



The Louisiana Supreme Court NEWS

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NEW LOUISIANA CHILD IN NEED OF CARE BENCHBOOK PUBLISHED AS A RESOURCE FOR JUVENILE COURT JUDGES

New Orleans, LA- The Court Improvement Program of the Louisiana Supreme Court, the Louisiana Judicial College, and the Pelican Center for Children and Families today announced the publication of the [Louisiana Child in Need of Care \(CINC\) Benchbook for Juvenile Judges](#). The Benchbook project is a part of the Child and Family Services Review Program Improvement Plan. The Benchbook incorporates State and Federal laws, best practices, and the Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS) Child Welfare Assessment and Decision Making Model, which is designed to expedite permanency and decrease the trauma experienced by families and children in CINC proceedings. This work is the culmination of a year-long collaborative effort involving many legal stakeholders in Louisiana.

In addition to the judicial Benchbook, the collaborative also created [bench cards](#) and order templates that will be available to Louisiana's state judges and legal practitioners. This project, a deliverable goal of the Louisiana Supreme Court's Court Improvement Program, was undertaken in partnership with the Pelican Center for Children and Families to develop strategies to improve outcomes for Louisiana children and families in the state's child welfare system based upon review findings of the federal Children's Bureau.

"I would like to thank those involved in this project for their hard work, dedication, and devotion on this initiative," said Chief Justice John L. Weimer. "There were many who collaborated in making this important resource available and they are to be commended."

A number of Louisiana state court judges were instrumental in providing input, guidance, and feedback on the content of the judicial Benchbook. Those judges include Jefferson Parish

Juvenile Court Judge Barron Burmaster, Orleans Parish Juvenile Court Judge Desiree Cook-Calvin, 9th JDC Judge John Davidson, 15th JDC Judge Thomas Duplantier, 21st JDC Judge Blair Edwards, 22nd JDC Judge Scott Gardner, East Baton Rouge Juvenile Court Judges Gail Grover and Adam Haney, 29th JDC Judge Timothy Marcel, Caddo Parish Juvenile Court Judge David Matlock, retired Orleans Parish Juvenile Court Judge Ernestine Gray and retired East Baton Rouge Parish Juvenile Court Judge Kathleen Stewart Richey.

The Introduction to the Benchbook provides an orientation to this resource and its overarching practice principles. In addition, the Table of Contents outlines all information contained in the Benchbook. Additionally, editable versions of the Order templates are on the Louisiana Supreme Court's website, located on the Division of Children and Families, Court Improvement Program page at: [https://www.lasc.org/Children Families?p=CIP](https://www.lasc.org/Children_Families?p=CIP).

The Benchbook may be directly accessed at:

- [https://www.lasc.org/Children Families?p=CIP](https://www.lasc.org/Children_Families?p=CIP)
- <https://clarola.org/>

For questions about the Benchbook or the work of the collaborative, please contact [Otha Curtis Nelson, Jr.](#), Deputy Judicial Administrator, Division of Children and Families, Louisiana Supreme Court.

For more information visit lasc.org or contact Louisiana Supreme Court Public Information Specialist/Coordinator Trina S. Vincent at tvincent@lasc.org or (504) 310-2590.