

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
311 W SARATOGA STREET  
BALTIMORE MARYLAND 21201

DATE: April 24, 2006

CIRUCULAR LETTER: SSA 06-12

TO: Directors, Local Department of Social Services  
Assistant Directors for Services, Local Departments of Social Services  
Child Welfare Supervisors, Local Departments of Social Services

FROM: Dr. Rebecca Bridgett, Acting Executive Director  
Social Services Administration

RE: Foster Parent/Caregiver Notification

PROGRAMS AFFECTED: Out-of-Placement Services (Foster/Kinship Care/Adoption)

ACTION REQUIRED OF: Out-of-Placement Staff

CONTACT PERSON: Sharon Hargrove, Manager  
Out-of-Home Placement Services  
410-767-7587

Judith Eveland  
Resource Development Program Manager  
410-767-7910

**Purpose**

This circular letter is to provide guidelines for completion of the Caregiver Notification of Hearing Form.

**Background**

The foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, or relative caregivers for any child in the care of a local department of social services either by commitment or guardianship shall be provided notice of, and an opportunity to be heard in, any review or hearing pertaining to the child. This requirement shall not be constructed to require that any foster parent, pre-adoptive parent or relative caregiver for the child be made a party to such a review or hearing solely on the basis of such notice and opportunity to be heard. The local department of social services must insure that all caregivers are notified and that documentation of the notification of all court hearings must be placed in the child's record.

**Instruction for Completion**

Use the attached sample form letter for your jurisdiction. A copy of this circular letter with the form attached is available on the DHR/SSA Net. Staff can download the form and use it for their jurisdiction.

**SAMPLE LETTER**

**Name of LDSS  
Street Address  
City, State Zip Code**

**Caregiver Notification of Hearing**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Re: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Child(ren))

Dear (Mr. Ms. Mrs.) \_\_\_\_\_:

A Permanency Planning or Review Hearing for the above-mentioned child(ren) has been Scheduled by the **(Name of your court)**. You have the right to be present for this hearing and an opportunity to be heard as the current caregiver of the child(ren). However, you are not required to attend. If you decide to attend this Hearing, please report to the **(Name address and room # of your court)**. The hearing is scheduled on Date: (mm/dd/yy) at **(Time of hearing and room #)**.

Please let me know if you plan to attend so that I can make sure the court and the parties to the proceeding know you are present. If have any questions, please call me.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Case Manager**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number