



PERMANENCY HEARING SUMMARY OF KEY QUESTIONS/DETERMINATIONS



- Were reasonable efforts made by the agency to reunify the family and to finalize a permanent plan?
- Is the plan in the best interest of the child?
 - Will placement be continued for a specific time, with a continued goal of family reunification? Have adoptive parents been identified?
- If legal custodianship is the plan, why is it preferable to TPR and adoption?
- If/when will the custody of the child be transferred to an individual or couple on a permanent basis?
- If APPLA is the plan:
 - Has the county agency documented a compelling reason that it would not be best suited to the safety, protection and physical, mental and moral welfare of the child to be returned to the child's parent, guardian or custodian, to be placed for adoption, to be placed with a legal custodian or to be placed with a fit and willing relative?
 - Has family finding been thoroughly conducted?
 - Have all efforts to achieve a more preferred permanency goal been exhausted?
 - Have circumstances changed such that another plan should be considered?
 - Is the child placed in the most family-like setting possible?
- What are the child's special needs? Who is to provide the services to meet the child's needs?
- Is the visitation plan still appropriate or do revisions need to be made?
 - Does the frequency and duration of the visits seem appropriate based on the child's age and needs?
 - Have relatives or kin resources been exhausted for visitation location and oversight?
 - Has a visitation plan been presented to the court that outlines details of the visitation plan, including assistance to the parent or siblings such as transportation?
- What are the child's educational needs?
 - Will the child remain in the same school?
 - If the child has been moved, does the child need new assessments?
 - If the child has been moved, is there monitoring to make certain his or her transition is successful?
 - Is the child appropriately placed, attending school, and making progress?
 - Does the child have a parent or guardian making reliable education decisions or should an EDM be appointed?
- If not already determined, has the court made a determination as to whether the child is an Indian Child as defined by the Indian Child Welfare Act, 25 U.S.C. § 1901 *et seq.* and the Bureau of Indian Affairs regulations, 25 C.F.R. § 23.2?

These questions are adapted from the text of this chapter, the *Mission and Guiding Principles for Pennsylvania's Dependency System* and the Permanency Hearing Benchcard provided in the *Enhanced Resource Guidelines* (NCJFCJ, 2016, pp. 319-329).