

Caregiver Reports

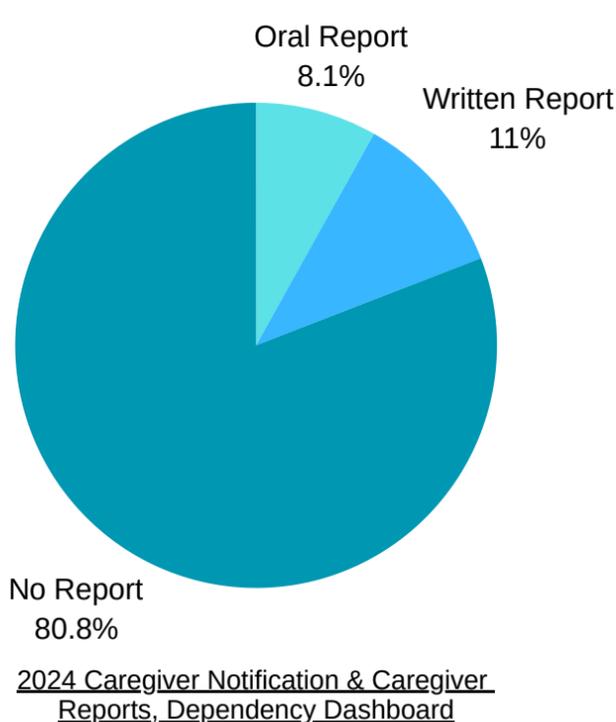
Child Dependency Courts

A Caregiver’s Report to the Court (“Caregiver Reports”) serve as an important supplement to professional assessments, ensuring that the voices of those who interact most closely with the child day-to-day are considered in court decision-making. These reports, completed by the out-of-home placement, summarize the child’s health, education, behaviors, relationships, and adjustment to their placement.



[View Report Form](#)

Caregiver Reports provide the court and parties with critical insights into a child’s daily life, well-being, and progress while in out-of-home care.



In 2024, Washington courts documented **9,136 cases** where caregivers were provided adequate and timely notice.

Despite this, caregiver reports to the court were relatively limited, with **744 oral reports** (8.1%) and **1,006 written reports** (11.0%) submitted.

These findings underscore the gap between widespread notification and the smaller proportion of cases in which caregiver input was actually provided to the court.

ENCOURAGING CAREGIVER REPORTS

Remind caregivers during hearings that their input is valuable.

Sample Language

“Your perspective as the child’s caregiver is very important to this court. I encourage you to provide a written or oral report before each hearing, as it helps us make more informed decisions for the child’s well-being.”

Ask early in the proceeding whether a caregiver report has been received and, if not, clarify the process.

Sample Language

“Have we received a caregiver report for today’s hearing? If not, I want to make sure caregivers know that these reports are welcome and should be submitted before future hearings.”

Encourage caseworkers to remind caregivers about report submission deadlines and provide assistance if needed.

Sample Language

“I want to remind the Department and the attorneys that caregiver reports are an important part of these hearings. Please be sure to let caregivers know when reports are due, provide them with the forms, and offer support if they need help completing or submitting their input.”