org/online?_ga=2.238522823.617299143.1572466214-1670553233.1559668901

Additional Hotlines and Resources *especially for individuals who are Native, trans, deaf, parents, unhoused, etc.*

- https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/get-updates-information-covid-19/

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES

Apna Ghar
Chicago locations in Uptown, Skokie, and Ashburn

- Crisis Line: 773-334-4663 OR 800-717-0757
- Text Hotline: 773-899-1041
- Website: http://www.apnaghar.org
- Additional Resource List: http://www.apnaghar.org/uploads/9/6/4/4/9644061/apna_ghar_resources_in_response_to_covid-19_4.20.20.pdf

Metropolitan Family Services
Various locations in Chicago, Evanston/Skokie, DuPage County, and Southwest Suburbs

- Hotline: 630-469-5650
- Website: https://www.metrofamily.org

Mujeres Latinas en Acción
Chicago locations in Pilsen, Brighton Park, and West Suburbs

- Domestic Violence Crisis Hotline: 312-738-5358
- Chicago Rape Crisis Hotline: 888-293-2080
- Website: https://mujereslatinasenaccion.org
- Legal Aid Society: https://www.metrofamily.org/legal-aid-society/
    - Hotline: 312-986-4105

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Legal Advocacy Hotline
Assistance with orders of protection, virtual hearings, safety planning, other legal options, and further referrals

- Hotline: 708-689-3422

Lifespan
Providing victims of abuse legal services, advocacy, and counseling

- Website: https://life-span.org
- Counseling Services: 847-824-0382
- Legal Services: 312-408-1210

GENERAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Legal Aid Chicago
Free civil legal representation for family safety; housing; financial assistance; work and employment rights; health, disability, and basic needs; and immigration.

- Website: https://www.legalaidchicago.org
- Phone Number: 312-341-1070

Illinois Legal Aid Online
- Website: https://www.illinoislegalaid.org
- Online Application: https://www.illinoislegalaid.org/get-legal-help

CARPLS
- Website: https://www.carpls.org
- Hotline: 312-738-9200

COVID-RELATED ASSISTANCE

Illinois COVID Unemployment Benefits

- Website: https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/Pages/default.aspx
- Expanded Pandemic Unemployment Benefit Guides: https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/IDES%20Forms%20and%20Publications/Learn-PUA.pdf#search=covid

City of Chicago Coronavirus Response Hotline

- Hotline: 312-746-7425
- Website: www.chicago.gov/coronavirus

Compiled Coronavirus Resources from Block Club Chicago

- https://blockclubchicago.org/2020/03/25/feel-sick-need-help-want-to-donate-heres-a-massive-list-of-coronavirus-resources-in-chicago/

SAFETY PLANNING, MENTAL HEALTH, AND SELF-CARE

Safety Planning Resources

- https://www.thehotline.org/help/path-to-safety/
- https://www.loveisrespect.org/for-yourself/safety-planning/interactive-safety-plan/

National Alliance on Mental Illness

- Hotline: 1-800-950-6264
- Email: info@nami.org
- Website: https://www.nami.org/Home

Self-Care

- https://www.thehotline.org/2014/08/08/the-importance-of-self-care/

TECHNOLOGY SAFETY

National Network to End Domestic Violence

- Technology Safety & Privacy: A Toolkit for Survivors: https://www.techsafety.org/resources-survivors

Interview Debrief Template

FCEP Litigant Interview Debrief

[Date of Interview]

BACKGROUND

- Interview Unique ID:
- Participant Pseudonym:
- Interviewer:
- Note Taker:
- Litigant Type: [Petitioner or Respondent]
- Zoom Interview Preference: [Video; Audio Only; or Call-In Number]
- Participant Consented to Participate in Interview: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Participant Consented to Audio Recording: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Payment Preference: [Mail-in Check; Mail-In Gift Card; Electronic Gift Card]
- Has a follow-up email been sent that included thanks, payment confirmation, and the resource guide? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Did the participant have an attorney or advocate present? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    - If yes, which one? ☐ Attorney ☐ Advocate
- Was there DCFS involvement in the participant's case? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Case History:

OBSERVATIONAL NOTES

- What did the participant look like? What did their environment or setting look like? [Descriptive Details]

- What was the overall disposition of the participant during the interview (attitude, interaction, emotional temperament, responding to questions)?

    - How did the participant present themselves overall during the interview?

    - Did the participant present themselves differently during different segments of the interview?

    - What was the comfort level of the participant during the interview process?

- What actions were happening during the interview?

INTERVIEWER DEBRIEF

- As the interviewer, how was your experience conducting this interview and asking questions?
    - Did any problems arise that need to be discussed?

- Are there certain interview questions that the participant did not react well to? How could we be mindful of this in the next interview?

- What was it like interviewing over Zoom (video, audio only, or telephone)?
    - Did the interviewing medium interfere with the interview in any way?
    - Were there any technical issues or issues with communication during the interview?

- Is there anything worth noting for a particular section?

- Is there anything worth noting about the overall interview experience?

Appendix F: Litigant Interview Materials (Spanish)

Litigant Interview Recruitment Flyer (Spanish)

¿Usted es elegible?

- 18 años o mayor
- Estaba o está involucrado en un proceso judicial para un orden de protección en el tribunal de violencia doméstica con un co-padre de un niño menor
- Reunió con el facilitador por lo menos una vez
- Alcanzó un acuerdo para los remedios relacionados con el niño durante la sesión con el facilitador

Se le pedirá que participe en una entrevista grabada por 45-60 minutos. La entrevista será individual y confidencial. Puede elegir a participar en la entrevista sin el otro padre. Si ambos padres deciden a participar, serán entrevistados individualmente.

La ubicación: La entrevista se llevará acabo en un espacio silencioso y privado en Chicago, IL. El entrevistador se pondrá de acuerdo con usted para determinar esta ubicación.

Recibirá $50.00 en efectivo como la compensación que proveerá por participar en la entrevista.

Para participar, por favor complete el formulario provisto a usted por el facilitador.

Si no está seguro de los requisitos o tiene algunas preguntas, por favor contacte las investigadoras de Loyola University Chicago Dr. Christine George a cgeorg@luc.edu o (773) 508-8533 o Yasmeen Khayr a ykhayr@luc.edu o (773) 508-8547.

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO
Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

Litigant Interview Recruitment FAQ (Spanish)

FAQs: Reclutamiento & Entrevista de Litigantes

¿Porque están haciendo esta investigación?

La propuesta para este proyecto de investigación es para encontrar maneras de mejorar el sistema judicial para los padres y sus niños. Los investigadores entrevistarán ambos litigantes y personales del tribunal, incluyente los jueces y abogados, para poder aprender que funciona bien y no funciona bien con el tribunal. Esperamos que este proyecto mejore el sistema judicial en el futuro.

¿Quiénes son los investigadores?

Son investigadores **externos** de Loyola University Chicago.

¿Quién puede participar en este proyecto de investigación?

Usted es elegible a participar en esta investigación si:

- Tiene 18 años o mayor
- Estaba o está involucrado en un caso de un Orden de Protección en el tribunal DV con un co-padre de un niño menor
- Reunió con el facilitador por lo menos una vez
- Alcanzó un acuerdo para los remedios relacionados con el niño durante la sesión con el facilitador

¿Qué me preguntarán en la entrevista?

Le preguntarán sobre su experiencia en general con el tribunal DV, su experiencia con el facilitador, y el acuerdo de paternidad que ha hecho. Los investigadores están interesados en saber cómo su acuerdo de paternidad está funcionando para usted y sus niños.

¿El otro padre tendrá que estar presente también?

No. El otro padre no estará presente al menos que usted le comenté que estará participando en la entrevista y quiera que esté presente.

¿El otro padre va a saber que me hice una entrevista?

No, la entrevista es completamente **confidencial**. El otro padre no va a saber si usted se participó o no. Su nombre e información personal quedarán privados.

¿Estas entrevistas son confidenciales?

Sí, las entrevistas son confidenciales. Las entrevistas serán grabadas pero las grabaciones no guardarán ninguna información personal. Las grabaciones serán transcritas por un investigador, pero su identidad se mantendrá anónima. Las grabaciones serán eliminadas cuando los investigadores terminan de transcribir. Adicionalmente, todas las entrevistas estarán en lugar privado. Los investigadores no notificarán cualquier persona de su participación.

¿El tribunal sabrá si hice esta entrevista?

No, su participación es confidencial y sus respuestas individuales no estarán compartidas con el tribunal—solamente los resultados serán compartidos.

¿Mi participación en esta investigación afectará mi caso en el tribunal?

Su participación en la investigación no afectará su caso o su involucramiento actual o futuro en el tribunal. No se le va a preguntar a usted que de cualquier información o revelar cualquier actividad relacionado con algún otro caso actual o pasado.

¿Qué tengo que hacer si estoy interesado?

Lo único que necesitas hacer es completar el formulario de contacto, póngalo en esta caja. Un investigador colectará los formularios cada semana. Ellos le contactarán en unas semanas para coordinar un tiempo y lugar para la entrevista.

¿Si firmo este formulario, estoy comprometido a una entrevista?

No, no se está comprometiendo a una entrevista. Firmando este formulario solamente provee el permiso para que el investigador le contacte. Cuando el investigador le contacte, usted puede hacerle cualquiera pregunta o preocupación que tenga y si decide si quiere participar o no. Puede parar de participar en cualquier momento.

¿Este formulario es confidencial?

Sí, este formulario es confidencial. Solamente los investigadores tendrán acceso a sus respuestas. El facilitador y el tribunal no tienen acceso a su formulario, y sus respuestas no afectarán su caso o su involucramiento en el tribunal de ninguna manera.

¿Puedo retirarme en cualquier tiempo durante la entrevista?

Sí, usted puede retirar su participación en cualquier tiempo antes o durante la entrevista. Pero, no será compensado si la entrevista es parcialmente completada.

¿Cuándo recibirá el $50?

Recibirá la compensación justo después que la entrevista sea completada.

¿Dónde estarán las entrevistas?

Las entrevistas se llevarán a cabo en un lugar silencioso y privado en la ciudad de Chicago. Usted puede coordinar un lugar con los investigadores le contacten. Ambos usted y el investigador pueden sugerir unas ubicaciones que sean convenientes para usted.

¿Cómo se usará esta información?

Esta información será usada para examinar como el tribunal DV crea los acuerdos de paternidad, el sentido de seguridad y justicia en general, y el rol del facilitador en su experiencia. La información será usada para informar las prácticas judiciales a futuro y los resultados del estudio.

Litigant Interview Recruitment Contact Form (Spanish)

El formulario de contacto de litigantes

Los investigadores de Loyola University Chicago están haciendo un estudio y quieren entrevistar a padres que trabajaron con el facilitador de alivio de menores en el tribunal de la violencia doméstica. La entrevista será privada y se le preguntará sobre su experiencia con el facilitador y sus planes de paternidad para su orden de protección. Las entrevistas durarán 45-60 minutos. La entrevista será individual y su participación no depende de la participación del otro padre. Su participación no afectará su caso de ninguna manera. Por su participación, recibirá $50 en efectivo después de que se complete la entrevista. Después de completar este formulario, un entrevistador se pondrá en contacto con usted para poder contestar cualquier pregunta que usted tenga y para ponerse de acuerdo en un tiempo y lugar para la entrevista. Al llenar este formulario, no está comprometido formalmente a la entrevista, pero autoriza que los investigadores se contacten con usted. Este formulario y todas sus respuestas son confidenciales y solamente los investigadores tendrán acceso a estos.

Por favor, provea la siguiente información:

Nombre completo: _____

Correo electrónico: _____

Teléfono móvil: (_____)_____

Teléfono de casa: (_____)_____

¿Cuál número de teléfono o correo electrónico prefiere para que los investigadores se comuniquen con usted? _____

¿A qué hora del día preferiría ser contactado?

_____

_____

¿Usted es el peticionario o respondiente en este caso?

- ❑ **Peticionario** (el individuo quien archive el Orden)
- ❑ **Respondiente** (el individuo quien el Orden está en contra)

_____ _____

La firma La fecha

Si tiene algunas preguntas o preocupaciones, por favor contacte las investigadoras de Loyola University Chicago, Dr. Christine George a cgeorg@luc.edu o (773) 508-8533 o Yasmeen Khayr a ykhayr@luc.edu o (773) 508-8547.

Cuando termine, por favor ponga el formulario en esta caja. Gracias por completar el formulario, un investigador se comunicará con usted pronto.

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

Litigant Interview Recruitment Contact Form Survey (Spanish)

Español (América Latina)

Introduction

FCEP formulario de contacto de litigantes

Los investigadores de Loyola University Chicago están haciendo un estudio y quieren entrevistar a padres que trabajaron con la facilitadora de alivio de menores en el tribunal de la violencia doméstica. La entrevista será privada y se le preguntará sobre su experiencia con la facilitadora y sus planes de paternidad para su orden de protección. Las entrevistas durarán 45-60 minutos. La entrevista será individual y su participación no depende de la participación del otro padre. Su participación no afectará su caso de ninguna manera. La entrevista estará virtual a través de Zoom (video, audio, o teléfono). Después de la entrevista, recibirá $75 por su participación. Por más información, por favor refiere al Flyer de Reclutamiento y FAQ debajo. Después de completar este formulario, una entrevistadora se pondrá en contacto con usted para poder contestar cualquier pregunta que usted tenga y, si tiene interés, para ponerse de acuerdo en una fecha y hora para la entrevista.

Por favor refiere a nuestro folleto de reclutamiento debajo por más información sobre las entrevistas.

FCEP Interview Flyer

FCEP Folleto de las Entrevistas

Si todavía tiene preguntas sobre la investigación o participación en las entrevistas, por favor revise la FAQ debajo por más información.

FAQs: Litigant Interview

FAQs: Entrevistas de Litigantes

Por favor, continue a la pagina siguiente si quería completar un formulario de contacto.

Si tiene interés en participar en las entrevistas o quería hablar directamente con una investigadora para aprender más sobre el proyecto, por favor complete el formulario siguiente. Al llenar este formulario, no está comprometido formalmente a la entrevista, pero autoriza que los investigadores se contacten con usted. Este formulario y todas sus respuestas son confidenciales y solamente los investigadores tendrán acceso.

Nombre completo

Correo electrónico (por favor incluye un correo electrónico accesible solamente a usted)

Teléfono móvil

Teléfono de casa

¿Cuál número de teléfono o correo electrónico prefiere para que los investigadores se comuniquen con usted?

¿A qué hora del día preferiría ser contactado?

¿Usted es el peticionario o respondiente en este caso?

- ○ Peticionario (el individuo quien archive el Orden)
- ○ Respondiente (el individuo quien el Orden está en contra)

Si tiene algunas preguntas o preocupaciones, por favor contacte las investigadoras de Loyola University Chicago, Yasmeen Khayr a ykhayr@luc.edu o (773) 234-3725. Dr. Christine George a cgeorg@luc.edu o (773) 508-8533.

Con tecnología de Qualtrics

Virtual Interviewing Protocol (Spanish)

Protocolo para la realización de entrevistas virtuales

Entrevistas de litigante para padres de FCEP

El siguiente documento tiene como objetivo establecer un protocolo para realizar entrevistas con los padres litigantes de forma virtual y remota que garantice la seguridad, privacidad y confidencialidad de nuestros participantes. Este protocolo incluirá una proyección previa a la entrevista, un protocolo para durante la entrevista e información sobre la plataforma de videoconferencia Zoom.

CONTACTO DE RECLUTAMIENTO CON LOS PARTICIPANTES

Los participantes que hayan confirmado su participación serán llamados por teléfono para programar la hora y la fecha de su entrevista. Durante esta llamada, el investigador y el participante programarán una hora para la entrevista completa, así como determinar una hora para una reunión de proyección antes de la entrevista programada.

Esta reunión de selección mostrará a los participantes para determinar la seguridad, si el participante preferirá tener la entrevista a través de Zoom video o teléfono, y otra información con respecto al proceso de entrevista.

Los participantes serán notificados de esta información durante esta llamada inicial y se les pedirá que programen una hora para esta reunión telefónica de proyección.

Guión

Hola, esto es [NOMBRE] del Centro de Investigación y Aprendizaje Urbano de la Universidad Loyola de Chicago con respecto a la llamada doméstica about las entrevistas sobreórdenes de protección y el tribunal de violencia doméstica. Hablamos anteriormente y usted estuvo de acuerdo en que estaba interesado en participar en estas entrevistas.

- ¿Es este un momento seguro para hablar o prefiere que discutamos esto en otro momento o por correo electrónico?
    - *En caso afirmativo,* ¿este número de teléfono sigue siendo un número seguro para contacto con usted en el futuro o hay otro número al que deberíamos llamarle??
    - *Si no,* ¿le gustaría reprogramar otra llamada telefónica o prefiere discutir sobre el correo electrónico?
        - *En caso afirmativo,* ¿cuál es una dirección de correo electrónico segura a la que solo puede acceder usted en la que podemos ponernos en contacto con usted??
- En el futuro, estas entrevistas se llevarán a cabo virtualmente a través de vídeo Zoom o teléfono. ¿Confirma que aún desea participar en una entrevista?
    - *En caso afirmativo:* Vamos a programar una fecha / hora para cuando tendríamos esta entrevista.
        - Determine el mejor momento tanto para el participante como para el entrevistador en función de los horarios.

    - *Si no:* Gracias y le agradezco por hacerme saber que no le gustaría participar.
- Antes de tener nuestra entrevista, me gustaría establecer una llamada telefónica previa a la reunión para determinar cómo queremos llevar a cabo la entrevista de forma remota. En esta reunión discutiríamos las opciones de video o teléfono y pasaríamos por procedimientos para garantizar que su seguridad y privacidad se mantengan durante estas entrevistas.
    - ¿Cuándo sería un buen momento para tener esta llamada telefónica previa a la reunión?
        - Determine el mejor momento tanto para el participante como para el entrevistador en función de los horarios.

Ahora que hemos programado tanto la entrevista como la pre-reunión, ¿tiene alguna otra pregunta? Si tiene alguna pregunta o inquietud, no dude en llamarme a [EMAIL] y [PHONE NUMBER].

REUNIÓN DE CRIBADO

Antes de la entrevista programada, el investigador y los participantes tendrán una reunión de detección para determinar la seguridad, si el participante preferirá tener la entrevista a través de Zoom video o teléfono, y otra información con respecto al proceso de entrevista.

Exámenes de seguridad

Se harán las siguientes preguntas para determinar si el participante puede hablar libremente y con seguridad:

- ¿Todavía es un buen momento para hablar? ¿Es seguro para usted hablar en este momento?
    - *Si no,* ¿hay un mejor momento en el que se puede hablar libremente y con seguridad?
- ¿Hablar por teléfono es seguro, o prefiere comunicarse de otra manera?
    - ¿Este número de teléfono sigue siendo el mejor número para ponerse en contacto con usted?
    - Con respecto al correo de voz, ¿tiene algún problema de seguridad si le dejamos un correo de voz sobre la entrevista?
- ¿Estás en un espacio privado donde puedes tener una conversación abierta/honesta durante los próximos 15-20 minutos?
    - *Si no,* ¿hay un mejor momento en el que puedas hablar en un espacio privado?
    - En *caso afirmativo,* ¿podrá utilizar este espacio privado durante la entrevista programada de una hora de duración?
        - *Si no,* ¿hay otro espacio privado que puedas usar para la entrevista?
- ¿Hay alguien más en la habitación contigo?
    - *En caso afirmativo,* ¿podría mudarse a una habitación privada?
    - ¿Hay alguien más viviendo contigo en este momento?
        - *En caso afirmativo,* ¿puede mantener su privacidad a pesar de que alguien más en la casa con usted?
            - *Si no,* ¿hay otra opción o lugar donde pueda hablar en privado?
- ¿Sus hijos viven con usted actualmente?
    - *En caso afirmativo,* ¿puede tener esta conversación en privado sin que lo oiremos?
    - *En caso afirmativo,* ¿tiene alguna inquietud con respecto a sus hijos y participar en esta entrevista privada?

        - *En caso afirmativo, el investigador abordará estas preocupaciones con el participante o reprogramará la reunión.*
- ¿Tiene alguna otra inquietud con respecto a su seguridad o privacidad que pueda surgir durante nuestra entrevista?
    - *En caso afirmativo, el investigador abordará estas preocupaciones con el participante o reprogramará la reunión.*
    - ¿Hay alguna palabra o frase que puedas decirme durante nuestra conversación para hacerme saber si ya no te sientes seguro?

Si el participante indica miedo o riesgos asociados con la realización de esta entrevista de forma remota, y esos riesgos no se pueden mejorar, entonces la entrevista remota no se llevará a cabo.

Capacidad tecnológica

Lo siguiente se utilizará para determinar si un participante preferiría que la entrevista programada se realizara a través de Zoom Video, Zoom Audio Only o Zoom Call-In Telephone, así como sus capacidades tecnológicas.

- Estamos ofreciendo tener estas entrevistas ya sea a través de una llamada Zoom Video o Zoom Call-In llamada telefónica, ¿tiene una preferencia por cómo le gustaría tener la entrevista?
    - *NOTA: Las opciones de Zoom Audio Only y Phone pueden limitar la capacidad del investigador para medir la seguridad y privacidad del participante durante una entrevista para*no ver*al participante.*

Si el teléfono de llamada del zoom:

- ¿El teléfono que planeas usar durante la entrevista es un teléfono celular o un teléfono fijo?
- ¿Le preocupa el tiempo que puede usar su teléfono (minutos limitados o plan de operador de teléfono limitado)?

El investigador explicará cómo funciona el Zoom Call-In Telephone y responderá a cualquier pregunta antes de la entrevista programada:

- Los participantes tendrán la opción de recibir el número de teléfono de llamada zoom, ya sea por teléfono o para recibir un correo electrónico con la invitación de zoom y el número de teléfono.
    - El investigador explicará cómo el participante llamará a la llamada Zoom a través del número de teléfono proporcionado.

Si Zoom Video:

- ¿Tiene un teléfono celular, tableta, iPad, computadora o computadora portátil que podría usar para conectarse a Internet?
- ¿Tiene una conexión a Internet Wi-Fi confiable o un plan de datos de Internet que soporte su tiempo de conexión?
- ¿Le preocupa el tiempo que puede usar sus datos de Internet o teléfono (Wi-Fi limitado o plan de datos telefónico limitado)?

- ¿Alguna vez has usado una aplicación de videollamadas, como Zoom, antes?
- ¿Qué tan cómodo se siente al usar una aplicación de videollamadas para esta entrevista?
- ¿Tiene una dirección de correo electrónico a la que podría enviar un enlace Zoom?
    - *En caso afirmativo,* ¿solo usted y nadie más puede acceder a esta dirección de correo electrónico?
    - *Si no*, ¿estaría dispuesto a configurar una dirección de correo electrónico o preferiría llevar a cabo la reunión por teléfono en su lugar?
- ¿Estarías interesado en un tutorial zoom en vivo conmigo antes de nuestra entrevista programada?
    - *En caso afirmativo, el investigador y el participante programarán una hora para un tutorial de Zoom*

El investigador explicará cómo funciona la plataforma Zoom y responderá a cualquier pregunta sobre la plataforma antes de la entrevista programada:

- La siguiente información sobre el zoom se explicará más a los participantes:
    - Cómo acceder a la reunión y contraseña
    - Cómo descargar Zoom
    - Información sobre la sala de espera, la función de chat y otras funciones
    - Cambiar el fondo del zoom y usar auriculares si hay problemas de seguridad
- Se recordará a los participantes que prueben el audio y el video en su dispositivo con antelación a la entrevista programada.
- Los participantes también tendrán la opción de un tutorial de Zoom en vivo antes de la entrevista programada y también se les proporcionará una guía adicional para Zoom documento que describe cómo acceder y utilizar Zoom.

Compensación

El investigador discutirá con el participante cómo preferiría ser compensado:

- Los participantes serán compensados $70 por su participación en esta entrevista
- Se ofrecerán tres opciones para saber cómo los participantes pueden recibir el estipendio:
    - Cheque por correo (requiere información y dirección de correo electrónico W-9)
    - Tarjeta de regalo Visa Electrónica (requiere dirección de correo electrónico)
    - Tarjeta de regalo Visa de correo (requiere dirección postal)

Al final de la sesión de selección, el investigador creará una reunión única de Zoom y enviará la invitación (incluyendo enlace, número de llamada, contraseña) y una Guía para Zoom al participante por correo electrónico. Se enviará un correo electrónico de recordatorio adicional al participante el día antes de la entrevista programada.

ENTREVISTA PROGRAMADA

Los participantes entrarán en la entrevista remota/virtual a través de Zoom Video Call, Zoom Audio Only o Zoom Call-In Telephone. Si llama a través de Zoom Video Call/Audio Only, los participantes serán colocados en una sala de espera privada hasta que el investigador les permita el acceso a la reunión. A todos los participantes se les harán varias preguntas para garantizar la seguridad, confidencialidad y consentimiento antes de comenzar la entrevista formal.

Procedimientos de zoom

Si el teléfono de llamada del zoom:

- A los participantes se les proporcionará un número de llamada zoom por teléfono o correo electrónico antes de la entrevista programada
- El día de la entrevista, los participantes llamarán al número de llamada zoom desde su teléfono y entrarán en la reunión de Zoom
    - El investigador notificará a los participantes que Zoom enmascarará los números de teléfono del participante para garantizar aún más la confidencialidad de su información de contacto.
- El investigador hará preguntas (se indica a continuación) con respecto a la seguridad, la confidencialidad y el consentimiento antes de comenzar la entrevista formal.

Si solo zoom de vídeo o audio:

- Los participantes recibirán una invitación por correo electrónico de Zoom antes de la entrevista programada que incluye el ID de reunión único, el enlace y la contraseña necesarios para acceder a la reunión.
    - También se proporcionará una guía para zoom y un tutorial de zoom opcional a todos los participantes antes de la entrevista.
- Cuando los participantes se unan a la reunión de zoom, se colocarán inmediatamente en una sala de espera privada hasta que el investigador les conceda acceso a la reunión.
    - Una vez que el participante entra en la reunión, el investigador se asegurará de que el nombre del participante no aparezca en la grabación de vídeo.
- El investigador también tomará algún tiempo para discutir el potencial de problemas técnicos que podrían ocurrir, incluyendo desafíos con retrasos de conexión, desconexión y dispositivos cargados.
    - El investigador también revisará lo que los participantes deben hacer en caso de que la llamada se desconecte o si pierden el servicio / conexión.
    - También se recordará a los participantes que se aseguren de que su dispositivo esté completamente cargado y/o que haya un cable de carga disponible durante la entrevista.
- El investigador hará preguntas (se indica a continuación) con respecto a la seguridad, la confidencialidad y el consentimiento antes de comenzar la entrevista formal.

Seguridad y privacidad

Una vez que los participantes han entrado en el video o llamada telefónica, el investigador hará varias preguntas en torno a la seguridad y la privacidad.

- ¿Todavía es un buen momento para usted a hablar? ¿Es seguro para usted a hablar ahora mismo?
    - *Si no*, ¿hay un mejor momento en el que se puede hablar libremente y con seguridad?
- ¿Está en un espacio privado donde puede tener una conversación abierta/honesta durante la próxima hora?
    - *Si no,* ¿hay mejor momento en el que puedas hablar en un espacio privado?

    - Si alguien entra en el espacio, la conversación de la entrevista se detendrá hasta que la persona ya no esté en la misma habitación que el participante.
    - ¿Tiene alguna inquietud con respecto a sus hijos y participar en esta entrevista privada?
        - *En caso afirmativo, el investigador abordará estas preocupaciones con el participante o reprogramará la reunión si es necesario.*
- ¿Tiene alguna otra inquietud con respecto a su seguridad o privacidad que pueda surgir durante nuestra entrevista?
    - ¿Hay alguna palabra o frase que puedas decirme durante nuestra conversación para hacerme saber si ya no te sientes seguro?
    - Si el participante ya no se siente lo suficientemente seguro para completar la entrevista, la entrevista terminará y potencialmente reprogramada.
        - *En caso afirmativo, el investigador abordará estas preocupaciones con el participante o reprogramará la reunión si es necesario.*

Confidencialidad, Consentimiento e Indemnización

Se habría enviado una declaración de consentimiento informado a los participantes por correo electrónico antes de la entrevista programada.

- El investigador leerá verbalmente a través de la declaración de consentimiento informado y ofrecerá a los participantes la oportunidad de hacer cualquier pregunta o preocupación del estado antes de aceptar participar.
    - Los participantes discutirán con los participantes las coacciones y procesos detallados de la entrevista para garantizar la confidencialidad de la información que compartan.
    - El investigador compartirá la preferencia de compensación que el participante hizo anteriormente y se asegurará de que este método de pago sigue siendo adecuado para el participante.
    - El investigador también solicitará el consentimiento con respecto al registro de la entrevista y los procedimientos para garantizar la privacidad y confidencialidad de su identidad y la información que comparten durante la entrevista.
        - El investigador notificará a los participantes que la llamada Zoom está encriptada y no se puede rastrear digitalmente.

INFORMACIÓN DE LA PLATAFORMA ZOOM

Descarga de Zoom

- A los participantes de la entrevista se les proporcionará un ID de reunión y una contraseña únicos de Zoom que se enviarán por correo electrónico
- Los participantes tendrán algunas opciones para unirse a la reunión de Zoom:
    - Descarga de Zoom
        - Zoom se descargará automáticamente cuando se une por primera vez a una reunión de Zoom
        - También está disponible para descarga manual aquí: https://zoom.us/download#client_4meeting
    - Invitación por correo electrónico

        - Los participantes pueden hacer clic directamente en el enlace Zoom que se envió a través de una invitación por correo electrónico
        - Se les pedirá que descarguen o abran la aplicación Zoom
    - Introducción manual del ID de la reunión
        - Para los participantes que ya tienen Zoom descargado, pueden hacer clic en "Unirse a la reunión" e ingresar manualmente el ID de la reunión para unirse a la reunión
    - Número de llamada
        - Los participantes que solo quieran usar la opción de teléfono pueden acceder al número de llamada desde la invitación de correo electrónico de Zoom
        - Los participantes tendrán que llamar al número desde su teléfono personal, introducir el ID de la reunión y la tecla de libra en el teclado para acceder a la reunión

Características de seguridad de Zoom

- La cuenta LUC Zoom proporciona una conexión remota segura y cifrada, y la reunión se puede bloquear una vez que comience la entrevista.
- Cada reunión tiene un número de identificación único y se requerirá una contraseña para entrar en la reunión.
- Los participantes serán colocados en una sala de espera cuando entren en la llamada en la que el investigador puede controlar cuándo y cómo el participante puede unirse a la reunión más grande
    - El investigador desactivará la función "unirse antes del anfitrión" antes de la reunión
- Zoom puede enmascarar el número de participantes que utilizan la opción de solo teléfono para mantener su privacidad y confidencialidad
    - El investigador enmascarará el número de teléfono personal del participante
- Las funciones de chat solo se permitirán con el host.
- Sólo el investigador tendrá acceso y capacidad para compartir la pantalla.
- Se animará a los participantes a usar auriculares y a cambiar su fondo Zoom.
- Para fines de entrevistas y recopilación de datos, la reunión será grabada audio a través de Zoom y transcrita por un asistente de investigación CURL.
    - Las reuniones se grabarán y transcriben audio a través de la plataforma Zoom y se guardarán en el portátil protegido con contraseña del investigador para garantizar la privacidad y confidencialidad de los contenidos del participante y de la entrevista.

Posibles problemas técnicos y preocupaciones

- Si un participante está usando su teléfono y las cosas son lentas, compruebe si está usando Wi-Fi o datos - uno puede ser más rápido que el otro.
    - Nota: Los participantes pueden tener limitaciones de datos, así que asegúrese de que pueden usar Wi-Fi o datos
        - Ofrezca compensaciones adicionales a los participantes que se pueden utilizar exclusivamente para el uso de datos

- El zoom en ejecución puede agotar la batería del teléfono. Si usa un teléfono celular, es probable que las partes necesiten poder cargar su teléfono durante la llamada o mantenerlo enchufado durante la llamada.
- Recuerde a los participantes al comienzo de la entrevista que estén al tanto de si el entrevistador o el entrevistado están retrasados en la resolución de problemas a medida que se producen retrasos:
    - Intente cambiar al uso de datos
    - Salga y entre en la reunión de nuevo
    - Cambiar al teléfono en su lugar si los retrasos interfieren con la entrevista

Para más asistencia con Zoom

- Zoom ofrece un tutorial de entrenamiento de una hora y una visión general de cómo utilizar su plataforma aquí.
- Zoom también ofrece un Entrenamiento Tutorial en Vivo, puede registrarse aquí.

Participant Guide to Zoom (Spanish)

Guía del participante para usar Zoom

Entrevistas de litigante para padres de FCEP

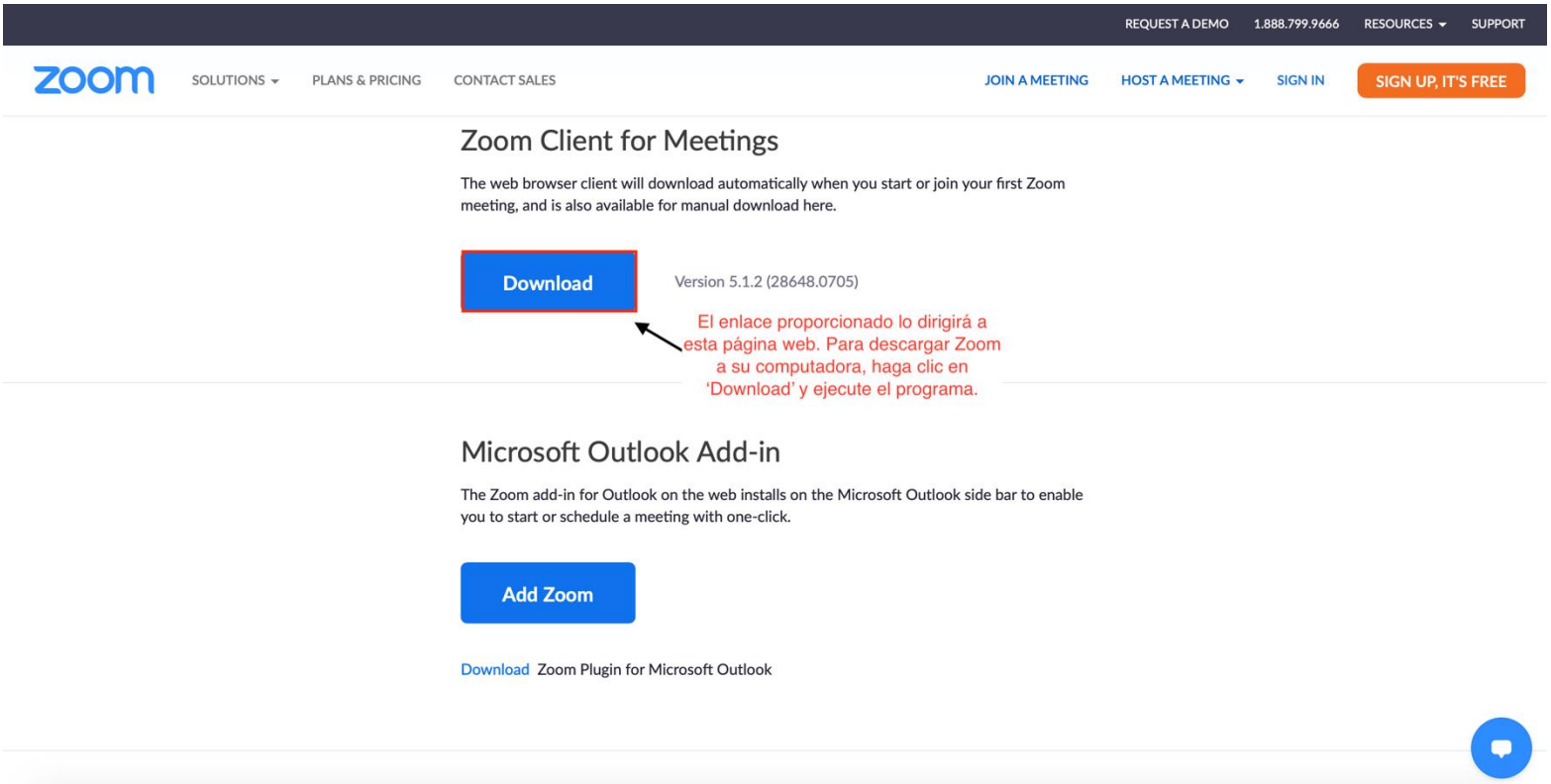
Usted ha aceptado participar en entrevistas virtuales enfocadas en su experiencia judicial y tiempo de crianza con sus hijos. Las entrevistas se llevarán a cabo a través de Zoom, una plataforma virtual para videoconferencia y conferencias telefónicas. Esta guía le ayudará a navegar cómo descargar y usar Zoom en preparación para la próxima entrevista. ¡Agradecemos que se tome el tiempo para familiarizarse con Zoom y por participar en una entrevista con nosotros!

Reunión de solo vídeo o audio

Descargar Zoom y unirse a una reunión de Zoom

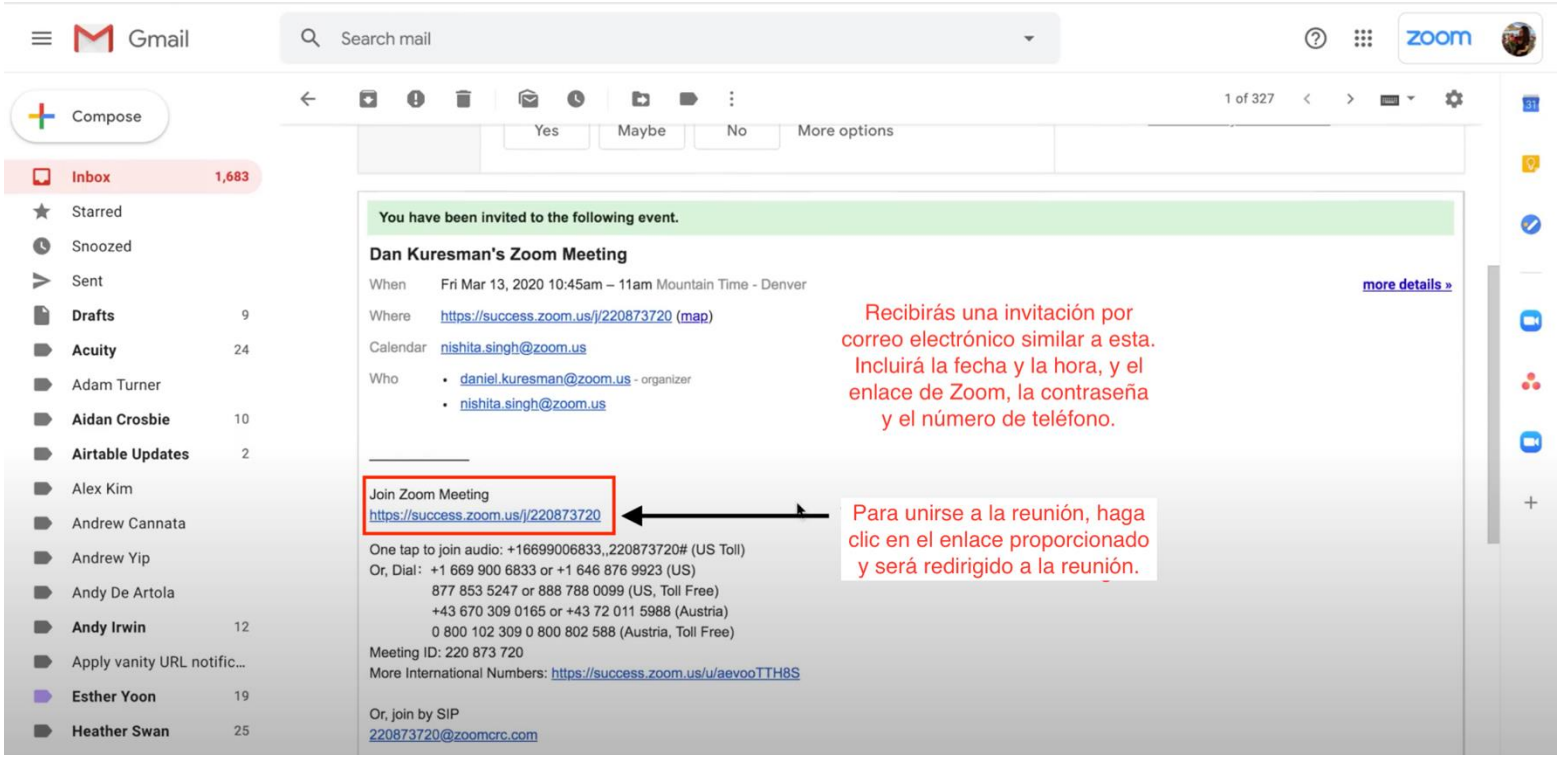
- Una vez que haya programado una hora de entrevista con el investigador, se le proporcionará un **ID de reunión zoom único y una contraseña** que se enviará a su correo electrónico
- Tendrás algunas opciones para unirte a la reunión de Zoom:
    - Descarga de Zoom

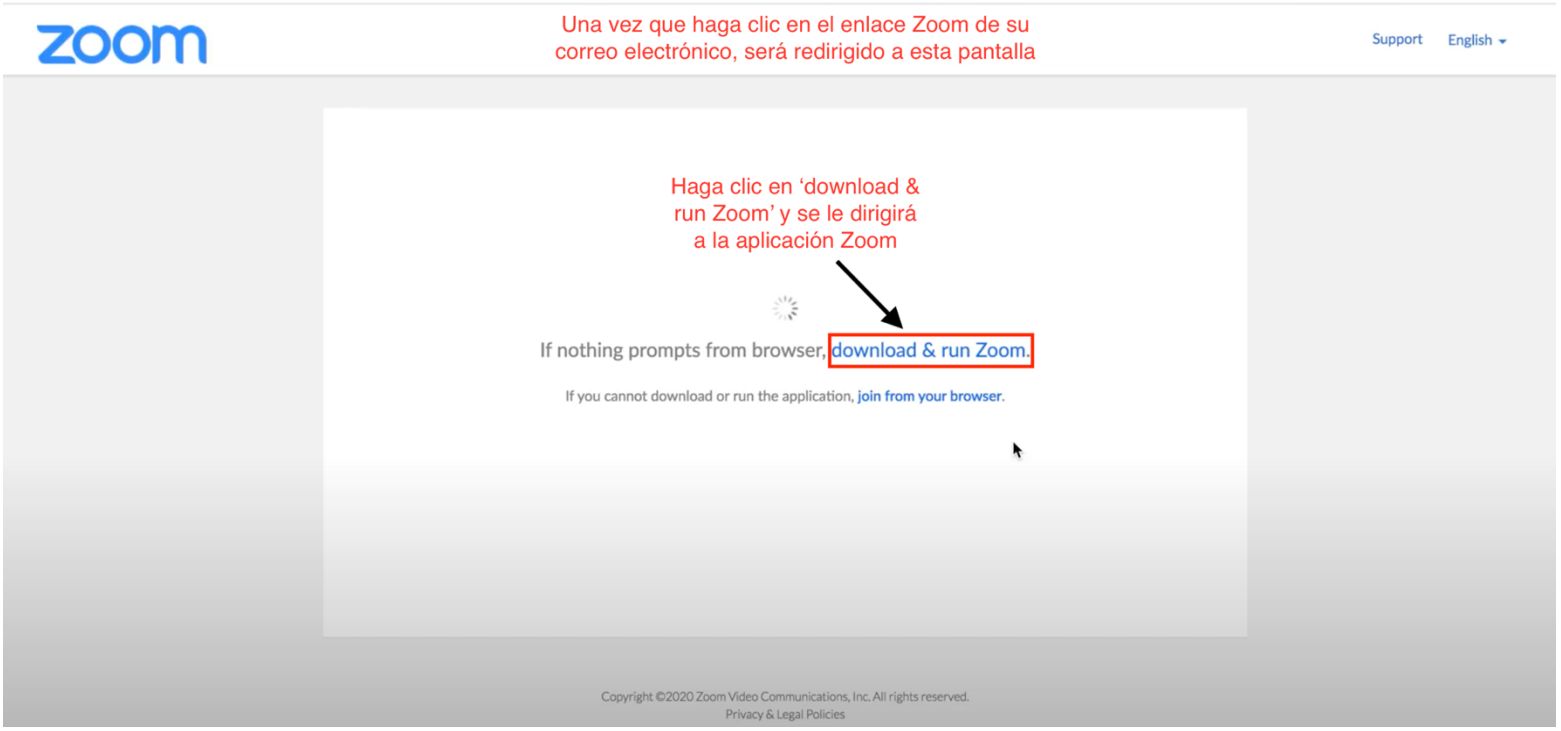
- Puede descargar manualmente Zoom aquí: https://zoom.us/download#client_4meeting

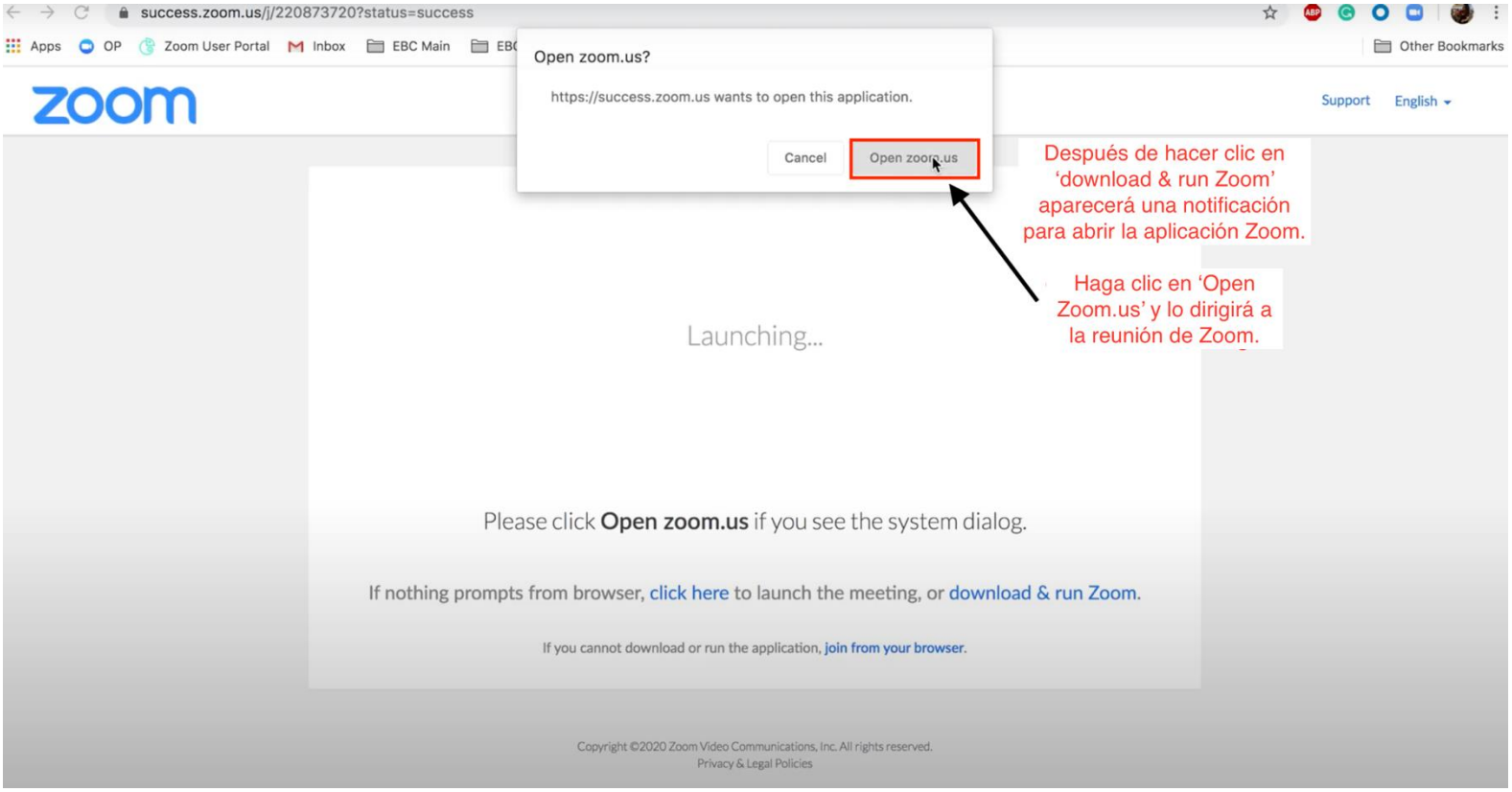


- Invitación por correo electrónico
  - Puede hacer clic directamente en el enlace Zoom que se envió a través de una invitación por correo electrónico

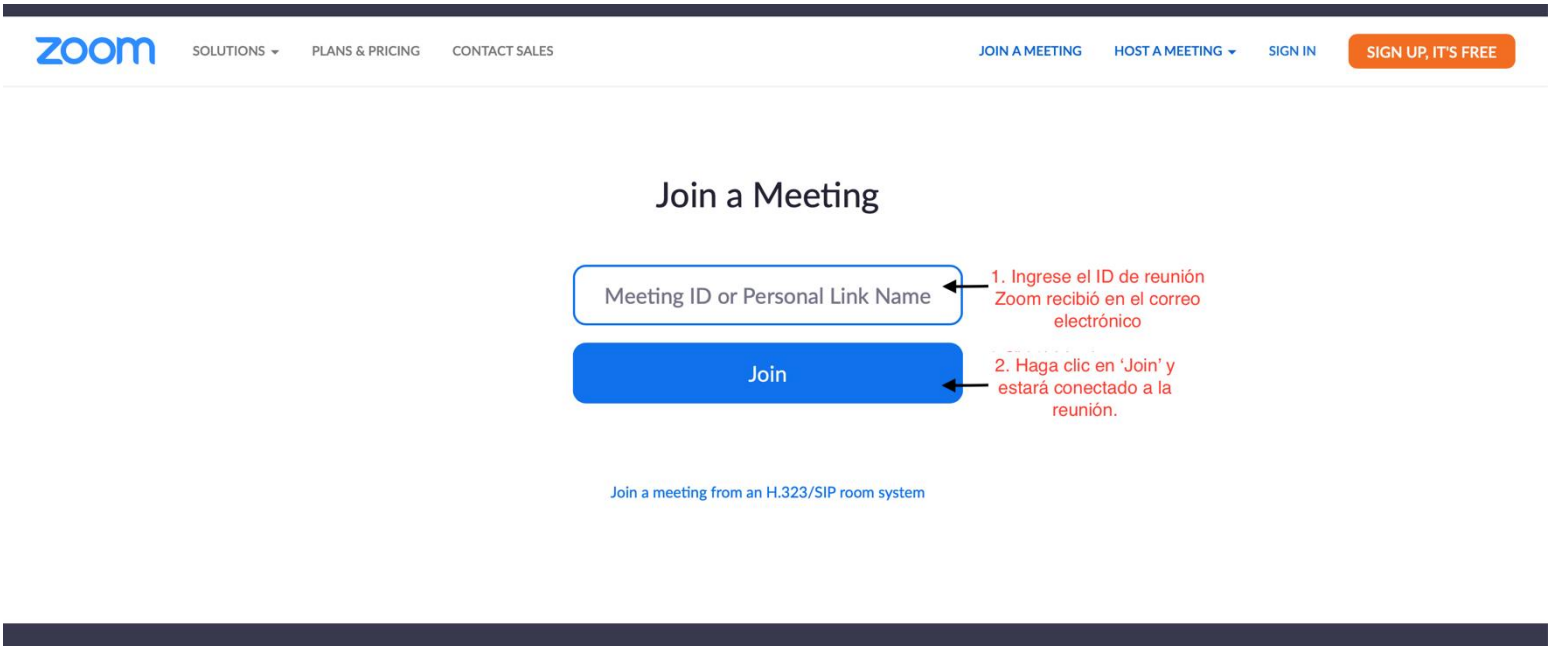
- Se le pedirá que descargue o abra la aplicación Zoom





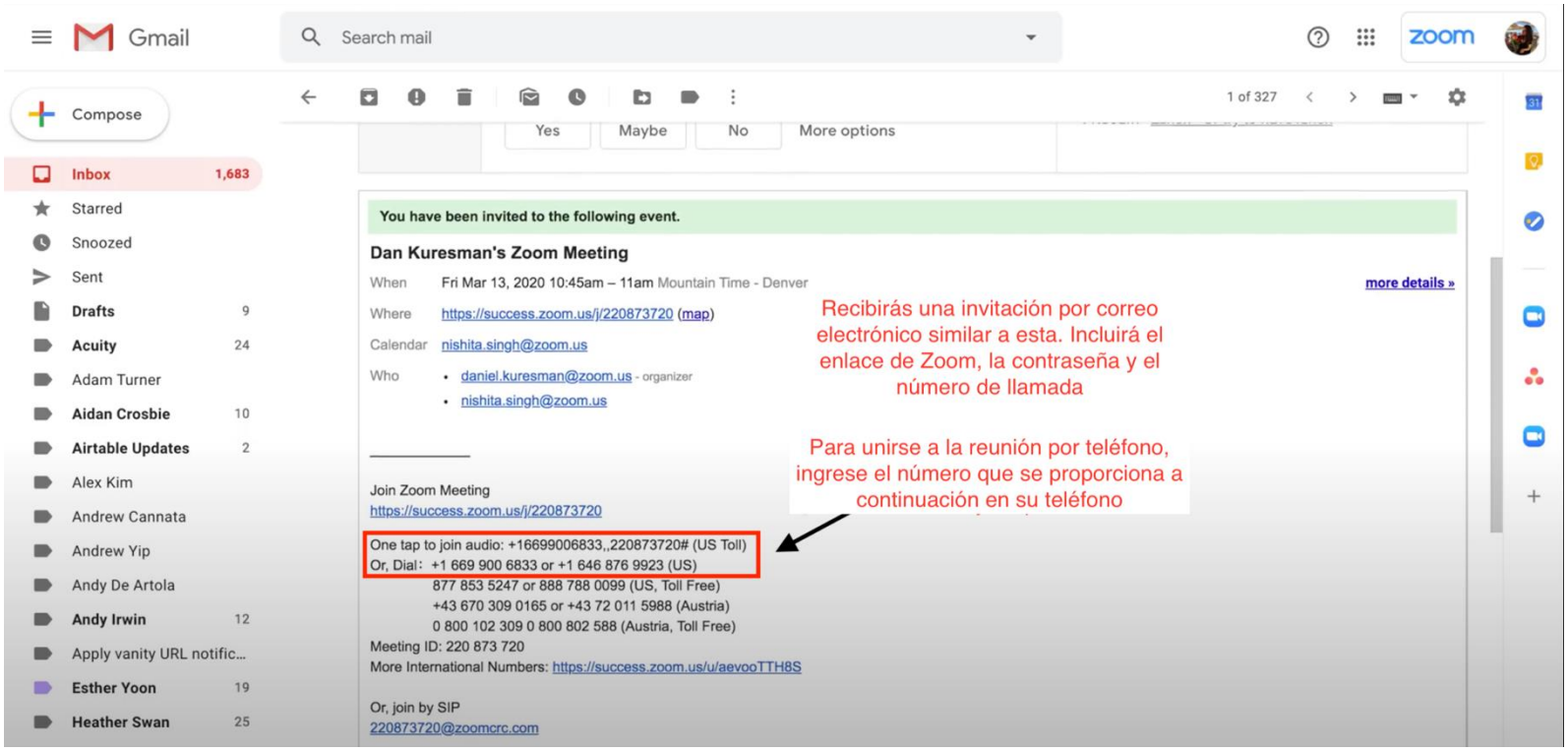


- Introducción manual del ID de la reunión
  - Si ya ha descargado Zoom, puede hacer clic en "Unirse a la reunión" e ingresar manualmente el ID de la reunión para unirse a la reunión



Número de llamada de zoom

- Si prefiere participar en esta entrevista por teléfono en lugar de video, también tiene la opción de llamar a la reunión a través de un **número de llamada Zoom**
- El número de llamada se le puede proporcionar antes de la reunión o se puede acceder a él a través de la invitación de correo electrónico de Zoom



  - Cuando sea la hora de su entrevista programada, por favor marque el número de llamada en su teléfono
    - Una vez conectado, se le pedirá que introduzca el ID de la reunión y la tecla de libra (o) en el teclado.
    - Se le pedirá que introduzca un ID de participante o simplemente la tecla de libra (o) en el teclado, sólo tiene que introducir la clave de libra (o) y tendrá acceso a la reunión.
- Si utiliza la opción de solo teléfono, Zoom enmascarará su número de teléfono personal para garantizar su privacidad y confidencialidad

Características de seguridad de Zoom

- Además del enlace Zoom y el número de ID, se le proporcionará una **contraseña** (ubicada en la invitación de correo electrónico zoom)

    - Después de hacer clic en el enlace Zoom y/o ingresar el número de identificación, es posible que se le pida que introduzca la contraseña para acceder a la reunión.
- Una vez que haya obtenido acceso con éxito a la reunión, se le colocará en una **sala de espera**
    - Por favor, espere hasta que el investigador (anfitrión) le conceda acceso a la reunión de vídeo

Características adicionales del zoom

- Chat
    - Las funciones de chat le permitirán chatear de forma privada con el anfitrión del investigador
- Pantalla compartida
    - El acceso de pantalla compartida se limitará únicamente al investigador (anfitrión), por lo que no tendrá acceso a compartir su pantalla durante la reunión
- Grabación y transcripción de zoom
    - Como se discutió durante el proceso de consentimiento, la reunión será grabada en audio y transcrita y sólo el investigador (anfitrión) tendrá acceso a estas grabaciones
    - Las grabaciones y transcripciones se eliminarán de la plataforma Zoom y se almacenarán únicamente en un portátil protegido con contraseña

Posibles problemas técnicos y preocupaciones

- Si usas tu teléfono y las cosas son lentas, comprueba si estás usando Wi-Fi o datos celulares: uno puede ser más rápido que el otro.
- El zoom en ejecución puede agotar la batería del teléfono. Si usas un teléfono celular, es probable que debas poder cargar tu teléfono durante la llamada o mantenerlo conectado durante la llamada.
- Si durante la entrevista la conexión comienza a retraso, por favor considere:
    - Intente cambiar al uso de datos
    - Salga y entre en la reunión de nuevo
    - Cambiar al teléfono en su lugar si los retrasos interfieren con la entrevista

Para más asistencia con Zoom

- Zoom ofrece un tutorial de entrenamiento de una hora y una visión general de cómo utilizar la plataforma ir aquí.
- Zoom también ofrece un Entrenamiento Tutorial en Vivo, puede registrarse aquí.

Litigant Interview Consent Form (Spanish)

Declaración de consentimiento para participar en la investigación

Título del proyecto: Evaluación de la eficacia del proyecto de mejora de la Corte de Familia en el Tribunal de Violencia Doméstica, Chicago, IL

Introducción:

Se le pide que participe en un estudio de investigación que evalúe el Proyecto de Mejora del Tribunal de Familia en el Tribunal de Violencia Doméstica (FCEP). En particular, esta entrevista le preguntará acerca de sus arreglos de crianza y su experiencia trabajando con la Facilitadora de Alivio Infantil y el tribunal para crear ese plan. Este estudio está siendo realizado por investigadores del Centro de Investigación y Aprendizaje Urbano (CURL) de la Universidad Loyola en asociación con la División de Violencia Doméstica del Tribunal de Circuito del Condado de Cook. La Investigadora Principal de este proyecto es la Dra. Christine George.

Propósito:

CURL planea llevar a cabo esta investigación con el fin de comprender mejor el impacto del FCEP en los procedimientos judiciales y los resultados de los litigantes con niños en común en las órdenes civiles de protección. El objetivo de esta entrevista es comprender mejor la experiencia de los litigantes que han presentado una orden de protección en el tribunal y que tienen hijos en común.

Procedimientos:

Esta entrevista tomará aproximadamente 45-60 minutos. Durante las entrevistas, el investigador le preguntará acerca de sus arreglos de crianza y su experiencia trabajando con la Facilitadora de Alivio Infantil y el tribunal para crear ese plan.

Las entrevistas se llevarán a cabo de forma remota, siendo por vídeo Zoom, solo audio Zoom o teléfono de llamada Zoom. En este punto, usted ha participado en un examen de seguridad y tecnología para evaluar si y cómo puede participar en esta entrevista. También se le ofreció una Guía del Participante para Zoom, así como una orientación en vivo opcional a Zoom antes de la entrevista programada.

El investigador puede estar tomando notas durante la entrevista, pero no registrará su nombre ni ninguna otra información personal identificable, excepto por una vez durante el comienzo de la entrevista durante el proceso de consentimiento informado. Además, con su permiso, tenemos la intención de grabar audio de la entrevista a través de Zoom. Sólo el investigador y los asistentes de investigación tendrán acceso a las grabaciones de audio, y serán transcritos. Los archivos de audio y transcripciones se guardarán inicialmente en la nube de Zoom y luego se cargarán/guardarán en una unidad de red LUC segura a la que solo podrá acceder el investigador por un aparato protegido por contraseña. Los archivos de audio y transcripción originales se eliminarán de la nube de Zoom una vez cargados en la unidad de red LUC segura para garantizar la privacidad de los datos. Las transcripciones completadas se almacenarán en una carpeta de proyecto de OneDrive segura de Loyola sin nombres ni otra información de identificación. Al final del estudio, los archivos de audio serán destruidos, pero las transcripciones se mantendrán. Las transcripciones se almacenarán en una carpeta segura del proyecto OneDrive segura de Loyola sin información de identificación para su posible uso futuro.

Riesgos/Beneficios:

No hay riesgos previsibles más allá de los experimentados en la vida cotidiana. Los investigadores harán todo lo posible para mantener su identidad y respuestas privadas. También se le pedirá que elija un seudónimo en lugar de compartir su nombre durante la entrevista.

Usted no recibirá ningún beneficio directo por participar. Sin embargo, la información que usted proporciona a los investigadores ayudará significativamente a entender el impacto del FCEP en los procedimientos judiciales y los resultados de los litigantes con niños en común que solicitan órdenes de protección.

Compensación:

Recibirá un estipendio de $75 si participa en el estudio. Este estipendio está destinado a compensarle por su tiempo, transporte potencial y / o cuidado de niños que pueda necesitar, y por cualquier dato celular, Internet, o tecnología general utilizada durante estas entrevistas. Se le han ofrecido tres opciones de cómo le gustaría ser compensado: cheque por correo, tarjeta de regalo Visa por correo o tarjeta de regalo Visa electrónica. Se le compensará al final de la entrevista.

Confidencialidad:

La confidencialidad se mantendrá en la medida permitida por la tecnología utilizada. Su participación en esta entrevista remota implica riesgos similares al uso diario de Internet por parte de una persona. La plataforma LUC Zoom proporciona una conexión remota segura y cifrada. La confidencialidad y privacidad en la plataforma Zoom se mantendrán a través de un ID de reunión único protegido por contraseña y un enlace. Si está utilizando el número de llamada Zoom, el número desde el que está llamando será enmascarado al investigador para proteger aún más su privacidad. Aparte del investigador/entrevistador y tomador/a de notas, solo usted, el participante, tendrá acceso a esta reunión privada de Zoom. Si acepta que se grabe audio, la grabación y transcripción solo se compartirán entre los investigadores de CURL y los asistentes de investigación, no incluirán ninguna información de identificación y se guardarán en un dispositivo seguro protegido por contraseña.

Si acepta participar en este estudio, la información individual que nos diga se mantendrá privada y, cuando se publique un informe, sus respuestas individuales no estarán conectadas a usted por su nombre. Como se señaló anteriormente, aparte de una vez no registraremos su nombre cuando tomemos notas durante la entrevista y su nombre no aparecerá en ningún informe u otro documento público relacionado con este estudio. El hecho de que haya participado en el estudio no se compartirá con ninguna persona fuera del personal de investigación. En particular, su participación no se compartirá con el otro padre de su hijo(s), el Facilitadora de Alivio de Niños, o el Tribunal, y su participación no afectará su caso(s) judicial(es) actual(es).

Participación Voluntaria:

Su participación en esta entrevista es completamente voluntaria. Usted es libre de participar o negarse a participar como desee. Incluso si decide participar, usted es libre de no responder a ninguna pregunta o retirarse de la entrevista en cualquier momento sin penalización.

Contactos y preguntas:

Si tiene preguntas sobre este estudio de investigación, no dude en ponerse en contacto con los investigadores de la Universidad Loyola de Chicago Yasmeen Khayr en ykhayr@luc.edu o 773.234.3725 o la Dra. Christine George en cgeorg@luc.edu o 773.508.8533. Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante en la investigación, puede comunicarse con la Oficina de Servicios de Investigación de la Universidad de Loyola al 773.508.2689.

Declaración de consentimiento:

Por favor responda a las siguientes dos preguntas:

¿Consiente participar en la entrevista?

□ Sí, doy mi consentimiento para participar en esta entrevista.

□ No, no doy mi consentimiento y no participaré en esta entrevista.

¿Consiente que se grabe audio durante esta entrevista de Zoom?

□ Sí, doy mi consentimiento para que me graben audio durante esta entrevista.

□ No, no doy mi consentimiento para que me graben audio durante esta entrevista.

Responder "sí" a las preguntas anteriores indica que ha leído o que el investigador le ha leído la declaración de consentimiento. También indica que ha tenido la oportunidad de hacer preguntas y está de acuerdo en participar en este estudio de investigación. Se le enviará por correo electrónico una copia de este formulario para guardar para sus registros.

Petitioner Interview Guide (Spanish)

Proyecto de Mejora del Tribunal de Familia: Investigación y Evaluación

Guía de entrevistas del peticionario

Pregunta de investigación: 2.1: *¿En qué medida perciben los peticionarios y los encuestados, después de trabajar con el CRE, que los acuerdos de crianza en el PO son seguros y justos tres meses después de la entrada en el OP?*

Objetivo

- Para entender desde la perspectiva de los peticionarios y los encuestados, cómo el FCEP afectó a:
    - Arreglos de visitas y plan de crianza compartida
    - La seguridad y la de sus hijos
    - Sensación general de equidad o justicia procesal

Hola, queremos comenzar agradeciéndole por estar aquí hoy y tomarse el tiempo para hablar con nosotros sobre su experiencia de obtener una Orden de Protección en la corte de violencia doméstica y cómo las cosas están yendo para usted ahora, unos meses más tarde. A través de su experiencia y perspectiva, estamos tratando de hacernos una idea de lo bien que el sistema judicial DV y el programa de agilización le ha ayudado o no a usted y a su familia. También quiero reconocer que el proceso judicial puede haber sido difícil, pero realmente apreciamos que hable con nosotros y realmente valoramos su experiencia y voz al tratar de mejorar el proceso judicial.

Soy investigador en el Centro de Investigación y Aprendizaje Urbano de la Universidad Loyola de Chicago. Realmente quiero entender su experiencia como alguien que no ha tenido el mismo tipo de experiencia para mejorar el futuro del proceso judicial y los resultados para personas como usted y sus familias. Por lo tanto, voy a hacerle una serie de preguntas con respecto a lo que fue tratar de llegar a un plan de crianza, cómo ese plan está funcionando para usted y sus hijos ahora, y su experiencia con todo el proceso del tribunal.

Además, para garantizar su privacidad, no voy a indicar su nombre en ningún momento durante la entrevista y la entrevista no será etiquetada con su nombre. Nos gustaría usar seudónimos. ¿Qué nombre alternativo quieres que te llame?

También le pido que no se refiera a nadie más por su nombre. En su lugar, puedes decir algo como "mi madre, mi amiga, mi pareja" pero por favor no uses el nombre de nadie. También le pedimos que no comparta información sobre ningún otro caso, o actividades relacionadas con

cualquier otro caso judicial. Estamos aquí para hablar sobre cómo fue su experiencia durante el caso OP.

Quiero que sepas que este es un espacio seguro para lo que estés pensando o sintiendo, y puedes compartir tanto o tan poco como te haga sentir cómodo. Por último, si en algún momento de la entrevista no te sientes cómodo respondiendo a una pregunta o quieres terminar la entrevista, no dudes en hacerlo.

Preguntas para la transición al inicio:

Opción 1: Antes de profundizar en las preguntas específicas sobre su experiencia en el tribunal, cuéntame un poco sobre usted y sus hijos. ¿Cómo te traen alegría?

Opción 2: Antes de profundizar en las preguntas específicas sobre su experiencia en la corte, quiero que piense en el tribunal, su experiencia allí, el personal con el que interactuó, y cualquier otra cosa relacionada. Ahora que has pensado un poco, ¿cuáles son algunos adjetivos que vienen a la mente? ¿Qué palabras usarías para describir esa experiencia?

Preguntas de detección

Gracias por compartir eso, quiero empezar primero con algunas preguntas contextuales sobre su OP y el acuerdo que creó con el CRE...

1. ¿Podría decirme cómo llegó a crear este acuerdo de crianza?
    a. ¿Se negoció este plan entre usted y el padre?
        i. ¿El plan fue ordenado por un juez o fue a una audiencia?
    b. ¿Usted tuve un abogado o defensor con usted durante su proceso tribunal?
    c. ¿Cómo te conectaste con el CRE?
        i. ¿El juez ofreció el CRE como opción? ¿O su abogado o defensor los refirieron?
    d. ¿Ha habido alguna participación del DCFS en su caso?
        i. ¿La participación del DCFS ha influido el tipo de plan que acordaron?

*Plan/Acuerdo de crianza**

**Cada entrevista tendrá preguntas únicas sobre el tiempo específico de crianza, la comunicación y el intercambio dependiendo de las especificidades de su acuerdo. Tendremos acceso a este acuerdo antes de la entrevista*

Gracias por compartir eso, quiero ahora empezar a hablar un poco sobre su experiencia actual con el plan de crianza que creó hace unos meses...

1. ¿Puedes guiarme a través de su plan de crianza actual? ¿Cómo ha funcionado para usted y su familia?
    a. ¿Qué plan creaste en torno a la comunicación sobre tus hijos? ¿Y cómo ha funcionado?
    b. ¿Cómo está funcionando el intercambio de sus hijos con el padre antes y después de una visita?
    c. ¿Cómo crees que van las visitas o el tiempo de crianza entre tus hijos y el padre?
2. ¿Ha afectado la pandemia COVID al plan de crianza? ¿De qué manera? ¿Ha tenido algún impacto en tu habilidad de seguir adelante con el plan?

*Tiempo de crianza**

**Se harán distinciones en función de si el OP ha concedido visitas no supervisadas, visitas supervisadas por un miembro de la familia, visitas supervisadas en un centro o una variación de estas opciones. Pero, en general, se harán las siguientes preguntas en todas las entrevistas:*

1. *Clarificación sobre 'el tiempo de crianza';* ¿Cuál ha sido su experiencia con el plan actual para el tiempo de crianza?
2. ¿Has tenido alguna preocupación acerca de este acuerdo de crianza?
    a. ¿El acuerdo atiende alguna de esas preocupaciones?
3. ¿Se han sentido usted y su familia más seguros con este plan de crianza?
    a. ¿Ha tenido algún problema de seguridad para usted o para sus hijos?
    b. ¿Alguna de estas preocupaciones de seguridad se han relacionado específicamente con COVID?
4. ¿Qué ha ido bien?
5. ¿Ha habido algún reto? ¿Qué no ha ido bien?
6. ¿Alguno de estos retos se han relacionado específicamente con COVID?

Si visita sin supervisión:

7. ¿Tuvieron previamente sus hijos las visitas supervisadas con el padre?
8. Si es así, ¿podría describir la experiencia de volver a tener tiempo de crianza sin supervisión?
9. ¿Si es que aplica, cómo se ha visto el tiempo de crianza afectado por COVID?
    a. ¿Ha tenido que hacer algún ajuste a las visitas debido a COVID?

Si la visita supervisada por un miembro de la familia:

10. ¿Cómo ha sido su experiencia con el hecho de que sus hijos visiten al padre con un miembro de la familia presente?
11. ¿Si es que aplica, cómo se ha visto el tiempo de crianza afectado por COVID?
    a. ¿Ha tenido que hacer algún ajuste a las visitas debido a COVID?

Si visitas supervisadas en un centro:

12. ¿Cómo ha sido su experiencia utilizando el centro de visitas supervisado?
13. ¿Se ha sentido seguro llevando a sus hijos al centro de visitas?
14. ¿Si es que aplica, cómo se ha afectado el tiempo de crianza por COVID?
    a. ¿Ha tenido que hacer algún ajuste a las visitas debido a COVID?

Niños

1. ¿Cuántos hijos tienes? ¿Cuántos años tienen?
2. ¿Cómo crees que ha sido la experiencia de tus hijos con el otro padre en los últimos meses?
3. ¿Cómo creen que se sentían sus hijos cuando usted comenzó con este plan de crianza (incluye comunicación, intercambio, visitas)?
    a. ¿Qué te hace pensar eso?
4. ¿Cómo creen que se sienten sus hijos con respecto al plan ahora, un par de meses después?
    a. ¿Qué te hace pensar eso?
5. ¿Cómo se han comportado sus hijos cuando usted deja o recoge a sus hijos del otro padre/centro de visitas/etc.?
6. ¿Cómo se han comportado sus hijos después de visitar al otro padre?
7. ¿Cómo han reaccionado sus hijos a su tiempo con el otro padre?
8. ¿Cómo ha afectado este arreglo de crianza *a su* relación con sus hijos? *(cambios, dificultades de mejora)*
9. ¿Si es que aplica, cómo se ha visto afectada la experiencia de su hijo con el tiempo de crianza debido a COVID?
    a. ¿La pandemia ha impactado el comportamiento de sus hijos de alguna manera?

Crianza

1. ¿Cómo ha afectado el plan de crianza la forma en que usted cria a sus hijos?
2. ¿Qué partes del plan de crianza van bien?
    a. ¿Cómo cumplió este plan con sus expectativas? ¿Cómo no ha cumplido con sus expectativas?
3. ¿Ha habido algún problema con el plan de crianza? ¿O problemas para seguir este plan de crianza?
    a. *Si el plan no ha salido según lo* planeado, ¿cómo crees que podría mejorarse el plan?
    b. ¿Sabía que puede modificar su plan de crianza?
        i. ¿Ha solicitado una modificación o ha realizado algún cambio en este plan en los últimos tres meses?
        ii. En caso afirmativo, ¿por qué se hicieron esos cambios? ¿Cómo han afectado esos cambios a usted y a su familia?
4. ¿Tuvo que hacer alguna modificación a su plan de crianza debido a COVID?

a. En caso afirmativo, ¿por qué se hicieron esos cambios? ¿Cómo han afectado esos cambios a usted y a su familia?

Experiencia con la Facilitadora de Alivio Infantil

Ahora que hemos pasado por su plan de crianza actual, quiero que piense en su experiencia con la Facilitadora de Alivio Infantil (CRE) y la creación del plan de crianza con ella...

1. ¿Podría describirme cómo supo por primera vez sobre el CRE o quién le informó sobre este recurso?
2. ¿Qué tipo de plan (tiempo de crianza; intercambio; comunicación) esperaba discutir y crear con la facilitadora?
    a. ¿Cómo se dio cuenta de los tipos de problemas relacionados con los niños y la crianza que podría plantear en su plan de OP y de crianza?
3. ¿Cómo fue la experiencia general para usted?
    a. ¿Puede nombrar algunas preocupaciones que quería mencionar durante la sesión?
    b. ¿Puede nombrar algunas preocupaciones que desea incluir en su acuerdo?
4. ¿Sintió que podía compartir sus preocupaciones con la facilitadora?
    a. ¿Sintió que podía incluir esas preocupaciones en el acuerdo?
5. ¿Qué estuvo bien durante su reunión? ¿Qué fue útil?
6. ¿Hubo alguna barrera que usted cree que interfirió para tratar de formular este plan?
7. ¿El plan que creó cumplió con sus expectativas de lo que quería?
8. ¿Ha estado en contacto virtualmente con la facilitadora durante la pandemia?
    a. Si es así, ¿cómo estuvo esa experiencia?

*Experiencia con los Jueces**

**Los peticionarios pueden haber visto varios jueces en EOP, POP u otras audiencias.*

Ahora me gustaría hablar con usted sobre su experiencia con los jueces con los que interactuó durante el proceso judicial...

1. ¿Con cuántos jueces usted interactuó durante su tiempo en el tribunal? ¿Cómo fueron sus interacciones generales con los jueces?
    a. ¿Podría describir esa experiencia?
2. ¿Pudiste plantear alguna de sus preocupaciones con los jueces?
    a. *En caso afirmativo*: ¿El juez respondía a estos?
    b. En caso negativo:
3. Más específicamente, ¿mencionó alguna preocupación con respecto a las visitas con los jueces?
    a. En caso afirmativo: ¿El juez respondió a estos?
4. ¿Tuvo un abogado o defensor presente con usted durante este proceso?
    a. *Si defensor:* ¿cómo impactó tener un defensor en su interacción con el juez?

i. ¿Cómo impactó tener un defensor en su experiencia general en el tribunal?

b. *Si abogado:* ¿cómo afectó el tener un abogado su interacción con el juez?

i. ¿Cómo impactó tener un abogado en su experiencia general en el tribunal?

b. En caso negativo: ¿Cómo estuvo ue estar frente el juez solo, sin representación legal?

5. ¿Ha estado frente a un juez virtualmente durante la pandemia?
    a. Si es así, ¿cómo estuvo esa experiencia?

Experiencia general en el tribunal

1. *En general, pensando en sus visitas a la corte, su experiencia con la facilitadora, y la creación de un acuerdo de crianza,* ¿se siente más seguro ahora?
    a. ¿Cree que sus hijos se sienten más seguros ahora? ¿Por qué o por qué no?
2. *En retrospectiva de todo el proceso*, ¿qué experiencia en la corte impactó su crianza en los últimos meses?
3. ¿Cuéntame un poco sobre cómo conseguiste o no lo que querías de la corte? (Orden de protección; plan de crianza; seguridad para usted y los niños)
4. ¿Hubo algo que desearas fuera diferente con el proceso de la corte, algo que hubiera hecho las cosas más seguras para usted?
5. En los últimos meses, ¿cómo ha estado navegando este proceso judicial y su plan de crianza durante la pandemia COVID en curso?

Preguntas cerradas

Muchas gracias por compartir sus experiencias conmigo. Sólo quiero terminar la entrevista con algunas preguntas que me gustaría que clasificara del 1 al 5 y explicara por qué la clasificaste de esa manera:

1. Pensando en su experiencia en la creación de un acuerdo de crianza con la facilitadora, en una escala de 1 a 5, en general, lo satisfecho que estaba con esta experiencia.
    a. 1: no está nada satisfecho; 2: no satisfecho; 3: algo satisfecho; 4: moderadamente satisfecho; 5: muy satisfecho
2. En general, en una escala del 1 al 5, ¿qué tan seguro se sintió como resultado de pasar por todo el proceso judicial?
    a. 1: no es en absoluto seguro; 2: no es seguro; 3: algo seguro; 4: moderadamente seguro; 5: muy seguro
3. En general, en una escala de 1 a 5, ¿en qué medida el PO y el plan de crianza afectaron positivamente o negativamente el bienestar de su hijo?
    a. 1: extremadamente negativo; 2: ligeramente negativo; 3: ni negativo ni positivo; 4: ligeramente positivo; 5: extremadamente positivo
4. En general, en una escala del 1 al 5, ¿cuán justa se sintió tratado durante todo el proceso judicial?
    a. 1: nada justo; 2: no justo; 3: algo justo; 4: moderadamente justo; 5: muy justo

5. Pensando en la pandemia en curso, ¿hasta qué punto COVID ha impactado su experiencia con todo el proceso judicial?
    a. 1: en absoluto; 2: ligeramente; 3: un poco; 4: moderadamente; 5: mucho

En el cierre

Gracias por compartir su experiencia conmigo. Voy a terminar la grabación. *Muchas gracias por compartir su experiencia conmigo. Realmente aprecio el tiempo que se tomó para tener esta conversación conmigo, será muy útil en la mejora del proceso del tribunal y la experiencia de seguir adelante.*

Quiero ser tan abierto contigo, ¿tienes alguna pregunta para mí?

Le enviaré una copia del formulario de consentimiento, así como su compensación. Si tiene alguna pregunta sobre esta entrevista, no dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo por correo electrónico. ¡Gracias de nuevo!

Si un participante hace una pregunta o tiene la preocupación de que nosotros, como investigadores, no podemos proporcionar directamente consejos o ayuda, entonces respondamos con lo siguiente y proporcione la guía de recursos:

Gracias por hacer esa pregunta, que es una preocupación importante y válida. Desafortunadamente, como investigador, no tengo la experiencia ni estoy autorizado a darle ese tipo de consejos. Sin embargo, tengo una lista de recursos e individuos con los que puede ponerse en contacto para obtener más información y podría ayudarlo con esas preguntas/preocupaciones. Le enviaré una Guía de Recursos directamente después de esta entrevista.

Respondent Interview Guide (Spanish)

Proyecto de Mejora del Tribunal de Familia: Investigación y Evaluación

Guía de entrevistas del demandado

Pregunta de investigación: 2.1: *¿En qué medida perciben los peticionarios y los encuestados, después de trabajar con el CRE, que los acuerdos de crianza en el PO son seguros y justos tres meses después de la entrada en el OP?*

Objetivo

- Para entender desde la perspectiva de los peticionarios y los encuestados, cómo el FCEP afectó a:
    - Arreglos de visitas y plan de co-paternidad
    - La seguridad y la de sus hijos
    - Sensación general de equidad o justicia procesal

Hola, queremos comenzar agradeciéndole por estar aquí hoy y tomarse el tiempo para hablar con nosotros sobre su experiencia de obtener una Orden de Protección en la corte DV y cómo las cosas están yendo para usted ahora, unos meses más tarde. A través de su experiencia y perspectiva, estamos tratando de hacernos una idea de lo bien que el sistema judicial DV y el programa de agilización le ha ayudado o no a usted y a su familia. También quiero reconocer que el proceso judicial probablemente no fue voluntario para usted y puede haber sido difícil, así que realmente apreciamos que hable con nosotros y realmente valoramos su experiencia y voz al tratar de mejorar el proceso judicial.

Soy investigador en el Centro de Investigación y Aprendizaje Urbano de la Universidad Loyola de Chicago. Realmente quiero entender su experiencia como alguien que no ha tenido el mismo tipo de experiencia para mejorar el futuro del proceso judicial y los resultados para personas como usted y sus familias. Por lo tanto, voy a hacerle una serie de preguntas con respecto a lo que fue tratar de llegar a un plan de crianza, cómo ese plan está funcionando para usted y sus hijos ahora, y su experiencia con todo el proceso del tribunal.

Además, para garantizar su privacidad, no voy a indicar su nombre en ningún momento durante la entrevista y la entrevista no será etiquetada con su nombre. Nos gustaría usar seudónimos. ¿Qué nombre alternativo quieres que te llame?

También le pido que no se refiera a nadie más por su nombre. En su lugar, puedes decir algo como "mi madre, mi amiga, mi pareja" pero por favor no uses el nombre de nadie. También le pedimos que no comparta información sobre ningún otro caso, o actividades relacionadas con

cualquier otro caso judicial. Estamos aquí para hablar sobre cómo fue su experiencia durante el caso OP.

Quiero que sepas que este es un espacio seguro para lo que estés pensando o sintiendo, y puedes compartir tanto o tan poco como te haga sentir cómodo. Por último, si en algún momento de la entrevista no te sientes cómodo respondiendo a una pregunta o quieres terminar la entrevista, no dudes en hacerlo.

Preguntas sobre el calentamiento:

Opción 1: Antes de empezamos con las preguntas específicas sobre su experiencia con el tribunal, cuénteme un poco sobre usted y sus hijos. ¿Cómo le traen alegría?

Opción 2: Antes de profundizar en las preguntas específicas sobre su experiencia en la corte, quiero que piense en el tribunal, su experiencia allí, el personal con el que interactuó, y cualquier otra cosa relacionada. Ahora que has pensado un poco, ¿cuáles son algunos adjetivos que vienen a la mente? ¿Qué palabras usarías para describir esa experiencia?

Preguntas de detección

Gracias por compartir eso, quiero empezar primero con algunas preguntas contextuales sobre su OP y el acuerdo que creó con la facilitadora Stephanie (CRE)...

1. ¿Podría decirme cómo llegó a crear este acuerdo de crianza?
    a. ¿Se negoció este plan entre usted y el otro padre?
        i. ¿El plan fue ordenado por un juez o fue a una audiencia en el tribunal?
    b. ¿Usted tuvo un abogado o defensor con usted durante su proceso tribunal?
    c. ¿Cómo se conectó con la facilitadora(Stephanie)?
        i. ¿El juez ofreció (la facilitadora) el CRE como opción? ¿O su abogado o defensor lo reen referenciaron?
    d. ¿Ha habido alguna participación del DCFS en su caso?
        i. ¿La participación del DCFS ha influido en el tipo de plan que se le ocurrió?

Plan/Acuerdo de crianza*

**Cada entrevista tendrá preguntas únicas sobre el tiempo específico de crianza, la comunicación y el intercambio dependiendo de las especificidades de su acuerdo. Tendremos acceso a este acuerdo antes de la entrevista*

Gracias por compartir eso, quiero ahora empezar a hablar un poco sobre su experiencia presente con el plan de crianza que creó hace unos meses...

1. ¿Podría describirme su plan de crianza presente? ¿Cómo ha funcionado para usted y su familia?
    a. ¿Qué plan creó en torno a la comunicación sobre sus hijos?

        i. ¿Y cómo ha funcionado eso?
    b. ¿Qué tipo de plan de intercambio se acordó en el plan (lugar de entrega/recogida, hora, frecuencia, etc.)?
        i. ¿Cómo ha estado el intercambio de sus hijos con el otr[a]o [madre] padre antes y después de que usted tenga el tiempo de crianza?
    c. ¿Qué tipo de plan de visitas se estableció (no supervisado, supervisado, centro de visitas, etc.)?
        i. ¿Cómo le ha ido durante el tiempo de crianza con sus hijos?
2. ¿Si aplica, cómo le ha afectado la pandemia COVID al plan de crianza? ¿Cómo ha impactado cómo puede seguir adelante con el plan?

*Tiempo de crianza**

**Se harán distinciones en función de si el OP ha concedido visitas no supervisadas, visitas supervisadas por un miembro de la familia, visitas supervisadas en un centro o una variación de estas opciones. Pero, en general, se harán las siguientes preguntas en todas las entrevistas:*

1. *Clarificación sobre 'el tiempo de crianza';* ¿Cómo le ha ido en su tiempo de crianza con sus hijos?
    a. ¿Con qué frecuencia ve a sus hijos? ¿Cómo te gusta pasar tiempo con tus hijos?
2. ¿Ha tenido alguna preocupación acerca de este acuerdo de crianza?
    a. ¿El acuerdo atiende alguna de esas preocupaciones?
    b. ¿Alguna de estas preocupaciones de seguridad se ha debido específicamente a cuestiones relacionadas con COVID?
3. ¿Cómo se ha sentido al seguir estos arreglos de tiempo de crianza?
    a. ¿Se ha sentido cómodo siguiendo el plan de crianza?
    b. ¿Ha impactado COVID cómo se mantiene al día con el plan de crianza? Si es así, ¿cómo?
4. ¿Qué ha ido bien con las visitas?
5. ¿Ha habido algún desafío? ¿Qué no ha ido bien?
6. ¿Alguno de estos desafíos se ha debido específicamente a cuestiones relacionadas con COVID?

Si visita sin supervisión:

7. ¿Previamente había supervisado el tiempo de visita con sus hijos?
8. Si es así, ¿podría describir la experiencia de volver a tener tiempo de crianza solo con sus hijos?
9. ¿Cómo, si es que lo hace, su tiempo de crianza con sus hijos se ha visto afectado por COVID?
    a. ¿Ha tenido que hacer algún ajuste a las visitas debido a COVID?

Si la visita supervisada por un miembro de la familia:

10. ¿Cómo ha sido como pasar tiempo con sus hijos con un miembro de la familia presente?
11. ¿Cómo, si es que lo hace, su tiempo de crianza con sus hijos se ha visto afectado por COVID?
    a. ¿Ha tenido que hacer algún ajuste a las visitas debido a COVID?

Si visitas supervisadas en un centro:

12. ¿Cómo ha sido como pasar tiempo con sus hijos en un centro de visitas supervisado?
13. ¿Cómo, si es que lo hace, su tiempo de crianza con sus hijos se ha visto afectado por COVID?
    a. ¿Ha tenido que hacer algún ajuste a las visitas debido a COVID?

Niños

1. ¿Cuántos hijos tienes? ¿Cuántos años tienen?
2. ¿Cómo crees que ha sido la experiencia de tus hijos durante el tiempo que compartes con tus hijos en los últimos meses?
3. ¿Cómo creen que se sentían sus hijos cuando usted comenzó con este plan de crianza (incluye comunicación, intercambio, visitas)?
    a. ¿Qué te hace pensar eso?
4. ¿Cómo crees que sus niños se sienten con el plan ahora, un par de meses después?
    a. ¿Qué te hace pensar eso?
5. ¿Cómo se han comportado sus hijos cuando usted recoge o deja a sus hijos?
6. ¿Cómo se han comportado sus hijos cuando están con usted durante el tiempo de crianza?
7. ¿Cómo creen que se han sentido su niños durante las visitas? ¿Qué te hace pensar eso?
8. ¿Cómo ha afectado este arreglo de crianza *a su* relación con sus hijos? *(cambios, mejoras, dificultades)*
9. ¿Cómo, si es que lo hace, se ha visto afectada la experiencia de su hijo con el tiempo de crianza debido a COVID?
    a. ¿La pandemia ha impactado el comportamiento de sus hijos de alguna manera?

Crianza

1. ¿Cómo ha afectado el plan de crianza a la forma en como usted es padre?
2. ¿Qué partes del plan de crianza van bien?
    a. ¿Cómo cumplió este plan con sus expectativas? ¿Cómo no ha cumplido con sus expectativas?
3. ¿Ha habido algún problema con el plan de crianza? ¿O problemas para seguir este plan de crianza?
    a. *Si el plan no ha salido según lo* planeado, ¿cómo crees que podría mejorarse el plan?
    b. ¿Sabe que puede modificar su plan de crianza?

   i. ¿Ha solicitado una modificación o ha realizado algún cambio en este plan en los últimos tres meses?
   ii. En caso afirmativo, ¿por qué se hicieron esos cambios? ¿Cómo han afectado esos cambios a usted y a su familia?
4. ¿Tuvo que hacer alguna modificación a su plan de crianza debido a COVID?
   a. En caso afirmativo, ¿por qué se hicieron esos cambios? ¿Cómo han afectado esos cambios a usted y a su familia?

Experiencia con la Facilitadora de Alivio Infantil

Ahora que hemos pasado por su plan de crianza actual, quiero que piense en su experiencia con la Facilitadora Stephanie (CRE) y la creación del plan de crianza con ella...

1. ¿Podría describirme cómo supo sobre la facilitadora por primera vez, o quién le informó sobre la facilitadora?
2. ¿Qué tipo de plan (tiempo de crianza; intercambio; comunicación) esperaba discutir y crear con la facilitadora?
   a. ¿Cómo se dio cuenta de los tipos de problemas relacionados con los niños y la crianza que podría plantear en su plan de OP y de crianza?
3. ¿Cómo fue la experiencia general para usted?
   a. ¿Puede nombrar algunas preocupaciones que quería mencionar durante la sesión?
   b. ¿Puede nombrar algunas preocupaciones que deseaba incluir en su acuerdo?
4. ¿Sintió que podía compartir sus preocupaciones con la facilitadora?
   a. ¿Sintió que podía incluir esas preocupaciones en el acuerdo?
5. ¿Qué estuvo bien durante su reunión? ¿Qué fue útil?
6. ¿Hubo alguna barrera que se interpuso en tratar de idear este plan?
7. ¿El plan que usted creó cumplió con sus expectativas para lo que quería?
8. ¿Ha estado en contacto virtualmente con la facilitadora durante la pandemia?
   a. Si es así, ¿cómo fue esa experiencia?

Experiencia con los Jueces *

*Los encuestados pueden haber visto varios jueces en EOP, POP u otras audiencias.

Ahora me gustaría hablar con usted sobre su experiencia con los jueces con los que interactuó durante el proceso judicial...

1. ¿Con cuántos jueces usted interactuó durante su tiempo en el tribunal? ¿Cómo fueron sus interacciones generales con los jueces?
   a. ¿Podría describir esa experiencia?
2. ¿Pudo plantear alguna de sus preocupaciones con los jueces?
   a. *En caso afirmativo:* ¿El juez respondió a estos?
3. Más específicamente, ¿mencionó alguna preocupación con respecto a las visitas con los jueces?

   a. *En caso afirmativo*: ¿El juez respondía a estos?
4. ¿Tenía un abogado presente con usted durante este proceso?
   a. *En caso afirmativo:* ¿Cómo impactó tener un abogado en su interacción con el juez?
      i. ¿Cómo impactó tener un abogado en su experiencia general en el tribunal?
   b. *En caso negativo:* ¿Cómo había estar frente el juez solo, sin representación legal?
5. ¿Has estado frente a un juez virtualmente durante la pandemia?
   a. Si es así, ¿cómo fue esa experiencia?

Experiencia general en el tribunal

1. *En general, pensando en sus visitas al tribunal, su experiencia con la facilitadora, y la creación de un acuerdo de crianza*, ¿se siente más cómodo con su arreglo de crianza ahora?
   a. ¿Cree que sus hijos se sienten más cómodos? ¿Por qué o por qué no?
2. *Mirando hacia atrás en todo el proceso*, ¿cómo su experiencia en la corte impactó su manera de crianza en los últimos meses?
3. ¿Cuénteme un poco sobre cómo consiguió o no lo que quería del tribunal? (Orden de protección; plan de crianza; comodidad para usted e hijos)
4. ¿Deseaba algo que fuera diferente con el proceso de la corte, algo que hubiera hecho la experiencia más positiva para usted?
5. En los últimos meses, ¿cómo ha estado navegando este proceso judicial y su plan de crianza durante la pandemia COVID en curso?

Preguntas cerradas

Muchas gracias por compartir sus experiencias conmigo. Sólo quiero terminar la entrevista con algunas preguntas que me gustaría que clasificara del 1 al 5 y explicara por qué la clasificaste de esa manera:

1. Pensando en su experiencia en establecer un acuerdo de crianza con la facilitadora, en una escala de 1 a 5, en general, lo satisfecho que estaba con esta experiencia.
   a. 1: no está nada satisfecho; 2: no satisfecho; 3: algo satisfecho; 4: moderadamente satisfecho; 5: muy satisfecho
2. En general, en una escala del 1 al 5, ¿qué tan seguro se sintió como resultado de pasar por todo el proceso judicial?
   a. 1: no es en absoluto seguro; 2: no es seguro; 3: algo seguro; 4: moderadamente seguro; 5: muy seguro
3. En general, en una escala de 1 a 5, ¿en qué medida de la orden de protección y el plan de crianza afectaron positiva o negativamente el bienestar de su hijo?
   a. 1: muy negativo; 2: ligeramente negativo ; 3: ni negativo ni positivo; 4: ligeramente positivo; 5: muy positivo

4. En general, en una escala del 1 al 5, ¿cuán justa(o) se sintió tratado durante todo el proceso judicial?
    a. 1: nada justo; 2: no justo; 3: algo justo; 4: moderadamente justo; 5: muy justo
5. Pensando en la pandemia en curso, ¿hasta qué punto COVID ha impactado su experiencia con todo el proceso judicial?
    a. 1: en absoluto; 2: ligeramente; 3: un poco; 4: moderadamente; 5: mucho

En el cierre

Gracias por compartir su experiencia conmigo, ¿tienes alguna pregunta para mí?

Muchas gracias por compartir su experiencia conmigo. Realmente aprecio el tiempo que se tomó para tener esta conversación conmigo, será muy útil en la mejora del proceso del tribunal y la experiencia de seguir adelante. Le enviaré una copia del formulario de consentimiento, así como su compensación. Si tiene alguna pregunta sobre esta entrevista, no dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo por correo electrónico. ¡Gracias de nuevo!

Si un participante hace una pregunta o tiene la preocupación de que nosotros, como investigadores, no podemos proporcionar directamente consejos o ayuda, entonces respondamos con lo siguiente y proporcione la guía de recursos:

Gracias por hacer esa pregunta, que es una preocupación importante y válida. Desafortunadamente, como investigador, no tengo la experiencia ni estoy autorizado a darle ese tipo de consejos. Sin embargo, tengo una lista de recursos e individuos con los que puede ponerse en contacto para obtener más información y podría ayudarlo con esas preguntas/preocupaciones. Le enviaré una Guía de Recursos directamente después de esta entrevista.

Litigant Resource Guide (Spanish)

Guía de recursos

LíNEAS DIRECTAS

Línea Nacional de Violencia Doméstica

- Línea directa: 1-800-799-7233
- Texto: Texto LOVEIS a 22522
- Sitio web: https://www.thehotline.org

Línea directa nacional de agresión sexual

- Línea directa: 1-800-656-4673
- Sitio web: https://www.rainn.org/about-national-sexual-assault-telephone-hotline
- Chat en línea: https://hotline.rainn.org/online?_ga=2.238522823.617299143.1572466214-1670553233.1559668901

Líneas directas y recursos adicionales *especialmente para personas nativas, trans, sordas, padres, sin casa, etc.*

- https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/get-updates-information-covid-19/

SERVICIOS DE VIOLENCIA DOMÉSTICA

Apna Ghar
Ubicaciones de Chicago en Uptown, Skokie y Ashburn

- Línea de Crisis: 773-334-4663 OR 800-717-0757
- Línea directa de texto: 773-899-1041
- Sitio web: http://www.apnaghar.org
- Lista de recursos adicionales: http://www.apnaghar.org/uploads/9/6/4/4/9644061/apna_ghar_resources_in_response_to_covid-19_4.20.20.pdf

Servicios Familiares Metropolitanos
Varias ubicaciones en Chicago, Evanston/Skokie, DuPage County y Southwest Suburbs

- Línea directa: 630-469-5650
- Sitio web: https://www.metrofamily.org

Mujeres Latinas en Acción
Chicago en Pilsen, Brighton Park y West Suburbs

- Línea directa de crisis de violencia doméstica: 312-738-5358
- Línea directa de Chicago Rape Crisis: 888-293-2080
- Sitio web: https://mujereslatinasenaccion.org
- Sociedad de Ayuda Legal: https://www.metrofamily.org/legal-aid-society/
    - Línea directa: 312-986-4105

ASISTENCIA LEGAL CONTRA LA VIOLENCIA DOMÉSTICA

Línea directa de defensa legal
Asistencia con órdenes de protección, audiencias virtuales, planificación de seguridad, otras opciones legales y otras referencias

- Línea directa: 708-689-3422

Vida útil
Proporcionar a las víctimas de absuo servicios legales, defensa y asesoramiento

- Sitio web: https://life-span.org
- Servicios de consejería: 847-824-0382
- Servicios Legales: 312-408-1210

ASISTENCIA LEGAL GENERAL

Ayuda Legal Chicago
Representación legal civil gratuita para la seguridad familiar; vivienda; asistencia financiera; derechos laborales y laborales; salud, discapacidad y necesidades básicas; y la inmigración.

- Sitio web: https://www.legalaidchicago.org
- Número de teléfono: 312-341-1070

Illinois Legal Aid Online
- Sitio web: https://www.illinoislegalaid.org
- Solicitud en línea: https://www.illinoislegalaid.org/get-legal-help

CARPLS
- Sitio web: https://www.carpls.org
- Línea directa: 312-738-9200

COVID-RELACIONADO ASSISTANCIA

Beneficios de desempleo COVID de Illinois

- Sitio web: https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/Pages/default.aspx
- Guías ampliadas de beneficios por desempleo pandémico: https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/IDES%20Forms%20and%20Publications/Learn-PUA.pdf#search=covid

Línea directa de respuesta coronavirus de la ciudad de Chicago

- Línea directa: 312-746-7425
- Sitio web: www.chicago.gov/coronavirus

Recursos de Coronavirus compilados de Block Club Chicago

- https://blockclubchicago.org/2020/03/25/feel-sick-need-help-want-to-donate-heres-a-massive-list-of-coronavirus-resources-in-chicago/

PLANIFICACIÓN DE LA SEGURIDAD, SALUD MENTAL Y CUIDADO PERSONAL

Recursos de planificación de la seguridad

- https://www.thehotline.org/help/path-to-safety/
- https://www.loveisrespect.org/for-yourself/safety-planning/interactive-safety-plan/

Alianza Nacional sobre Enfermedades Mentales

- Línea directa: 1-800-950-6264
- Correo electrónico: info@nami.org
- Sitio web: https://www.nami.org/Home

Autoafin cuidarse

- https://www.thehotline.org/2014/08/08/the-importance-of-self-care/

SEGURIDAD TECNOLÓGICA

Red Nacional para Poner Fin a la Violencia Doméstica

- Seguridad y privacidad de la tecnología: un kit de herramientas para sobrevivientes: https://www.techsafety.org/resources-survivors

Appendix G: Judge Interview Materials

Judge Interview Recruitment Script

Judges Recruitment Email Scripts

Current Judges:

Hello Judge_____,

The Family Count Enhancement Project (FCEP) is being evaluated by Loyola University Chicago researchers in partnership with DVD with a grant funded by the Office of Violence Against Women at the US Department of Justice. As you know, the Family Court Enhancement project was a demonstration project funded by the NIJ in 2014, with the aim to enhance the ability of the DVD to address cases in which litigants had children in common. Preliminary research as to success of the demonstration project and the incorporation of its various features into the DVD, led to Loyola and the DVD this research partnership being funded to better understand the impact of FCEP on facilitating safe and fair parenting arrangements for petitioners and respondents with children in common. The findings of this study will serve to inform best practices for courts in child custody/visitation remedies in OPs when risk is the highest for victims. Findings will also guide advocates and attorneys who assist parents in achieving safety outcomes.

The researchers would like to interview you as one of the judges currently hearing civil cases at 555 regarding Orders of Protection in which litigant have children in common. The goal of this interview is to better understand the experience of judges who evaluate cases in which petitioners seeking an order of protection have children in common with the respondent. This interview should take approximately 60 minutes and will be done remotely over Zoom or in-person at a site of your convenience such as your office. If done in-person, necessary safety precautions like wearing face masks and social distancing will be followed. During the interview, the researcher will ask you how the FCEP procedures and new staff (CRE and SVCL) impacted your work and also your perspective as to our preliminary analysis of a review of court pleadings in cases were litigants had children in common.

Your participation is voluntary and confidential. Please contact Yasmeen Khayr at 847-217-2199 or ykhayr@luc.edu to arrange time for an interview. Also, you may also contact Dr. Christine George at 773-508-8533 or cgeorg@luc.edu if you would like more information about the project.

Thank you and we appreciate your consideration.

Former Judges

Hello Judge_____,

The Family Count Enhancement Project (FCEP) is being evaluated by Loyola University Chicago researchers in partnership with DVD with a grant funded by the Office of Violence Against Women at the US Department of Justice. As you know, the Family Court Enhancement project was a demonstration project funded by the NIJ in 2014, with the aim to enhance the ability of the DVD to address cases in which litigants had children in common. Preliminary research as to success of the demonstration project and the incorporation of its various features into the DVD, led to Loyola and the DVD this research partnership being funded to better understand the impact of FCEP on facilitating safe and fair parenting arrangements for petitioners and respondents with children in common. The findings of this study will serve to inform best practices for courts in child custody/visitation remedies in OPs when risk is the highest for victims. Findings will also guide advocates and attorneys who assist parents in achieving safety outcomes.

The researchers would like to interview you as one of the judges who heard cases at 555 regarding Orders of Protection during the implementation of the FCEP projection in 2017. The goal of this interview is to obtain your perspective as the changes that were implemented during that time period and share with you preliminary analysis comparing court pleadings in cases were litigants had children in common, comparing cases in 2015 (prior to FCEP) to pleadings in 2017. This interview should take approximately 60 minutes and will be done remotely over Zoom or in-person at a site of your convenience such as your office. If done in-person, necessary safety precautions like wearing face masks and social distancing will be followed.

Your participation is voluntary and confidential. Please contact Yasmeen Khayr at 847-217-2199 or ykhayr@luc.edu to arrange time for an interview. Also, you may also contact Dr. Christine George at 773-508-8533 or cgeorg@luc.edu if you would like more information about the project.

Thank you and we appreciate your consideration.

Judge Interview Consent Script

Consent Statement to Participate in Research

Judge Interviews

Project Title: Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Family Court Enhancement Project in the Domestic Violence Court, Chicago, IL

Introduction:
You are being asked to take part in a research study evaluating the Family Count Enhance Project (FCEP) at the Domestic Violence Court at 555 W Harrison. In particular, this interview asks your perspective as to how the FCEP trainings and new procedures and staff impacted your work and also your perspective as to our preliminary analysis of a review of court pleadings in cases were litigants had children in common. This study is being conducted by researchers from Loyola University Chicago's Center for Urban Research and Learning in partnership with Cook County Circuit Court Domestic Violence Division. The Primary Investigator for this research project is Dr. Christine George.

Purpose:
This research is funded by a grant from the Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) CURL plans to conduct this research in order to better understand the impact of the FCEP on the court procedures and the outcomes of litigants with children in common of civil orders of protection. The goal of this interview is to better understand the experience of judges who evaluate cases in which petitioners seeking an order of protection have children in common with the respondent.

Procedures:
This interview should take approximately 60 minutes. During the interview, the researcher will ask you how the FCEP trainings and new procedures and policies impacted your work and also your perspective as to our preliminary analysis of a review of court pleadings in cases were litigants had children in common.

Interviews will be conducted either remotely either by Zoom video, audio only, or call-in telephone or in-person at a convenient location of your choosing. If the interview is conducted in-person, COVID-related safety precautions such as face masks and social distancing will be followed.

The researcher may be taking notes during the interview, but will not record your name or any other personally-identifying information in those notes, except for once during the beginning of the focus group during the informed consent process. Also, with your permission, we do intend to audio record the discussion. Only the researcher and research assistants will have access to the audio recordings, and they will be transcribed. For in-person interviews, the discussion will be recorded via a tape recorder and uploaded/saved on a secure LUC network drive only accessible to the researcher on a password-protected device. For remote interviews, the audio will be recorded via Zoom. The audio files and transcripts will be initially saved to the Zoom cloud and then uploaded/saved on a secure LUC network drive only accessible to the researcher only on a password-protected device. All audio and Zoom transcript files will be deleted from the Zoom cloud or the physical tape recorder once uploaded to the secure LUC network drive to

ensure data privacy. The completed transcripts will be stored on a Loyola secure OneDrive project folder with no names or other identifying information. At the end of the study, the audio files will be destroyed but the transcripts will be kept. The transcripts will be stored on a secure Loyola secure OneDrive project folder with no identifying information for possible future use.

Risks/Benefits:
There are no foreseeable risks beyond those experienced in everyday life. Researchers will make every effort to keep your identity and answers private. None of the data that the research team collects in the interview will be shared outside the research team. Recordings and transcripts will be locked up and secured.

You will not receive any direct benefit for participating. However, the information that you provide to researchers will be significant in informing best practices for the courts in child custody/visitation remedies in OPs when risk is highest for victims. Findings will also guide advocates and lawyers who assist victim-parents in achieving safety outcomes.

Confidentiality:
Confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. Your participation in this remote interview involves risks similar to a person's everyday use of the Internet. The LUC Zoom platform provides a secure and encrypted remote connection. Confidentiality and privacy on the Zoom platform will be maintained through a password-protected unique meeting ID and link. If you are using the Zoom call-in number, the number you are calling from will be masked to the researcher to further protect your privacy. Aside from the researcher/interviewer and notetaker, only you, the participant, will have access to this private Zoom meeting. If you agree to be audio recorded, the recording and transcription will only be shared among CURL researchers and research assistants, they will not include any identifying information, and they will be saved on a secure password-protected device.

If you agree to participate in this study, the individual information you tell us will be kept private and, when a report is published, your individual responses will not be connected to you by name. As noted above, aside from one time we will not record your name when we take notes during the interview and your name will not appear in any report or other public document connected to this study. The fact that you participated in the study and the responses you give will not be shared with any person outside the research staff.

Voluntary Participation:
Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. You are free to participate or refuse to as you wish. Even if you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or to withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.

Contacts and Questions:
If you have questions about this research study, please feel free to contact Loyola University Chicago researchers Yasmeen Khayr at ykhayr@luc.edu or 773.234.3725 or Dr. Christine George at cgeorg@luc.edu or 773.508.8533. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Loyola University Office of Research Services at 773.508.2689.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above, have had an opportunity to ask questions, and agree to participate in this research study. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

Please respond to the following two questions:

Do you consent to participating in the interview?

□ Yes, I consent to participating in this interview.

□ No, I do not consent and will not participate in this interview.

Do you consent to being audio recorded during this in-person or Zoom interview?

□ Yes, I consent to being audio recorded during this interview.

□ No, I do not consent to being audio recorded during this interview.

Answering 'yes' to the above questions indicates that you have read or the researcher has read you the consent statement. It also indicates that you have had an opportunity to ask questions and agree to participate in this research study. You will be emailed a copy of this form to keep for your records.

_____ _____

_____ _____

Loyola University Chicago: Lakeside Campuses
Institutional Review Board for
The Protection of Human Subjects

Date of Approval: 12/01/2021

Approval Expires: 08/02/2022

Family Court Enhancement Project: Research & Evaluation

Former Judges Interview Guide

Research Question 1.6: What short-term impact did the FCEP-provided CRE have on increasing the safety and fairness of visitation arrangements for litigants?

Research Question 3.1: How did the FCEP training and stakeholder meetings, as well as the additional resources provided by the FCEP, affect judges' decision-making processes on child-related remedies for litigants?

AIM

- To understand from the perspective of current DVD judges who did receive FCEP training the impact of FCEP and their:
    - Perceptions of how the CRE-mediated sessions impacted visitation agreements
    - Use of SAFeR training, Judge SAFeR-Based Bench Card, additional support for petitioners at the Help Desk, the added role of Child Relief Expeditor (CRE), and CRE Factual Indicators impacted their child-related judgements
    - Observations on the findings from RQ 1 re: requested and granted child relief remedies in OPs and judge's questioning about child-related issues

---

Introduction

Hello, thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview about your time as a judge at the Cook County Domestic Violence Court. We really value the work you do at the courts and value the time your taking today to share your experience with us. The purpose of this interview is to better understand the impact of the Family Court Enhancement Project, or FCEP, on the court and how FCEP may have impacted your decision-making process in Order of Protection cases.

I am a researcher from Loyola University Chicago's Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) and I will be completing the interview with you. CURL has partnered with the Circuit Court of Cook County Domestic Violence Division to complete an evaluation of FCEP's impact on the court and this interview is a component of our evaluation.

To begin, we would like to provide you with some background information on FCEP and the purpose of this interview. As you may recall from your time as judges at the DV court, FCEP was implemented at the DV Court in 2016 with the intent of improving outcomes for Order of Protection (OP) cases where the litigants had children in common. To accomplish this, FCEP implemented trainings for judges, attorneys, and advocates; added the role of Child Relief Expediter to the court; and provided additional support staff and materials at the Help Desk for petitioners. FCEP utilized information and training materials from the Battered Women's Justice Project's SAFeR approach to making informed decisions regarding DV in families with children.

For the purpose of this interview, we will be asking questions about your recollection/familiarity with FCEP and the SAFeR materials and how you perceived that your decision-making process was impacted by FCEP. We would then like to share some of the findings from our research and have you share your observations on these results.

Before we begin the interview, do you have any questions regarding FCEP or its implementation in the court? Do you have any questions regarding the purpose of this interview?

START RECORDING: "This is an FCEP judge interview held on [DATE]. The participant has consented to this interview and has consented to be audio recorded."

Background:

To begin the interview, we will be asking/reviewing general information about your time as a judge in the Cook County Domestic Violence Court and your experience with the Family Court Enhancement Project.

- Share information about each judge's participation in the early judge interviews in 2017, FCEP training, stakeholder trainings, if applicable.

1. Are you currently a judge in the Cook County Domestic Violence?
    a. How long have you served as a judge in the Cook County Domestic Violence Court?
2. While working as a judge in the Cook County Domestic Violence Court, did you participate in any way with the Family Court Enhancement Project?
    a. Did you participate in an FCEP-related training or online webinar?

FCEP Experience

Now, we are going to ask you about how the materials and information from FCEP impacted your decision-making process. Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.

- Share context of surveys conducted with judges to identify gaps in information or resources judges needed to assess child-related cases. Refer to Findings Handout.

FCEP Materials/Information

One component of FCEP was the addition of resources for judges and litigants like the CRE Factual Indicators, Judges SAFeR Bench Card and SAFeR Practice Guide (*display documents on screen during interview)*:

1. Did you ever use any of these FCEP resources, guides, or tools to assist in your decision-making process in cases with children in common?
    a. What FCEP materials and resources, if any, did you find most useful for decision-making?
2. Did you ever use any additional non-FCEP resources, guides or tools to assist in your decision-making process?
    a. If so, what kind of resources did you use?

SAFeR Training

Another component of FCEP was a special training for court personnel, including judges, attorneys, and advocates. The training took place in 2016 and used the SAFeR model. An online video training was offered for judges, attorneys, and advocates unable to attend the 2016 in-person training. SAFeR was developed by Battered Women's Justice Project and stands for Screening for IPV, Assessing the full nature and context of IPV, focusing on the effects of IPV, and Responding to IPV in all recommendations, decisions, and interventions.

1. *Refer to contextual judge information provided by Leslie to preface the discussion of the judge's level of participation in the SAFeR training and decide how to frame first context questions.*
    a. Did you participate in the FCEP SAFeR training that took place in 2016 with both DVD and DRD judges?
    b. Or did you participate in the online SAFeR webinar training?
2. *As you may recall, the SAFeR trainings focused especially on child-related abuse and the impact it has on the entire family.* Did you feel like the SAFeR training provided you additional knowledge and information to make informed decisions regarding custody and visitation in OP rulings?
    a. If not, what information do you wish was addressed during the training?
    b. How did the SAFeR information assist in your understanding of the impact of domestic violence on petitioners?
        i. And the impact on children?
    c. *The training especially provided new information on the impact of abuse on families.* How did the SAFeR information assist in your understanding of the impact of domestic violence on petitioners' parenting?
        i. Did you find the focus on the parenting useful for your decision making?
    d. Overall, how did the SAFeR training impact how you deliberate child-related relief in Order of Protection cases?
        i. How did the training help you evaluate safety risks as it related to child-related remedies?
        ii. How did your evaluation of risk factors impact your deliberation of child-related remedies?
3. Do you think it would be useful to add the SAFeR training to the statewide judicial trainings offered yearly?
    a. Do you think there are other ways that FCEP information and resources can be shared with judges on a consistent basis?

Role of the Child-Relief Expediter (CRE)

The role of Child Relief Expeditor, or CRE, was added to the court as a component of FCEP to help facilitate parenting and visitation agreements between petitioners and respondents with children in common. In addition to the added role, CRE Factual Indicators *documents were provided to judges. The following questions are about your experience working with the CRE and how the role had impacted your experience as a judge.*

1. *Refer to contextual judge information provided by Leslie to preface the discussion of the judge's level of utilization of the CRE and SVCL, if possible.* During court proceedings, did you refer litigants to the CRE to help with parenting and visitation agreements?
    a. Thinking about the CRE referral process, what indicators would you look for before referring litigants to the CRE?
        i. Did you use the Factual Indicators or other information to determine referrals to the CRE?
    b. Overall, what was your experience like referring or linking clients to the CRE?
        i. Are there any changes to the referral process you would make?
2. Thinking back on your experiences using the CRE, how did the CRE's involvement impact your decision-making process and overall understanding of a case?
    a. Did the CRE assist you in your evaluation of appropriateness of child-related remedies in OP cases referred to the CRE?
    b. How did the CRE involvement impact your rulings when litigants were able to develop an agreement?
        i. How was that different when litigants were unable to reach an agreement with the CRE?
    c. Based on your experiences, what was the value of CRE-developed agreements on litigants in OP cases?
3. *You may worked with the Supervised Visitation Center Liaison (SVCL) during your time at the court.* If so, what was your overall experience working with the SVCL?
    a. How did working with the SVCL inform your decision-making around visitation remedies with litigants in OP cases with children in common?
    b. *If you didn't work with the SVCL,* what has your experience or relationship been like with the supervised visitation centers?
        i. How do they inform the kind of visitation remedies you grant to litigants?
    c. *If the judge attended an SVC tour*, was it beneficial and informative to receive a tour with the various supervised visitation centers?
        i. How did that experience inform the way you granted supervised visitation centers as a remedy to litigants?

Research Findings

CURL spent the last couple years researching and evaluating the impact of FCEP on various aspects of civil OP cases and on litigant parents with children in common. We'd like to share some of the findings with you and have you share your thoughts and observations.

Share result summary document with judges and ask the following questions:

1. After reviewing *Requested Child-Related Remedies by Petitioners*, what do you think about these findings and how petitioners requested remedies before and after FCEP?
    a. Do you find any of these results surprising? Why or why not?
    b. *Overall, we saw pro se petitioners increasingly request child-related remedies*. Why do you think pro se petitioners requested more remedies in 2017 compared to 2015?
    c. Based on your personal experience in the court, did you observe any differences between legally represented and self-represented petitioners and how they filed their petitions before and after FCEP? Why or why not?

2. After reviewing *Argumentation on Behalf of Petitioner during Court Hearing*, what do you think about these findings and how petitioners argued their cases before and after FCEP?
    a. Do you find any of these results surprising? Why or why not?
    b. *Again, we see that pro se petitioners increasingly argued their alleged abuses in their petitions and during court hearings post-FCEP.* Why do you think pro se petitioners changed their practices before and after FCEP?
3. After reviewing *Judges Questioning on Child-Related Issues*, what do you think about these findings and how judges asked child-related questions before and after FCEP?
    a. Do you find any of these results surprising? Why or why not?
    b. Do these results reflect your personal experience and your own practice at the DV court when asking petitioners about child-related issues?
    c. Why do you think judges asked more about child-related issues in 2017 than in 2015?
4. After reviewing *Granted Child-Relief Remedies*, what do you think about these findings and how cases were granted child-related remedies before and after FCEP?
    a. Do you find any of these results surprising? Why or why not?
    b. Why do you think there was not a lot of change in the child-related remedies granted before and after the implementation of FCEP?
    c. Based on your own experiences at the court, how do you think FCEP impacted how judges granted child-related remedies?
    d. Do you think there was a change in judges' deliberation practices for OPs where litigants have children in common after the implementation of FCEP?
5. Based on your own experiences at the court, how do you think these findings compare to what you observed overall at the court before and after FCEP was implemented?

Overall Impact of FCEP on DV Court

1. Based on the overall findings we shared with you, how do you think FCEP did or did not have an impact on the DV court processes?
2. Overall, how did FCEP (trainings, materials, CRE, SVCL) influence your experience in the court?
    a. How did FCEP impact your decision-making process and rulings?
3. Did you observe any differences in how the court processed Orders of Protections pre- and post-FCEP?
4. Do you have any questions about the impact of FCEP on the DV court?

Family Court Enhancement Project: Research & Evaluation

Current Judges Interview Guide

Research Question 1.6: What short-term impact did the FCEP-provided CRE have on increasing the safety and fairness of visitation arrangements for litigants?

Research Question 3.1: How did the FCEP training and stakeholder meetings, as well as the additional resources provided by the FCEP, affect judges' decision-making processes on child-related remedies for litigants?

AIM

- To understand from the perspective of current DVD judges who did not receive FCEP training the impact of FCEP and their:
    - Perceptions of how the CRE-mediated sessions impacted visitation agreements
    - Use of SAFeR training, Judge SAFeR-Based Bench Card, additional support for petitioners at the Help Desk, the added role of Child Relief Expeditor (CRE), and CRE Factual Indicators, impacted their child-related judgements
    - Observations on the findings from RQ 1 re: requested and granted child relief remedies in OPs and judge's questioning about child-related issues

---

Introduction

Hello, thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview about your time as a judge at the Cook County Domestic Violence Court. The purpose of this interview is to better understand the impact of the Family Court Enhancement Project, or FCEP, on the court and how FCEP may have impacted your decision-making process in Order of Protection cases.

I am a researcher from Loyola University Chicago's Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL), and I will be completing the interview with you. CURL has partnered with the Circuit Court of Cook County Domestic Violence Division to complete an evaluation of FCEP's impact on the court and this interview is a component of our evaluation.

To begin, we would like to provide you with some background information on FCEP and the purpose of this interview. FCEP was implemented in the court in 2016 with the intent of improving outcomes for Order of Protection (OP) cases where the litigants had children in common. To accomplish this, FCEP implemented trainings for court stakeholders, including judges, attorneys, and advocates; added the role of Child Relief Expatiator and Supervised Visitation Liaison to the court; and provided additional support at the Help Desk for petitioners.

FCEP utilized information and training materials from the Battered Women's Justice Project's SAFeR approach to making informed decisions regarding DV in families with children.

For the purpose of this interview, we will be asking questions about your recollection/familiarity with FCEP and the SAFeR materials and how you perceived that your decision-making process was impacted by FCEP. We would then like to share some of the findings from our research and have you comment on these results. Lastly, if you were still working at the DV court during the pandemic, we would like to briefly review how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the court process and your experience adjudicating during that period.

Before we begin the interview, do you have any questions regarding FCEP or its implementation in the court? Do you have any questions regarding the purpose of this interview?

Background

To begin the interview, we will be asking you a few general questions about your experience as a judge in the Cook County Domestic Violence Court and your experience with the Family Court Enhancement Project.

1. Are you currently a judge in the Cook County Domestic Violence?
    a. **OR** How long have you served as a judge in the Cook County Domestic Violence Court?
2. While working as a judge in the Cook County Domestic Violence Court, did you hear about or participate in any way with the Family Court Enhancement Project?
    a. Did you participate in an FCEP-related training or online webinar?

Decision-Making Process

Next, we are going to ask you some specific questions on how you approach civil rulings and your decision-making process for OP cases with children in common between litigants.

1. Briefly describe your decision-making process for civil Order of Protections cases where the litigants have children in common?
    a. How have you utilized the Child-Relief Expediter as part of your decision-making process for cases with children in common between litigants?
2. What are your key considerations when making a decision about the children in common in OP cases?
    a. *Key considerations – best interest and safety of child(ren), child(ren) witnessed abuse, paternity with respondent, primary caregiver to child(ren) in common, age of child(ren), severity of abuse, previous OPs, law enforcement involvement, DCFS involvement, etc.*
    b. What facts or information do you use to make rulings?
        i. How would you seek out this information (asking litigants, asking helper group, outside resources, etc.)?

3. What are some of challenges you face when making a decision about OP cases with children in common?
    a. Are you aware of key challenges that other judges, stakeholders, or the court as a whole currently faces that you could speak on?

FCEP Experience

1. Are you familiar or have any experience with the SAFeR approach created by the Battered Women Justice Project?
    a. *SAFeR stands for Screening for IPV, Assessing the full nature and context of IPV, Focusing on the effects of IPV, and Responding to IPV in all recommendations, decisions, and interventions.*
2. Have you received any outside training regarding intimate partner violence prior to entering the court?
3. Have you received any training on intimate partner violence since joining the court? If so, please describe these trainings.
    a. Do you feel like an intimate partner training or course would be beneficial for judges in the DV Court? Why or why not?
4. Added court roles:
    a. Have you worked with the Child Relief Expeditor (CRE)?
        i) Have you utilized the CRE Factual Indicators to assist with your decision-making?
        ii) If so, how do you know or decide to refer litigants to the CRE?
    b. During court proceedings, did you refer litigants to the CRE to help with parenting and visitation agreements?
        i) If so, how often do you utilize the CRE?
        ii) What kind of litigants do you typically refer to the CRE?
    c. Was the CRE able to assist in your evaluation of appropriateness of child-related remedies?
    d. What has your experience or relationship been like with the supervised visitation centers?
        i) How do they inform the kind of visitation remedies you grant to litigants?

Research Findings

CURL spent the last couple years researching and evaluating the impact of FCEP on various aspects of civil OP cases and on litigant parents with children in common. We'd like to share some of the findings with you and have you share your thoughts and observations.

Share result summary document with judges and ask the following questions:

1. After reviewing *Requested Child-Related Remedies by Petitioners*, what do you think about these findings and how petitioners requested remedies before and after FCEP?
    a. Do you find any of these results surprising? Why or why not?

   b. *Overall, we saw pro se petitioners increasingly request child-related remedies*. Why do you think pro se petitioners requested more remedies after the implementation of FCEP?
   c. Based on your personal experience in the court, do you observe any differences in how legally represented and self-represented petitioners file their petitions? Why or why not?
2. After reviewing *Argumentation on Behalf of Petitioner during Court Hearing*, what do you think about these findings and how petitioners argued their cases before and after FCEP?
   a. Do you find any of these results surprising? Why or why not?
   b. *Again, we see that pro se petitioners increasingly argued their alleged abuses in their petitions and during court hearings between pre- and post-FCEP*. Why do you think pro se petitioners changed their practices before and after FCEP?
   c. Based on your own experience and observations of the DV court, how do these findings compare to how petitioners are currently arguing about their alleged abuses?
3. After reviewing *Judges Questioning on Child-Related Issues*, what do you think about these findings and how judges asked child-related questions before and after FCEP?
   a. Do you find any of these results surprising? Why or why not?
   b. Do these results reflect your personal experience and your own practice at the DV court when asking petitioners about child-related issues?
   c. Why do you think judges asked more about child-related issues after FCEP was implemented?
   d. How do these results compare to your personal experience and your own practice at the DV court when asking petitioners about child-related abuses?
4. After reviewing *Granted Child-Relief Remedies*, what do you think about these findings and how cases were granted child-related remedies before and after FCEP?
   a. Do you find any of these results surprising? Why or why not?
   b. Why do you think there was not a lot of change in the child-related remedies granted before and after the implementation of FCEP?
   c. Based on your own experiences at the court, how do you think FCEP currently impacts how judges grant child-related remedies?
   d. How do you think that judges now are considering child-related impacts and issues when granting OPs to litigants with children in common?
5. Based on your own experiences at the court, how do you think these findings compare to what you observed overall at the court before and after FCEP was implemented?

Impact of COVID-19

Next, we wanted to ask you a few questions about your experience in the court during the COVID-19 pandemic. We understand the overwhelming impact of the pandemic on court

stakeholders, litigants, and court proceedings, and we wanted to better understand how it affected the implementation of FCEP during this time. Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.

1. Were you present in the Cook County Domestic Violence Court before and during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. How did court proceedings change during the COVID-19 pandemic?
    a. Did these changes impact your decision-making process? If so, how?
    b. Did you use Zoom to connect with litigants?
        i. If so, how did seeing litigants virtually impact your decision-making process?
        ii. How was the transition from in-person to Zoom court proceedings?
        iii. Have you observed any differences in how you approach cases due to the virtual context?
        iv. Have you observed any differences in how litigants presented or discussed cases?
        v. Have you noticed any differences in how litigants present themselves to you during Zoom court proceedings?
    c. What were some of the challenges about conducting court proceedings over Zoom?
3. Were there any COVID-19 concerns you considered while making decisions regarding child-related remedies?
    a. Did COVID-19 impact your decisions regarding visitation in OP cases? If so, how?
    b. Did COVID-19 impact how you used the role of CRE and supervised visitation centers in your rulings? If so, how?

Judge Interview Research Findings Handout

FCEP Research Findings

CURL spent the last couple years researching and evaluating the impact of FCEP on various aspects of civil OP cases and on litigant parents with children in common. The following document outlines the major findings from this research and evaluation.

Specifically, the research focused on how FCEP trainings, materials, and initiatives impacted:

- *How petitioners assisted by various helper groups requested child-related remedies;*
- *How petitioners assisted by various helper groups argued and presented their case during court hearings;*
- *How judges questioned/probed petitioners on child-related issues;*
- *How child-related remedies were granted in OPs.*

The child-related remedies particularly identified and researched were the following:

- Minor Child(ren) named Protected Parties
- Exclusive Possession of Residence
- Stay Away
    - *from Petitioner/Protected Parties*
    - *from Other Addresses*
- Physical Care and Possession (PCP) of Minor Children
    - *Return to/Non-removal of Children from Petitioner*
- Temporary Legal Custody
- Visitation
    - *Granted Visitation*
    - *Restricted Visitation*
    - *Reserved Visitation*
    - *Denied Visitation*
- Prohibited Removal from IL/Concealment of Children
- Respondent Further Enjoined

Requested Child-Related Remedies by Petitioners

Pro Se Petitioners

- Pro se petitioners requested more child-related remedies during the implementation of FCEP than before FCEP
- There were various significant <u>increases</u> in child-related remedies requested by petitioners due to FCEP, including:
    - From 76.1% to 90.5% of petitioners requesting *exclusive possession of residence*

    - From 77.1% to 91.2% of petitioners requesting *stay away from petitioner*
    - From 64.2% to 92.5% of petitioner requesting *respondent further enjoined*
- There was a significant decrease from 24.8% to 12.2% of petitioners requesting *child support* when comparing pre- and post-FCEP time periods

Advocate-Assisted Petitioners

- Generally, there were not a lot of differences in how petitioners assisted by advocates requested remedies pre- and post-FCEP
- There was a significant decrease from 19.6% to 8.9% of petitioners requesting *child support* between pre- and post-FCEP
- There was a significant increase from 80.4% to 97% of petitioners requesting *respondent further enjoined* between pre- and post-FCEP

Law Student-Assisted Petitioners

- Petitioners assisted by law students tended to request remedies similarly both in pre- and post-FCEP time periods
- There was a significant increase from 59.5% to 85.1% of petitioners requesting *temporary legal custody* between pre- and post-FCEP

Attorney-Represented Petitioners

- Overall, there were no significant differences in how petitioners represented by attorneys requested child-related remedies between pre- and post-FCEP

Argumentation on Behalf of Petitioner during Court Hearing

Attorney-Represented Petitioners

- Attorney represented cases did not see much change pre- and post-FCEP in how attorneys argued and presented the alleged abuses on behalf of petitioners in the OP petition and in court hearings
- Attorneys increasingly mentioned risk factors such as:
    - *Respondent is unemployed and not seeking employment*
    - *Abuse during pregnancy*
    - *Strangulation*

Advocate-Assisted Petitioners

- Advocate assisted cases saw almost no distinguishable change pre- and post-FCEP in how petitioners argued or mentioned alleged abuses in their petitions and during court hearings

Pro Se Petitioners

- Pro se cases revealed significant increases between pre- and post-FCEP in how petitioners argued and mentioned alleged abuses in their petitions and during court hearings.
- Specifically:
    - From 59.1% to 86.4% of cases mentioned *abuse by respondent to child(ren)* during a hearing

- From 36.4% to 77.3% of cases reported *the impact of abuse on petitioner's parenting* in a petition
  - 13.6% to 54.5% of cases mentioned *the impact of abuse on petitioner's parenting* during a hearing
- From 4.5% to 31.8% of cases mentioned red flag, *abuser's mental state* during a hearing

Judges Questioning on Child-Related Issues

- Types of child-related concerns asked by judges:
  - *Abuse of the petitioner*
  - *Exposure of children to abuse*
  - *Impact of abuse on children*
  - *Petitioner's abilities to care for/protect their children or control their own parenting*
  - *Impact of abuse on daily life*
  - *Red flags/risk factors*
- Overall, cases heard by judges in 2017 asked more SAFeR-related questions (see table):
  - 27.3% to 48.9% of cases heard by judges asked about *exposure of children to abuse*
  - 2.3% to 12.5% of cases heard by judges asked about *impact of abuse on children*
- When assessing cases with legal representation (attorney) and cases with self-representation (pro se and advocate), judges:
  - continued to ask about abuse of the petitioner the same between pre- and post-FCEP.
  - increasingly asked about *exposure of children to abuse* and *red flags/risk factors* post-FCEP
  - Did not really ask a lot about the *impact of abuse on children, parenting,* or *daily life* between pre- and post-FCEP
- Self-Represented cases especially had a statistically significant increase from 20.5% to 52.3% of cases where a judge asked questions regarding the *exposure of abuse on children*.
- Overall, cases heard by judges asked more child-related questions (*exposure of children to abuse, impact of abuse on children, impact of abuse on parenting*), seeing increases from 27.2% to 62.8% of cases between pre- and post-FCEP.

Percentage of Cases where a Judge Asked Child-Related Question during Court Hearings, Pre vs. Post

	Pre	**Post**
Cases %(n)	100(88)	100(88)
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the abuse of the petitioner?	83.0 (73)	86.4(76)
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the exposure of children to abuse?	**27.3(24)**	**48.9(43)****
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the impact of the abuse on children?	**2.3(2)**	**12.5(11)****
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the impact of abuse of the petitioner's abilities to care for/protect their children or control their own parenting?	10.2(9)	6.8(6)

Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the impact of abuse on daily life?	37.5(33)	31.8(27)
Does the judge ask the petitioner/atty one or more questions about the red flags/risk factors?	58.0(51)	68.2(60)

Granted Child-Relief Remedies

- Overall, there was not a lot of change in granted child-related remedies before and after the implementation of FCEP.
- Advocate-assisted cases were increasingly granted *respondent further enjoined* from 47.1% to 100% between pre- and post-FCEP for no contact orders.
- While not statistically significant, pro se cases saw steady increases in the number and percentage of child-related remedies granted post-FCEP.
- Reserved visitation was increasingly granted among cases post-FCEP than any other visitation remedy, especially for attorney-represented and pro se cases.
    - We expected more visitation remedies to have been granted since they were increasingly requested for post-FCEP, but the findings do not reveal this.

Judge SAFeR Tool

© 2017 Battered Women's Justice Project, Minneapolis, MN. This project is supported by Awards 2015-TA-AX-K039 and 2014-TA-AX-K046 from the office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.

WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT?

LIMIT OR MONITOR RESPONDENT'S ACCESS TO CHILD OR PETITIONER:

Custody/decision-making:
- ☐ Suspend contact with child
- ☐ Award temporary legal custody to petitioner
- ☐ Suspend respondent's decision-making
- ☐ Limit respondent's decision-making

Parenting time:
- ☐ Suspend visitation
- ☐ Refer to professional supervised visitation center
- ☐ Institute non-professional supervised visitation
- ☐ Refer to professional supervised exchange
- ☐ Institute non-professional supervised exchange
- ☐ Appoint a third party visitation/exchange monitor
- ☐ Require neutral exchange locations (school, place of business, etc.)

Additional limitations and monitoring (especially if visitation is not supervised)
- ☐ Limit methods of contact (no in-person, telephonic or social media contact)
- ☐ Prescribe frequency and methods of communication (email only, text only, etc.)
- ☐ Restrict length and/or content of communication (1-page, 10-minutes, scope)
- ☐ Limit access to sensitive information (addresses, account numbers, SSNs, records)
- ☐ Restrict visitation to designated locale (grandparent's home, public park, church)
- ☐ Restrict visitation to a geographical area (25-mile radius, in town, in state, etc.)
- ☐ Restrict what can happen during contact (no alcohol or drugs, no weapons, etc.)
- ☐ Establish benchmarks for unsupervised contact (no abuse, threats, violations)
- ☐ Condition contact on compliance with defined terms (sobriety, BIP, car seat, etc.)
- ☐ Appoint post-visitation safety monitor to ensure visits are safe and go as planned
- ☐ Define consequences for non-compliance with access restrictions
- ☐ Other:

REQUIRE RESPONDENT TO PARTICIPATE IN REMEDIAL INTERVENTIONS AND/OR SERVICES:
- ☐ Refer respondent to batterer intervention for assessment and proper services
- ☐ Refer respondent parent to parenting after violence program
- ☐ Other:

RESTRICT RESPONDENT'S ACCESS TO FIREARMS
- ☐ Prohibit respondent from using, possessing, or purchasing firearms
- ☐ Order surrender or seizure of firearms

SUPPORT PETITIONER'S EFFORTS TO PROTECT CHILD:
- ☐ Link parental decision-making authority to parental responsibility for child's care
- ☐ Designate petitioner as the custodian of records
- ☐ Facilitate petitioner's access to available community-based resources
- ☐ Allow direct and expedited access to enforcement mechanisms
- ☐ Establish automatic bill-paying processes for respondent's financial obligations
- ☐ Delineate reasonable house rules
- ☐ Grant petitioner possession of home, vehicles and personal property
- ☐ Limit respondent's ability to dispose of or dissipate assets
- ☐ Establish temporary child support

STRENGTHEN CHILD'S SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT:
- ☐ Ensure that parenting plan accommodates child's interests, activities and supports
- ☐ Provide sufficient parenting time flexibility to adapt to child's age and social needs
- ☐ Structure parenting time to maintain access to child's support system
- ☐ Connect child and petitioner to available community based resources

MONITOR AND ENFORCE RESPONDENT'S COMPLIANCE WITH ORDER:
- ☐ Conduct review hearings
- ☐ Establish schedule for respondent to demonstrate compliance with order
- ☐ Set automatic consequences for non-compliance with protection order
- ☐ Appoint a compliance monitor at respondent's cost
- ☐ Hold respondent accountable for unjustified, unexcused, intentional violations
- ☐ Other:

© 2017 Battered Women's Justice Project, Minneapolis, MN. This project is supported by Awards 2015-TA-AX-K039 and 2014-TA-AX-K046 from the office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.

CRE Indicators for Judge Referral

Circuit Court of Cook County: Domestic Violence Division
Family Court Enhancement Project
Child Relief Expediter Program

Factual Indicators Suggesting that a Case May Be Appropriate for Expediter Referral:

1. Judge has made a determination that the OP will be granted; judge is not seeking findings of fact or recommendations by the CRE.
2. Child-related relief is at issue in the case and the basis for referral to the CRE.
3. The respondent has been adjudicated to be the father of the children at issue.
4. Judge has determined that the nature and context of the abuse do not raise safety concerns sufficient to preclude an award of visitation to the respondent.
    - This analysis should include, but not be limited to, an assessment of risk indicators. *Judges should consult the risk factors provided below in determining whether visitation should be restricted or denied.*
    - This analysis should include a review of relevant and accessible court records to determine whether any safety concerns exist.
5. Judge has not made a final determination regarding the form and schedule of visitation to be ordered pursuant to the OP.
6. Judge determines that both parties are capable of understanding the process to be undertaken, as well as its purpose and voluntary nature.
7. Parties have received information about the process and have been offered an opportunity to speak with an attorney or advocate prior to engaging in the process.

Risk Factors Regarding Visitation:

750 ILCS 60/214(b)(7) provides that "the court shall restrict or deny respondent's visitation with a minor child if the court finds that respondent has done or is likely to do any of the following: (i) abuse or endanger the minor child during visitation; (ii) use the visitation as an opportunity to abuse or harass petitioner or petitioner's family or household members; (iii) improperly conceal or detain the minor child; or (iv) otherwise act in a manner that is not in the best interests of the minor child."

Certain risk factors, if present in a case, indicate that visitation may endanger the child or that the abusive parent may use visitation as an opportunity to abuse or harass the petitioner or the petitioner's family. Many of these risk factors have been identified in studies to determine the factors most commonly present when the risk of serious harm or death exists.

Consider taking evidence about the following risk factors in determining whether visitation should be restricted or denied for those reasons under 750 ILCS 60/214(b)(7):

- Recent separation of the parties or the petitioner is currently separating from the respondent
- Respondent has threatened to kill the petitioner

- Respondent has access to a firearm or other weapon, there is a firearm or weapon in the home, or the respondent has used or threatened to use a weapon against the petitioner
- Respondent has attempted to strangle or choke the petitioner
- The respondent is unemployed and not currently seeking employment
- Direct physical abuse, threats to harm children, and child sexual abuse
- Respondent is constantly or violently jealous
- Children witnessed and/or were present during incident(s) at issue in the OP proceeding or during previous incidents of abuse
- Respondent has stalked the petitioner, including repeatedly calling, texting, or emailing the petitioner, sending unwanted gifts or other items to the petitioner, monitoring petitioner's phone calls, computer use, or social media, using technology, like hidden cameras or global positioning systems (GPS), to track the petitioner, driving by or hanging out at the petitioner's home, school, or work, following or showing up wherever the petitioner is
- Increase in frequency or severity of physical violence over the past year
- Respondent has forced the victim to have sex
- Respondent tries to control most or all of victim's daily activities
- Respondent has threatened or tried to commit suicide
- Petitioner believes that the alleged perpetrator will re-assault or attempt to kill the petitioner

Note: A" no" answer does not indicate a low level of risk, but a "yes" answer is very significant

The project was supported under Grant No. 2014-FJ-AX-K003 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

Appendix H: Attorney and Advocate Focus Group Materials

Attorney Focus Group Recruitment Script

Attorney Recruitment Email

From our on-going work on this project we already have all the agency contact information but will check with Leslie Landis, our research partner for DV court to update our list.

Hello, I am Christine George, from Loyola University Chicago Center for Research and Learning. As you know, the Family Count Enhancement Project (FCEP) is being evaluated by Loyola University Chicago researchers in partnership with the Cook County Circuit Court Domestic Violence Division with a grant funded by the Office of Violence Against Women at the US Department of Justice.

It is significant that the FCEP partnership was successful in gaining this funding because it recognizes that the preliminary research and the funded activities were showing promising results worthy of a deeper evaluation. Information from this research project will inform the continued work of diverse stakeholder groups within the DVD to facilitate safe and fair parenting arrangements for petitioners and respondents with children in common. The findings of this study will serve to inform best practices for courts in child custody/visitation remedies in OPs when risk is the highest for victims. Findings will also guide advocates and lawyers who assist victim-parents in achieving safety outcomes.

We are convening a focus group of legal assistance and pro-bono attorneys to ask your perspective as to how the FCEP trainings and new procedures and policies are impacting your work and the work of the court in general and also your perspective as to our preliminary analysis of a review of court pleadings in cases were litigants had children in common.

Your participation is voluntary and confidential. Please contact Dr. Christine George at 773-508-8533 or cgeorg@luc.edu to scheduling the focus group. Also, you may also contact Leslie Landis at 312 325-9042 if you would like more information about the project.

Attorney Focus Group Consent Script

Consent Statement to Participate in Research

Attorney Focus Group

Project Title: Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Family Court Enhancement Project in the Domestic Violence Court, Chicago, IL

Introduction:
You are being asked to take part in a research study evaluating the Family Count Enhance Project (FCEP) at the Domestic Violence Court at 555 W Harrison. In particular, this focus group asks your perspective as to how the FCEP trainings and new procedures and staff impacted your work and also your perspective as to our preliminary analysis of a review of court pleadings in cases where litigants had children in common. This study is being conducted by researchers from Loyola University Chicago's Center for Urban Research and Learning in partnership with Cook County Circuit Court Domestic Violence Division. The Primary Investigator for this research project is Dr. Christine George.

Purpose:
This research is funded by a grant from the Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) CURL plans to conduct this research in order to better understand the impact of the FCEP on the court procedures and the outcomes of litigants with children in common of civil orders of protection. The goal of this interview is to better understand the experience of current and former attorneys who assist in cases in which petitioners seeking an order of protection have children in common with the respondent.

Procedures:
This interview should take approximately 60 minutes. During the focus group, the researcher will ask you and other participants about how the FCEP trainings and new procedures and policies impacted your work and also your perspective as to our preliminary analysis of a review of court pleadings in cases were litigants had children in common. The researcher will ask you to refrain from using other participants' names during the focus group. Interviews will be conducted either remotely either by Zoom video, audio only, or call-in telephone.

The researcher may be taking notes during the focus group, but will not record your name or any other personally-identifying information in those notes, except for once during the beginning of the focus group during the informed consent process. Also, with your permission, we do intend to audio record the discussion. Only the researcher and research assistants will have access to the audio recordings, and they will be transcribed. For remote interviews, the audio will be recorded via Zoom. The audio files and transcripts will be initially saved to the Zoom cloud and then uploaded/saved on a secure LUC network drive only accessible to the researcher only on a password-protected device. All audio and Zoom transcript files will be deleted from the Zoom cloud or the physical tape recorder once uploaded to the secure LUC network drive to ensure data privacy. The completed transcripts will be stored on a Loyola secure OneDrive project folder with no names or other identifying information. At the end of the study, the audio files will be destroyed but the transcripts will be kept. The transcripts will be stored on a secure Loyola secure OneDrive project folder with no identifying information for possible future use.

Risks/Benefits:
There are no foreseeable risks beyond those experienced in everyday life. Researchers will make every effort to keep your identity and answers private. There is minimal risk inherent in the group nature of the process that we cannot guarantee full confidentiality of focus groups. While we encourage everyone not to disclose anything discussed in focus groups, we cannot guarantee complete confidentiality of everything said in focus groups. We will encourage all participants at the beginning of the focus group to not disclose any personal information during the focus groups that they would prefer to keep private. None of the data that the research team collects in the focus group will be shared outside the research team. Recordings and transcripts will be locked up and secured.

You will not receive any direct benefit for participating. However, the information that you provide to researchers will be significant in informing best practices for the courts in child custody/visitation remedies in OPs when risk is highest for victims. Findings will also guide advocates and lawyers who assist victim-parents in achieving safety outcomes.

Confidentiality:
Confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. Your participation in this remote focus group involves risks similar to a person's everyday use of the Internet. The LUC Zoom platform provides a secure and encrypted remote connection. Confidentiality and privacy on the Zoom platform will be maintained through a password-protected unique meeting ID and link. If you are using the Zoom call-in number, the number you are calling from will be masked to the researcher to further protect your privacy. Aside from the researcher/interviewer and notetaker, only you, the participant, will have access to this private Zoom meeting. If you agree to be audio recorded, the recording and transcription will only be shared among CURL researchers and research assistants, they will not include any identifying information, and they will be saved on a secure password-protected device.

If you agree to participate in this study, the individual information you tell us will be kept private and, when a report is published, your individual responses will not be connected to you by name. As noted above, aside from one time we will not record your name when we take notes during the interview and your name will not appear in any report or other public document connected to this study. The fact that you participated in the study and the responses you give will not be shared with any person outside the research staff.

Voluntary Participation:
Your participation in this focus group is completely voluntary. You are free to participate or refuse to as you wish. Even if you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or to withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.

Contacts and Questions:
If you have questions about this research study, please feel free to contact Loyola University Chicago researchers Yasmeen Khayr at ykhayr@luc.edu or 773.234.3725 or Dr. Christine George at cgeorg@luc.edu or 773.508.8533. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Loyola University Office of Research Services at 773.508.2689.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above, have had an opportunity to ask questions, and agree to participate in this research study. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

Please respond to the following two questions:

Do you consent to participating in the focus group?

□ Yes, I consent to participating in this focus group.
□ No, I do not consent and will not participate in this focus group.

Do you consent to being audio recorded during this in-person or Zoom focus group?

□ Yes, I consent to being audio recorded during this focus group.
□ No, I do not consent to being audio recorded during this focus group.

Answering 'yes' to the above questions indicates that you have read or the researcher has read you the consent statement. It also indicates that you have had an opportunity to ask questions and agree to participate in this research study. You will be emailed a copy of this form to keep for your records.

_____ _____

_____ _____

Loyola University Chicago: Lakeside Campuses
Institutional Review Board for
The Protection of Human Subjects

Date of Approval: 05/16/2022

Approval Expires: 08/02/2022

Family Court Enhancement Project: Research & Evaluation

Attorney Focus Group Guide

Research Question 3.2: How did FCEP training and stakeholder meetings and the availability/utilization of the CRE and SVCL affect attorneys' and advocates' interactions with petitioners and their subsequent decisions to help them to request the three remedies for litigants?

AIM

- To understand from the perspective of current and former attorneys and the impact of FCEP on their:
  - Perceptions of how the CRE-mediated sessions impacted visitation agreements;
  - Use of SAFeR training, additional support for petitioners at the Help Desk, and the added role of Child Relief Expeditor (CRE) impacted their legal representation of petitioners with shared children with respondents;
  - Observations on the findings from RQ 1 re: requested and granted child relief remedies in OPs and attorney argumentation about child-related issues.

Introduction

Hello, thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group about your time as an attorney at the Cook County Domestic Violence Court. The purpose of this focus group is to better understand the impact of the Family Court Enhancement Project, or FCEP, on the court and how FCEP may have impacted your formulation and argumentation in Order of Protection cases.

I am a researcher from Loyola University Chicago's Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL), and I will be completing the focus group with you. CURL has partnered with the Circuit Court of Cook County Domestic Violence Division to complete an evaluation of FCEP's impact on the court and this focus group is a component of our evaluation.

To begin, we would like to provide you with some background information on FCEP and the purpose of this focus group. FCEP was implemented in the court in 2016 with the intent of improving outcomes for Order of Protection (OP) cases where the litigants had children in common. To accomplish this, FCEP implemented trainings for court stakeholders, including judges, attorneys, and advocates; added the role of Child Relief Expatiator and Supervised Visitation Liaison to the court; and provided additional support at the Help Desk for petitioners. FCEP utilized information and training materials from the Battered Women's Justice Project's SAFeR approach to making informed decisions regarding DV in families with children.

For the purpose of this focus group, we will be asking questions about your recollection/familiarity with FCEP and the SAFeR materials and how you perceived that your ability to represent petitioners was impacted by FCEP. We would then like to share some of the findings from our research and have you comment on these results. Lastly, if you were still working at the DV court during the pandemic, we would like to briefly review how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the court process and your experience adjudicating during that period.

Before we begin the focus group, do you have any questions regarding FCEP or its implementation in the court? Do you have any questions regarding the purpose of this focus group?

Background

To begin the focus group, we will be asking you a few general questions about your experience as an attorney in the Cook County Domestic Violence Court and your experience with the Family Court Enhancement Project.

1. Are you currently an attorney working with clients in the Cook County Domestic Violence Court?
    a. **OR** How long have you worked as an attorney in the Cook County Domestic Violence Court?
2. While working as an attorney in the Cook County Domestic Violence Court, did you hear about or participate in any way with the Family Court Enhancement Project?
    a. Did you participate in an FCEP-related training or online webinar?

Argumentation Formulation Process

Next, we are going to ask you some specific questions on how you approach appearing in front of the court to assist petitioners and your decision-making process for OP cases with children in common between litigants.

1. Briefly describe your decision-making process when representing petitioners with requesting child-related remedies in preparation for appearance in Court?
    a. How have you utilized the Child-Relief Expediter as part of your decision-making process for cases with children in common between litigants?
2. What are your key considerations when requesting remedies for children in common in OP cases?
    a. *Key considerations – best interest and safety of child(ren), child(ren) witnessed abuse, paternity with respondent, primary caregiver to child(ren) in common, age of child(ren), severity of abuse, previous OPs, law enforcement involvement, DCFS involvement, etc.*
    b. What facts or information do you use to support these considerations?
        i. How would you seek out this information (asking litigants, asking helper group, outside resources, etc.)?

3. What are some of challenges you face when assisting with OP cases with children in common?
    a. Are you aware of key challenges that other attorneys, stakeholders, or the court as a whole currently faces that you could speak on?
4. How did you use the SAFeR risk assessments in advising/assisting your clients on remedies to request?
    a. What were some challenges?
    b. How did it help?

FCEP Experience

1. Are you familiar or have any experience with the SAFeR approach created by the Battered Women Justice Project?
    a. *SAFeR stands for Screening for IPV, Assessing the full nature and context of IPV, Focusing on the effects of IPV, and Responding to IPV in all recommendations, decisions, and interventions.*
2. Have you received any outside training regarding intimate partner violence prior to entering the court?
3. Have you received any training on intimate partner violence since working with the Cook County Domestic Violence Court? If so, please describe these trainings.
    a. Do you feel like additional intimate partner training or course would be beneficial for attorneys in the DV Court? Why or why not?
4. Added court roles:
    a. Have you worked with the Child Relief Expeditor (CRE)?
        i) Have you utilized the CRE Factual Indicators to assist with your decision-making?
        ii) If so, how do you know or decide to refer litigants to the CRE?
    b. Prior to or during court proceedings, did you refer litigants to the CRE to help with parenting and visitation agreements?
        i) If so, how often do you utilize the CRE?
        ii) What kind of litigants do you typically refer to the CRE?
    c. Was the CRE able to assist you with determining what remedies to request alongside the petitioner?
    d. What has your experience or relationship been like with the supervised visitation centers?
        i) How do they inform the kind of visitation remedies you request for litigants?

Research Findings

CURL spent the last couple years researching and evaluating the impact of FCEP on various aspects of civil OP cases and on litigant parents with children in common. We'd like to share some of the findings with you and have you share your thoughts and observations.

Share result summary document with judges and ask the following questions:

1. After reviewing *Requested Child-Related Remedies by Petitioners*, what do you think about these findings and how petitioners requested remedies before and after FCEP?
    a. Do you find any of these results surprising? Why or why not?
    b. *Overall, we saw pro se petitioners increasingly request child-related remedies.* Why do you think pro se petitioners requested more remedies after the implementation of FCEP?
    c. Based on your personal experience in the court, do you observe any differences in how legally represented and self-represented petitioners file their petitions? Why or why not?
2. After reviewing *Argumentation on Behalf of Petitioner during Court Hearing*, what do you think about these findings and how petitioners argued their cases before and after FCEP?
    a. Do you find any of these results surprising? Why or why not?
    b. *Again, we see that pro se petitioners increasingly argued their alleged abuses in their petitions and during court hearings between pre- and post-FCEP.* Why do you think pro se petitioners changed their practices before and after FCEP?
    c. Based on your own experience and observations of the DV court, how do these findings compare to how petitioners are currently arguing about their alleged abuses?
3. After reviewing *Judges Questioning on Child-Related Issues*, what do you think about these findings and how judges asked child-related questions before and after FCEP?
    a. Do you find any of these results surprising? Why or why not?
    b. Do these results reflect your personal experience and your own practice at the DV court when assisting petitioners with child-related issues?
    c. Why do you think judges asked more about child-related issues after FCEP was implemented?
    d. How do these results compare to your personal experience and your own practice at the DV court when representing petitioners about child-related abuses?
4. After reviewing *Granted Child-Relief Remedies*, what do you think about these findings and how cases were granted child-related remedies before and after FCEP?
    a. Do you find any of these results surprising? Why or why not?
    b. Why do you think there was not a lot of change in the child-related remedies granted before and after the implementation of FCEP?

   c. Based on your own experiences at the court, how do you think FCEP currently impacts how judges grant child-related remedies?
   d. How do you think that judges now are considering child-related impacts and issues when granting OPs to litigants with children in common?
5. Based on your own experiences at the court, how do you think these findings compare to what you observed overall at the court before and after FCEP was implemented?

Impact of COVID-19

Next, we wanted to ask you a few questions about your experience in the court during the COVID-19 pandemic. We understand the overwhelming impact of the pandemic on court stakeholders, litigants, and court proceedings, and we wanted to better understand how it affected the implementation of FCEP during this time. Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.

1. Were you present in the Cook County Domestic Violence Court before and during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. How did court proceedings change during the COVID-19 pandemic?
   a. Did these changes impact your formulation of OPs? If so, how?
   b. Did you use Zoom to connect with litigants?
      i. How was the transition from in-person to Zoom court proceedings?
      ii. Have you observed any differences in how you approach cases due to the virtual context?
      iii. Have you observed any differences in how litigants presented or discussed cases?
      iv. Have you noticed any differences in how litigants present themselves during Zoom court proceedings?
   c. What were some of the challenges about conducting court proceedings over Zoom?
3. Were there any COVID-19 concerns you considered while requesting child-related remedies?
   a. Did COVID-19 impact your decisions regarding requesting visitation in OP cases? If so, how?
   b. Did COVID-19 impact how you used the role of the CRE and supervised visitation centers in your requests? If so, how?

Attorney and Advocate Focus Group Research Findings Handout

FCEP Research Findings

CURL spent the last couple years researching and evaluating the impact of FCEP on various aspects of civil OP cases and on litigant parents with children in common. The following document outlines the major findings from this research and evaluation.

The child-related remedies particularly identified and researched were the following:

- Minor Child(ren) named Protected Parties
- Exclusive Possession of Residence
- Stay Away
  - *from Petitioner/Protected Parties*
  - *from Other Addresses*
- Physical Care and Possession (PCP) of Minor Children
  - *Return to/Non-removal of Children from Petitioner*
- Temporary Legal Custody
- Visitation
  - *Granted Visitation*
  - *Restricted Visitation*
  - *Reserved Visitation*
  - *Denied Visitation*
- Prohibited Removal from IL/Concealment of Children
- Respondent Further Enjoined

Requested Child-Related Remedies by Petitioners

Pro Se Petitioners

- Pro se petitioners requested more child-related remedies during the implementation of FCEP than before FCEP
- There were various significant increases in child-related remedies requested by petitioners due to FCEP, including:
  - From 76.1% to 90.5% of petitioners requesting *exclusive possession of residence*
  - From 77.1% to 91.2% of petitioners requesting *stay away from petitioner*
  - From 64.2% to 92.5% of petitioner requesting *respondent further enjoined*
- There was a significant decrease from 24.8% to 12.2% of petitioners requesting *child support* when comparing pre- and post-FCEP time periods

Advocate-Assisted Petitioners

- Generally, there were not a lot of differences in how petitioners assisted by advocates requested remedies pre- and post-FCEP
- There was a significant decrease from 19.6% to 8.9% of petitioners requesting *child support* between pre- and post-FCEP

- There was a significant increase from 80.4% to 97% of petitioners requesting *respondent further enjoined* between pre- and post-FCEP

Law Student-Assisted Petitioners

- Petitioners assisted by law students tended to request remedies similarly both in pre- and post-FCEP time periods
- There was a significant increase from 59.5% to 85.1% of petitioners requesting *temporary legal custody* between pre- and post-FCEP

Attorney-Represented Petitioners

- Overall, there were no significant differences in how petitioners represented by attorneys requested child-related remedies between pre- and post-FCEP

Argumentation on Behalf of Petitioner during Court Hearing

Attorney-Represented Petitioners

- Attorney represented cases did not see much change pre- and post-FCEP in how attorneys argued and presented the alleged abuses on behalf of petitioners in the OP petition and in court hearings
- Attorneys increasingly mentioned risk factors such as:
    - *Respondent is unemployed and not seeking employment*
    - *Abuse during pregnancy*
    - *Strangulation*

Advocate-Assisted Petitioners

- Advocate assisted cases saw almost no distinguishable change pre- and post-FCEP in how petitioners argued or mentioned alleged abuses in their petitions and during court hearings

Pro Se Petitioners

- Pro se cases revealed significant increases between pre- and post-FCEP in how petitioners argued and mentioned alleged abuses in their petitions and during court hearings.
- Specifically:
    - From 59.1% to 86.4% of cases mentioned *abuse by respondent to child(ren)* during a hearing
    - From 36.4% to 77.3% of cases reported *the impact of abuse on petitioner's parenting* in a petition
        - 13.6% to 54.5% of cases mentioned *the impact of abuse on petitioner's parenting* during a hearing
    - From 4.5% to 31.8% of cases mentioned red flag, *abuser's mental state* during a hearing

Judges Questioning on Child-Related Issues

- Types of child-related concerns asked by judges:
    - *Abuse of the petitioner*
    - *Exposure of children to abuse*

  - *Impact of abuse on children*
  - *Petitioner's abilities to care for/protect their children or control their own parenting*
  - *Impact of abuse on daily life*
  - *Red flags/risk factors*
- Overall, cases heard by judges in 2017 asked more SAFeR-related questions (see table):
  - 27.3% to 48.9% of cases heard by judges asked about *exposure of children to abuse*
  - 2.3% to 12.5% of cases heard by judges asked about *impact of abuse on children*
- When assessing cases with legal representation (attorney) and cases with self-representation (pro se and advocate), judges:
  - continued to ask about abuse of the petitioner the same between pre- and post-FCEP.
  - increasingly asked about *exposure of children to abuse* and *red flags/risk factors* post-FCEP
  - Did not really ask a lot about the *impact of abuse on children, parenting,* or *daily life* between pre- and post-FCEP
- Self-Represented cases especially had a statistically significant increase from 20.5% to 52.3% of cases where a judge asked questions regarding the *exposure of abuse on children*.
- Overall, cases heard by judges asked more child-related questions (*exposure of children to abuse, impact of abuse on children, impact of abuse on parenting*), seeing increases from 27.2% to 62.8% of cases between pre- and post-FCEP.

Granted Child-Relief Remedies

- Overall, there was not a lot of change in granted child-related remedies before and after the implementation of FCEP.
- Advocate-assisted cases were increasingly granted *respondent further enjoined* from 47.1% to 100% between pre- and post-FCEP for no contact orders.
- While not statistically significant, pro se cases saw steady increases in the number and percentage of child-related remedies granted post-FCEP.
- Reserved visitation was increasingly granted among cases post-FCEP than any other visitation remedy, especially for attorney-represented and pro se cases.
  - We expected more visitation remedies to have been granted since they were increasingly requested for post-FCEP, but the findings do not reveal this.

Appendix I: CRE Interview Guide

Family Court Enhancement Project: Research & Evaluation

Child Relief Expediter Interview Guide

Research Question 1.6: What short-term impact did the FCEP-provided CRE have on increasing the safety and fairness of visitation arrangements for litigants?

Research Question 3.3: How did the CRE facilitate parenting agreements among petitioners and respondents?

AIM

- To understand the expediting process led by the CRE in creating safe parenting agreements with parent litigants.
- To observe the findings on the initial cases heard by the CRE in the first year of FCEP and how this process and the cases have changed over the years.
- To understand the role of the CRE in relationship with the judges, attorneys, advocates, and any additional court personnel.

Introduction

Hello, thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview about your time as the Child Relief Expediter at the Cook County Domestic Violence Court. We really value the work you do at the courts and value the time your taking today to share your experience with us. The purpose of this interview is to better understand the impact of the Family Court Enhancement Project, or FCEP, on the court and how your role as a CRE is impacting the safety of parents and their parenting arrangements.

I am a researcher from Loyola University Chicago's Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) and I will be completing the interview with you. CURL has partnered with the Circuit Court of Cook County Domestic Violence Division to complete an evaluation of FCEP's impact on the court and this interview is a component of our evaluation.

To begin, we would like to provide you with some background information on FCEP and the purpose of this interview. As you may recall from your time as judges at the DV court, FCEP was implemented at the DV Court in 2016 with the intent of improving outcomes for Order of Protection (OP) cases where the litigants had children in common. To accomplish this, FCEP implemented trainings for judges, attorneys, and advocates; added the role of Child Relief Expediter to the court; and provided additional support staff and materials at the Help Desk for petitioners. FCEP utilized information and training materials from the Battered Women's Justice Project's SAFeR approach to making informed decisions regarding DV in families with children.

For the purpose of this interview, we will be asking questions about your time at the court as the CRE, how your expediting process has changed over the years, what it is like working with

litigants, and relationships with the judges, attorneys, and advocates at the court. We would also like to share some of the findings from our research and have you share your observations on these results.

As a reminder, because your identity will be harder to keep confidential for this interview, we want to be transparent about how this information will be used once we start writing our reports. We can decide how you'll want this information used and to make sure anything we report on does not compromise your position in any way.

START RECORDING: "This is an FCEP interview with the Child Relief Expediter held on [DATE]. The participant has consented to this interview and has consented to be audio recorded."

Background

1. To start us off, please remind us when exactly you came into the court and started as the Child Relief Expediter?
2. What was your process like meeting with litigants those first couple months into the first year as the expediter?

CRE Reports

As you know, you have shared session reports with us and we have been compiling that information in a database. We have conducted some preliminary descriptive analysis of your cases from your first year at the court. We'd like to share some of the findings with you and have you share your thoughts and observations from that initial year of FCEP and how your process and cases may have changed over the years. Share CRE Report on the screen.

1. *Demographics:* Do these demographics (age, education, marital status, gender, race/ethnicity) match what you may remember from that first year?
    a. Has the demographics of the litigants you see changed over the last few years?
2. *CRE Referrals:* It looks like cases were coming to you either at the point of an agreed POP or during their temporary EOP.
    a. Has this changed at all over the past years? At what stage in their cases are most litigants meeting with you now?
    b. Are cases coming in at either their EOP or POP stage at the same rates?
        i. If not, how does it change your expediting process if folks are coming more so during their EOP than POP?
        ii. What are the advantages of hearing cases at the EOP stage? POP stage?
    c. Are you seeing the same rates of cases occurring, getting terminated, or not appropriate?
3. *Visitation Remedies*: It looks like unsupervised visitation was the most common form of visitation discussed, but about 1/3 of your cases were supervised by family and 1/3 had unsupervised. About 1/3 of cases that discussed visitation ended up agreeing to include in their OP.
    a. Why was there this spread of visitation offerings in the first year of FCEP?

   b. How did that change over the years? What are the most commonly agreed upon types of visitation options?
      i. What has been a challenge when it comes to creating plans around visitation with litigants?
   c. What's it like working with the visitation centers over the years? How has that changed in the last couple years, especially with COVID?
      i. How does that change how your conversation with litigants about visitation goes?
4. *Exchange:* A third of the cases went with neutral exchange and even less agreed on supervised exchange or exchange with a center.
   a. Are you seeing similar trends now?
   b. Is the issue of exchange and safe exchange still something brought up in your current cases?
5. *Other Remedies:* Communication is the most common issue aside from visitation and exchange that was brought up and agreed upon by litigants. Less focus on other issues such as belongings, financial matters, and others.
   a. Are you seeing similar trends now? Are there additional issues that are being brought up more so now?

General CRE Process

1. Could you describe your typical expediting process and your general workflow?
   a. How many cases do you usually see in a day, week, month?
   b. How has your process changed when it was in-person to virtual sessions?
2. What has been going well in the expediting process over the last few years?
3. What are the main challenges that you face in your role as the CRE?
4. Are there additional practices, protocol, initiatives that would be helpful to have in place that would benefit the CRE program?

Working with Litigant Parents

1. What's your process in working with litigant parents in helping them create their parenting plan?
2. How do you support them in assessing their safety options for the litigants and their children?
   a. How do parents react to your advice or recommendations?
3. How do you balance the tensions that may come up between the parents when creating the parenting plan?
   a. What are some barriers/challenges that come up when helping families create the plan?
   b. How has that changed since the pandemic in expediting virtually?
4. What are the most effective ways you help parents consider family issues and decide on a safe parenting plan?
5. Have you noticed anything different in how you interact with clients virtually? Are there any differences in how litigants are showing up to your sessions virtually?

Working with Judges, Advocates, Attorneys

- What's your experience like working with the judges over the last few years and how they refer cases to you?
    - How has that changed as judges changed so often?
- How do you engage with the advocates and attorneys when they assist the litigants during this process?
    - What are some benefits to having them present during the expediting process?
    - What are some challenges that may inhibit the process of creating a parenting plan?

Impact of COVID on CRE

- Have you noticed differences in the types of issues that are affecting families more so during the pandemic than before?
- How has the pandemic impacted your overall expediting process and working with families?
- How has the pandemic impacted the safety of litigants in deciding on a safe parenting plan?
- What's your experience been like meeting with litigants virtually?

Anything else you want to share with us about your role as the CRE over the last few years?

Appendix J: Granted Remedies Data Tables

Frequencies of Types of Order of Protections and Status, Pre vs. Post

	Attorney		Advocate		Pro Se	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Cases n(%)	**44(100)**	**44(100)**	**22(100)**	**22(100)**	**22(100)**	**22(100)**
All EOP Granted	43(97.7)	43(97.7)	17(77.3)	18(81.8)	19(86.4)	19(86.4)
Only EOP Granted	*24(55.8)*	*26(60.5)*	*10(58.8)*	*13(72.2)*	*12(63.2)*	*16(84.2)*
EOP Denied	*1(2.3)*	*1(2.3)*	*5(29.4)*	*4(22.2)*	*3(15.8)*	*3(15.8)*
Interim/POP Granted[a]	20(45.5)	18(40.9)	7(31.8)	5(22.7)	7(31.8)	4(18.2)
Default POP	*7(35)*	*9(50)*	*1(14.3)*	*2(40)*	*4(57.1)*	*2(50)*
Entire OP Denied	0(0)	0(0)	5(22.7)	4(18.2)	3(13.6)	2(9.1)

[a] *Three Interim temporary orders of protection are included in these values, particularly within the attorney-represented cases.*

Frequencies of Respondents Present

	Attorney		Advocate		Pro Se	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Cases n(%)	**44(100)**	**44(100)**	**22(100)**	**22(100)**	**22(100)**	**22(100)**
Respondent Present in Hearing	14(31.8)	9(20.5)	7(31.8)	5(22.7)	3(13.6)	2(9.1)
Respondent Disputes Remedies	*7(50)*	*5(55.6)*	*2(28.6)*	*2(40)*	*0(0)*	*0(0)*
Respondent Contested Alleged Abuses	*3(21.4)*	*1(1.1)*	*2(28.6)*	*0(0)*	*1(4.5)*	*1(4.5)*
Respondent Offers Additional Information	*2(14.3)*	*1(1.1)*	*1(4.5)*	*0(0)*	*0(0)*	*1(4.5)*

Frequencies of Any Remedies Granted in OP Across Helper Group, Pre vs. Post

	Attorney		Advocate		Pro Se	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Total Cases n(%)	**44(100)**	**44(100)**	**22(100)**	**22(100)**	**22(100)**	**22(100)**
Granted OP	**44(100)**	**44(100)**	**17(77.3)**	**18(81.8)**	**19(86.4)**	**20(90.9)**
Final EOP	*24 (59.1)*	*26(61.4)*	*10(58.8)*	*13(72.2)*	*12(63.2)*	*16(80)*
Final Interim[a]/POP	*20(40.9)*	*18(38.6)*	*7(41.2)*	*5(27.8)*	*7(36.8)*	*4(20)*

**There were no significant differences across helper groups or time period*

[a] *Three Interim temporary orders of protection are included in these values, particularly within the attorney-represented cases*

Appendix K: Impact of CRE Data Tables

Litigant Age

Age	13-17	18-24	25-51	51+	Session Did Nc Occur	Missing	Total
Petitioner	2	48	143	1	21	9	224
(Frequency)	(0.9)	(21.4)	(63.8)	(0.4)	(9.4)	(4.0)	(100)
Respondent	0	29	137	7	22	23	218
(Frequency)	(0)	(13.3)	(62.8)	(3.2)	(10.1)	(10.6)	(100)

Litigant Education Level

Education Completed	Less than H School	Some High School/trad school	High School Completed/GEI	Some Colle	College Complete (BA/BS)	Gradua Level ar higher (Master PhD)	Session Not Occ	Missing	Tota
Petitioner	15	15 (6.3)	74 (31.0)	53	17	4	35	46	239
(Frequency)	(6.3)			(22.2)	(7.1)	(1.7)	(14.6)	(10.9)	(100
Respondent	12	16 (6.7)	68 (28.5)	26	20	1	36	60	239
(Frequency)	(5.0)			(10.9)	(8.4)	(0.4)	(15.1)	(25.1)	(100

Litigant Marital Status

Marital Status	Married	Civil Unior	Divorced	Never Marri	Session Did Nc Occur	Missing	Total
Petitioner	56	2	0	131	35	15	239
(Frequency)	(23.4)	(0.8)	(0)	(54.8)	(14.6)	(6.3)	(100)
Respondent	40	9	0	117	35	36	237
(Frequency)	(16.9)	(3.8)	(0)	(49.4)	(14.8)	(15.2)	(100)

Litigant Gender

Gender	Woman	Man	Session Did Nc Occur	Missing	Total
Petitioner	181	14	35	9	239
(Frequency)	(75.7)	(5.9)	(14.6)	(3.8)	(100)
Respondent	14	163	35	27	239
(Frequency)	(5.9)	(68.2)	(14.6)	(11.3)	(100)

Litigant Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	American Indian/Alask Native	Asia	Black/Afric American	Hispanic/Latin	Native Hawaiian/Paci Islander	Whit	Mul racia	Session Not Oc	Missin	Tota
Petitioner	3	4	65	103	0	8	5	35	16	239
(Frequency)	(1.3)	(1.7	(27.2)	(43.1)	(0)	(3.3)	(2.1	(14.6	(6.7)	(100
Respondent	1	2	63	90	1	8	4	35	35	239
(Frequency)	(0.4)	(0.8	(26.4)	(37.7)	(0.4)	(3.3)	(1.7	(14.6	(14.6)	(100

CRE Referral Status

Timing of Referral	Frequency (%)
EOP Temporary	58 (22.7)
POP Agreed Order	59 (23.1)
POP Hearing	13 (5.1)
Modification*	20 (7.8)
Court Driven	*4 (20.0)*
Client Driven	*14 (70.0)*
Missing	*2 (10.0)*
Information Not Collected	100 (39.2)
Missing	5 (2.0)
Total	255 (100)

CRE Session Status

Session(s)	Yes	No	Total
Session Occurred	202 (79.2)	53 (20.8)	255 (100)
No Session Occurred	36 (14.1)	219 (85.9)	255 (100)
Caseload/ Wait Time	*9 (25.0)*		
Other	*27 (75.0)*		
Session Terminated	17 (6.7)	238 (93.3)	255 (100)
Not Appropriate for Expediting	*12 (70.6)*		
Other	*5 (29.4)*		

CRE Session Visitation and Exchange Remedies

Remedies	Unsupervised Visitation	Supervised Visitation by Family	Supervised Visitation by Center	Neutral Exchange	Supervised Exchange by Family	Supervised Exchange by Center
Discussed						
No	55 (21.6)	121 (47.5)	130 (51.0)	104 (40.8)	121 (47.5)	189 (74.1)
Yes	164 (64.3)	98 (38.4)	89 (34.9)	115 (45.1)	98 (38.4)	30 (11.8)
Outcome						
Full Agreement	*97 (59.1)*	*38 (38.8)*	*27 (30.3)*	*78(67.8)*	*41(41.8)*	*2 (6.7)*
Partial Agreement	*0 (0)*	*0 (0)*	*0 (0)*	*0 (0)*	*0 (0)*	*0 (0)*
No Agreement	*25 (15.2)*	*23 (23.5)*	*20 (22.5)*	*10 (8.7)*	*11 (11.2)*	*7 (23.3)*
N/A or Missing	*42 (25.6)*	*37 (37.8)*	*42 (47.2)*	*27 (23.5)*	*46 (46.9)*	*21 (70.0)*
Session Did Not Occur	36 (14.1)	36 (14.1)	36 (14.1)	36 (14.1)	36 (14.1)	36 (14.1)
Total	255 (100)	255 (100)	255 (100)	255 (100)	255 (100)	255 (100)

CRE Session Other Remedies

Remedies	Belongings/ Documents	Communication	Financial Matters	Physical Care Custody	Restrictions During Visits	Other
Discussed						
No	201 (78.8)	40 (15.7)	164 (64.3)	216 (84.7)	164 (64.3)	189 (74.1)
Yes	18 (7.1)	179 (70.2)	55 (21.6)	3 (1.2)	55 (21.6)	30 (11.8)
Outcome						
Full Agreement	*14 (77.7)*	*137 (76.5)*	*39 (70.9)*	*2 (66.6)*	*43 (78.2)*	*24 (80.0)*
Partial Agreement	*0 (0)*	*1 (0.5)*	*1 (1.8)*	*0 (0)*	*2 (3.6)*	*0 (0)*
No Agreement	*2 (11.1)*	*19 (10.6)*	*9 (16.4)*	*1 (33.3)*	*3 (5.5)*	*4 (13.3)*
N/A or Missing	*2 (11.1)*	*22 (12.3)*	*6 (10.9)*	*0 (0)*	*7 (12.7)*	*2 (6.7)*
Session Did Not Occur	36 (14.1)	36 (14.1)	36 (14.1)	36 (14.1)	36 (14.1)	36 (14.1)
Total	255 (100)	255 (100)	255 (100)	255 (100)	255 (100)	255 (100)

References

Ajmi, A. (2022). COVID 19: A Catalyst to Automate Protection Order Petitions to Support Self-Represented Litigants. *Family Court Review*, *60*(2), 165–80.

American Bar Association. (2008). *Child custody and domestic violence by state*. Retrieved From http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/migrated/domviol/docs/Custody.authcheckdam.pdf

Bancroft, L. R., & Silverman, J. G. (2002). *The batterer as parent: addressing the impact of domestic violence on family dynamics*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Beck, C. J. A. & Raghavan, C. (2010). Intimate Partner Abuse Screening in Custody Mediation: The Importance of Assessing Coercive Control. *Family Court Review, 48,* 555–565

Bell, H., Kulkarni, S., & Dalton, L. (2003). Organizational prevention of vicarious trauma. *Families in society*, *84*(4), 463-470.

Cattaneo, L. B., Grossmann, J., & Chapman, A. R. (2016). The Goals of IPV Survivors Receiving Orders of Protection: An Application of the Empowerment Process Model. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 31*(17), 2889–2911.

Coles, J., Astbury, J., Dartnall, E., & Limjerwala, S. (2014). A Qualitative Exploration of Researcher Trauma and Researchers' Responses to Investigating Sexual Violence. *Violence Against Women, 20*(1), 95–117.

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: a black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory, and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989:139–67.

Crowley, J. E. (2006). Fathers Rights Activism and Law Reform in Comparative Perspective (S. Sheldon & R. Collier, Eds.). Oxford: Hart Pub.

Dalton, J.H., M.J. Elias, and A. Wandersman. (2001). Community Psychology: Linking Individuals and Community. Stamford, CT: Wadsworth.

Davis, G. (2015). A Systematic Approach to Domestic Violence-Informed Decision Making in Family Law Cases, *Family Court Review*, *53*(4):565- 577

Davis, G. (2016). A SAFeR approach to decision-making in domestic violence-related child custody disputes. Battered Women's Justice Project.

Davis, G., Frederick, L., & Ver Steegh, N. (2018). Practice guides for family court decision-making in domestic abuse-related child custody matters. Battered Women's Justice Project.

Dragiewicz, M. (2012). Gender Bias in Courts: Implications for Battered Mothers and their Children. *Family and Intimate Partner Violence Quarterly*, *5*(1):13-35

Etherington, K. (2007). Working with traumatic stories: From transcriber to witness. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *10*(2), 85-97.

Felitti, et al. (1998). Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, *14*(4), 245–258.

Fleury-Steiner, R. E., Miller, S. L., Maloney, S., & Bonistall Postel, E. (2016). "No contact, except . . .": Visitation decisions in protection orders for intimate partner abuse. *Feminist Criminology*, *11*(1), 3–22.

Glen, S. (2016). *Inter-rater Reliability IRR: Definition, Calculation - Statistics How To*. https://www.statisticshowto.com/inter-rater-reliability/

Gover, A. R., Brank, E. M., & MacDonald, J. M. (2007). A specialized domestic violence court in South Carolina: An example of procedural justice for victims and defendants. *Violence Against Women*, *13*, 603-626.

Guraya, S. Y., & Barr, H. (2018). The effectiveness of interprofessional education in healthcare: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *The Kaohsiung journal of medical sciences*, *34*(3), 160-165.

Hayes, B. E. (2012). Abusive men's indirect control of their partner during the process of separation. *Journal of Family Violence*, *27*, 333–344.

Holtzworth-Munroe, A., Beck, C. J. A., & Applegate, A. G. (2010). The Mediator's Assessment of Safety Issues and Concerns (MASIC): A screening interview for intimate partner violence and abuse available in the public domain. *Family Court Review*, *48*, 646–662.

Illinois Domestic Violence Act of 1986

Jaffe, P. G., & Crooks, C. V. (2004). Partner violence and child custody cases. *Violence against Women*, *10*, 917-934.

Johnson, M. P. (2008). *A typology of domestic violence: Intimate terrorism, violent resistance, and situational couple violence*. Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press.

Jouriles, E. N. and R. McDonald. (2015). "Intimate Partner Violence, Coercive Control, and Child Adjustment Problems" *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *30*(3): 459 – 474.

Kernic, M. A., Monary-Ernsdorff, D. J., Koepsell, J. K., & Holt, V. L. (2005). Children in the crossfire: Child custody determinations among couples with a history of intimate partner

violence. *Violence against Women, 11*, 991-1021.

Litton Fox, G., Sayers, J., & Bruce, C. (2001). Beyond bravado: Redemption and rehabilitation in the fathering accounts of men who batter. *Marriage & Family Review, 32,* 137–163.

Mazzotta, C. M., Crean, H. F., Pigeon, W. R., & Cerulli, C. (2021). Insomnia, posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms, and danger: their impact on victims' return to court for orders of protection. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, *36*(5-6), NP2443-NP2463.

Meier, J. (2003). Domestic violence, child custody and child protection: Understanding judicial resistance and imagining the solutions. *American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy & the Law, 11*(2), 657-731.

Messing, J. T., O'Sullivan, C. S., Cavanaugh, C. E., Webster, D. W., & Campbell, J. (2017). Are Abused Women's Protective Actions Associated With Reduced Threats, Stalking, and Violence Perpetrated by Their Male Intimate Partners? Violence Against Women, 23(3), 263–286.

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (2015). Family Court Enhancement Project Defining Child-Related Relief in Civil Protection Orders to Enhance Safety. *Family Court Enhancement Project.*

Nichols-Hadeed, C., Cerulli, C., Kaukeinen, K., Rhodes, K. V., & Campbell, J. (2012). Assessing danger: What judges need to know, *Family Court Review*, *50*(1), 150–158.

Oehme, K. & O'Rourke, K. (2012). Protecting victims and their children through supervised visitation: A study of domestic violence injunctions. *Faulkner Law Review, 3*, 261-272.

O'Connor, C., & Joffe, H. (2020). Intercoder Reliability in Qualitative Research: Debates and Practical Guidelines. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*.

O'Leary, K.D., & Cohen, S. (2007). Treatment of psychological and physical aggression in a couples context. In Hamel, J. & Nicholls, T. (Eds.), *Family interventions in domestic violence: A handbook of gender-inclusive theory and treatment* (pp. 363-380). New York: Guilford Press.

Paternoster, R., Brame, R., Bachman, R., & Sherman, L. (1997). Do fair procedures matter? The effect of procedural justice on spouse assault. *Law & Society Review, 31*, 163-204.

Pence, E., Davis, G., Beardslee, C., & Gamache, D. (2012). *Mind the gap: accounting for domestic abuse in child custody evaluations*. Minneapolis, MN: Battered Women's Network.

Perry, B., Pollard, R., Blakley, T., Baker, W., & Vigilante, D. (1995). Childhood trauma, the neurobiology of adaptation, and "use-dependent" development of the brain: How "states"

become “traits.” Infant Mental Health Journal, 16(4), 271–291. https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-0355(199524)16:43.0.CO;2-B

Saunders, D. G., Faller, K. C., & Tolman, R. M. (2011). Child custody evaluators’ beliefs about domestic abuse allegations: Their relationship to evaluator demographics, background, domestic violence knowledge, and custody visitation recommendations. *National Institute of Justice*. Retrieved from https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/238891.pdf

Shepard, M. F., & Hagemeister, a. K. (2013). Perspectives of rural women: custody and visitation with abusive ex-partners. *Affilia*, *28*(2), 165–176.

Stith, S. M., McCollum, E. E., & Rosen, H. (2011). *Couples therapy for domestic violence*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Stith, S. M., Rosen, H., McCollum, E. E., & Thomsen, C. J. (2004). Treating Intimate Partner Violence within intact couple relationships: Outcomes of multi-couple versus individual couple therapy. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 30,* 305–318.

Stover, C. S. (2013). Fathers for change: A new approach to working with fathers with histories of intimate partner violence and substance abuse. *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, 41,* 1–7.

Stover, C. S., & Morgos, D. (2013). Fatherhood and Intimate Partner Violence: Bringing the parenting role into intervention strategies. *Professional Psychology, Research and Practice*, *44*(4), 247–256.

Stover, C. S., Van Horn, P., & Lieberman, A. F. (2006). Parental representations in the play of preschool aged witnesses of marital violence. *Journal of Family Violence, 21,* 417–424.

Suarez-Balcazar, Y., & Harper, G. W. (2003). Community-Based Approaches to Empowerment and Participatory Evaluation Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar. *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community*, *26*(2), 1-4.

Swan, S. C., & Snow, D. L. (2002). A typology of women’s use of violence in intimate relationships. *Violence against Women, 8*(3), 286–319.

Thibault, J., & Walker, L. (1975). A Theory of Procedure. *California Law Review, 66,* 541-566.

Weisz, A. N., & Schell, M. (2020). Responding to intimate partner violence: Urban women’s decisions about getting personal protection orders when other resources are scarce. *Violence against women*, *26*(10), 1242-1261.

Woodby, L. L., Williams, B. R., Wittich, A. R., & Burgio, K. L. (2011). Expanding the notion of researcher distress: The cumulative effects of coding. *Qualitative health research*, *21*(6), 830-838.

Wolfe, D. A., Crooks, C. V., Lee, V., McIntyre-Smith, A., & Jaffe, P. G. (2003). The effects of children's exposure to domestic violence. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, *6*(3), 171–187.

Wuest, J., Ford-Gilboe, M., Merritt-Gray, M., & Berman, H. (2003). Intrusion: the central problem for family health promotion among children and single mothers after leaving an abusive partner. *Qualitative Health Research,13*, 597-622.

Zorza, J. (2010). Batterer manipulation and retaliation compounded by denial and complicity in the family courts. In M. Hannah & B. Goldstein (Eds.), *Domestic violence, abuse, and child custody: legal strategies and policy issues* (pp.14-2–14-28). Kingston, NJ: Civic Research Press.