

Family Law Orders in New Dependency Cases

Child Dependency Courts

A small but important number of cases arise where an existing family law order no longer fits once a dependency case opens. While these situations represent only a handful of cases, changing family circumstances and new dependency facts can leave existing family law orders clearly in need of modification.

The Issue

Outdated orders can create confusion for families, tension between court processes, and uncertainty for professionals trying to ensure child safety.

Without timely coordination or a clear process for revisiting family law orders, courts may be forced to navigate conflicting directives.



Why It Matters

- **Children need consistent guidance.** Conflicting orders create confusion around safety, visitation, and expectations.
- **Court processes can work at cross-purposes.** Dependency goals may clash with assumptions in older family law orders.
- **Practitioners need clarity.** Unclear orders leads to inconsistent practice.
- **Families feel the strain.** Mixed messages increase stress and complicate compliance with services.
- **Permanency can be delayed.** Outdated orders slow case planning and delay stable, long-term outcomes.



Even a small number of conflicting orders can create significant challenges, making coordination essential to ensure child safety, avoid delays in permanency, reduce confusion, and support consistent, family-centered outcomes.