**Essex County Council - Children & Families**

**Public Law Outline (PLO) Toolkit**

1. **Introduction:**

This PLO Toolkit has been developed from the findings of: the PLO Peer Review (part of Essex County Council’s contribution to the DfE’s Partners in Practice programme), the Public Law Advisory Group report (Dec 2020), and the Family Justice Board Statement ‘Priorities for the Family Justice System’ (Dec 2020).

The PLO Toolkit is intended to assist local authorities fulfil the key recommendations set out in each of these reports*.*

1. **How to use the Toolkit:**

* Completing the Self Evaluation Tool (see document 4, embedded below) will help to identify the strengths and areas for development in your Local Authority.
* A further toolkit for conducting a peer review with another local authority (using the methodology of the PLO peer review referenced above) is also included (see item 2 in the below list). A peer review brings the additional benefit of an external lens, and of learning from observing another’s practice.
* The toolkit list below has a number of documents to support improved decision making, for example the PLO flow chart plots the decision-making process and the relevant documents at each stage of the PLO process.
* At the end of the table list are links to guidance and resources, for example the Family Justice Board statement which outlines the need for practice and culture change. There are also some legal judgement quotes for reference.
* The toolkit should be used flexibly and dynamically - the documents and resources may be updated/deleted as required.

For further advice/information regarding this toolkit, please contact Russel Breyer ([Russel.Breyer@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Russel.Breyer@essex.gov.uk)) or Dawn Attreed-James ([Dawn.Attreed-James@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Dawn.Attreed-James@essex.gov.uk)).

| **No.** | **Title** | **Author** | **Context** | **Document** |
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| 1 | Essex C&F: PLO Toolkit Presentation | Essex Children & Families | Background to the development of the PLO self-evaluation & toolkit. |  |
| 2 | Partners in Practice: PLO Peer Review Methodology & supporting documents | Essex Children & Families – Partners in Practice | A guide to how to complete a Peer Review re PLO in a Local Authority. |  |
| 3 | Care Proceedings in England. The case for Clear Blue Water. | Isabelle Trowler & University of Sheffield | Policy briefing on issuing proceedings. |  |
| 4 | Self-Evaluation – Public Law | Essex Children & Families | Tool to support Local Authorities understanding of their current strengths and development needs. |  |
| 5 | PLO Flow Chart | Essex Children & Families | Details the stages for decisions and practice when entering and reviewing PLO. |  |
| 6 | Initial Legal Planning Meeting Agenda | Essex Children & Families | Template that can be used for initial Legal planning meetings including a discussion guide, views of all to be considered and a plan of action re PLO/issuing. |  |
| 7 | Legal Planning Meeting Review | Essex Children & Families | Template that can be used for review legal planning meetings - including a discussion guide, list of assessments, capacity & views of involved parties, legal input, actions for Issues Resolution Hearing. |  |
| 8 | PLO Letter Template | Essex Children & Families | Details to parents the reason for this action, what will happen next and what they need to do next. |  |
| 9 | Issues Resolution Hearing (IRH) Checklist | Essex Children & Families | Checklist that details the issues required to have been addressed so that the court can list the final hearing at the Issues Resolution Hearing |  |
| 10 | Urgent Hearing Checklist | Essex Children & Families | Checklist that details the issues that need to have been addressed to justify an urgent hearing |  |
| 11 | Legal Letter to Issue template | Essex Children & Families | Template for letter to parents explaining that the LA is issuing proceedings. |  |
| 12 | C110A Application template | Essex Children & Families | Template for making an application to Family Court for an order |  |
| 13 | First and Final SW Statement | Essex Children & Families | Template for Social Worker statement for ICO |  |
| 14 | First SW Statement in Support of an EPO | Essex Children & Families | Template for social work statement when applying for an EPO |  |
| 15 | Social Work Chronology Template | Essex Children & Families | Template for aSocial Work Chronology |  |
| 16 | Cultural Genogram examples | Essex Children & Families |  |  |
| 17 | Contact Policy, Procedures, and Practice Guidance | Essex Children & Families |  |  |

1. **Links to Useful Resources**
2. [Family-Justice-Board-statement-Dec-2020\_1.pdf (judiciary.uk)](https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Family-Justice-Board-statement-Dec-2020_1.pdf)
3. [The Road Ahead - Sir Andrew McFarlane - President of the Family Division for the Family Court in England and Wales](https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/The-Road-Ahead_FINAL.pdf)
4. [Public-Law-Advisory-Group-Report-Dec-2020-1.pdf (judiciary.uk)](https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Public-Law-Advisory-Group-Report-Dec-2020-1.pdf)
5. [Private Law Working Group (PLWG) Response to Consultation (judiciary.uk)](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.judiciary.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2020%2F04%2FPRIVATE-LAW-WORKING-GROUP-REPORT.pdf&data=04%7C01%7C%7C4e8dec34604844379ade08d8bc939364%7Ca8b4324f155c4215a0f17ed8cc9a992f%7C0%7C0%7C637466689306951910%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=IzOhJpqYarLfYflxWxoN4PxXVrF%2BvbWECkFrPCwXEe0%3D&reserved=0)
6. [Family Procedure Rules](https://www.justice.gov.uk/courts/procedure-rules/family/rules_pd_menu)  - The guidance also includes case plan template
7. [PRACTICE DIRECTION 12A - CARE, SUPERVISION AND OTHER PART 4 PROCEEDINGS: GUIDE TO CASE MANAGEMENT (justice.gov.uk)](http://www.justice.gov.uk/courts/procedure-rules/family/practice_directions/pd_part_12a)
8. [Public Law - Practice Directions 2014](https://www.judiciary.uk/related-offices-and-bodies/advisory-bodies/fjc/guidance/familycourtguide/publiclaw/practice-directions/)
9. [Updated version of the Remote Family Access Court](https://www.judiciary.uk/announcements/updated-version-of-the-remote-family-access-court-released/)
10. [The President of the Family Division Working Group on Medical Experts in the Family Courts Final Report](https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Working-Group-on-Medical-Experts-Final-Report-v.7.pdf)
11. [Remote hearings in the family justice system: reflections and experiences - Sept 2020](https://www.nuffieldfjo.org.uk/app/nuffield/files-module/local/documents/remote_hearings_sept_2020.pdf)
12. [Safety from Domestic Abuse and Special Measures in Remote and Hybrid Hearings](https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Safety-from-Domestic-Abuse-and-Special-Measures-in-Remote-and-Hybrid-Hearings-Family-Justice-Council-guidance.pdf)
13. [Going to Court about a Family Issue? Leaflet](https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/going-to-court-about-a-family-issue-leaflet.pdf)
14. [The Court and your Child](https://www.judiciary.uk/related-offices-and-bodies/advisory-bodies/fjc/reports-publications/fjc-publications/the-court-and-your-child/)
15. [Representing yourself in family court – film](https://www.advicenow.org.uk/guides/representing-yourself-family-court-film)
16. [Initial Family and Friends Care Assessment: A good practice guide](https://www.frg.org.uk/images/Viability_Assessments/VIABILITY-MASTER-COPY-WHOLE-GUIDE.pdf)
17. [Delivering Good Practice Initial Assessments of Family & Friends Carers - addendum in the context of Covid-19](https://www.frg.org.uk/images/Viability_Assessments/initial-family-and-friends-care-assessment-a-good-practice-guide.pdf)
18. [Family Rights Group](https://www.frg.org.uk/)
19. Legal Judgement Quotes for reference****