

What Should an Attorney **DO** in a Child Welfare Case?

SKILLS: WRITTEN ADVOCACY

Quality legal representation for children involves the willingness and ability to advance the client's case through targeted, strategic, and skillful written advocacy. Every piece of writing an attorney does, whether formal or informal, holds the potential to persuade a decision-maker to shift the case in the way that aligns with a client's interests, needs, and narrative. Lawyers who represent children should demonstrate the ability to strategically use written advocacy to achieve the client's goals, preserve the record, attain court orders in the client's interest, and move the case towards permanency. Such written advocacy opportunities include:

- ❖ Emails
- ❖ Letters
- ❖ Court reports
- ❖ Motions
- ❖ Memoranda of law
- ❖ Briefs

Resources

- ❖ Steve Lubet & John E.B. Meyers. "Chapter 34: Trial Advocacy", in *Child Welfare Law and Practice: Representing Children, Parents, and State Agencies in Abuse, Neglect, and Dependency Cases* (Donald N. Duquette, Ann M. Haralambie, & Vivek S. Sankaran eds., National Association of Counsel for Children, 3d ed. 2016)