
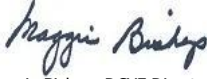


1277 COURT HEARINGS	
Chapter: Child Protective Field Services	Section: Working with Families in Court
	New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families Policy Manual Policy Directive: 08-03 Effective Date: May 2008 Scheduled Review Date:
	Approved:  Maggie Bishop, DCYF Director
Related Statute(s): RSA 169-C Related Admin Rule(s): Related Federal Regulation(s):	Related Form(s): FORM NHJB-2222, FORM NHJB-2223, and FORM NHJB-2224 Bridges' Screen(s) and Attachment(s):

Policy

- I. [Preliminary Hearings](#): This hearing is held to determine, based on offers of proof, whether [reasonable cause](#) exists to believe that a child/ren has been abused or neglected. The court must provide a [written order](#) following the preliminary hearing {Form nhjb-2222}.

- II. [Adjudicatory Hearings](#): At this hearing, the involved parties present evidence and the court must determine by a [preponderance of evidence](#) whether or not the allegations in the abuse or neglect petition are sustained by the evidence. The court must provide a [written order](#) following this hearing {Form nhjb-2223}.
 - A. If the Court makes a finding that the child/ren has been abused and/or neglected, the CPSW works with the family to complete a [social study](#) in preparation for the dispositional hearing.

 - B. An adjudicatory hearing may be waived, pursuant to RSA 169-C:17,1, and a [consent decree](#) filed with the court. The court's approval of a consent decree, that includes a finding of true, will have the same force and effect as if the court had determined at an adjudicatory hearing that a child had been abused or neglected and had entered a finding of true. A consent decree must contain specific [requirements](#) prior to approval by the court.

- III. [Dispositional Hearings](#): This hearing is held [after a finding of abuse or neglect](#) is entered by the court. In addition to the social study, DCYF is required to submit a [report](#) to the court prior to the [dispositional hearing](#). The court must provide a [written order](#) following this hearing {Form nhjb-2224}.