

**232.127 Hearing — adjudication — disposition.**

1. Upon the filing of a petition, the court shall fix a time for a hearing and give notice thereof to the child and the child's parent, guardian or custodian.

2. A parent without custody may petition the court to be made a party to proceedings under this division.

3. The court shall exclude the general public from such hearing except the court in its discretion may admit persons having a legitimate interest in the case or the work of the court.

4. The hearing shall be informal and all relevant and material evidence shall be admitted.

5. The court may adjudicate the family to be a family in need of assistance and enter an appropriate dispositional order if the court finds:

a. There has been a breakdown in the relationship between the child and the child's parent, guardian or custodian; and

b. The child or the child's parent, guardian or custodian has sought services from public or private agencies to maintain and improve the familial relationship; and

c. The court has at its disposal services for this purpose which can be made available to the family.

6. If the court makes such a finding the court may order any or all of the parties to accept counseling and to comply with any other reasonable orders designed to maintain and improve the familial relationship. At the conclusion of any counseling ordered by the court, or at any other time deemed necessary, the parties shall be required to meet together and be apprised of the findings and recommendations of such counseling. Such an order shall remain in force for a period not to exceed one year unless the court otherwise specifies or sooner terminates the order.

7. The court may not order the child placed on probation, in a foster home or in a nonsecure facility unless the child requests and agrees to such supervision or placement. In no event shall the court order the child placed in the state training school or other secure facility.

8. The court shall not order group foster care placement of the child which is a charge upon the state if that placement is not in accordance with the service area plan for group foster care established pursuant to section 232.143 for the departmental service area in which the court is located.

9. A child found in contempt of court because of violation of conditions imposed under this section shall not be considered delinquent. Such a contempt may be punished by imposition of a work assignment or assignments to benefit the state or a governmental subdivision of the state. In addition to or in lieu of such an assignment or assignments, the court may impose one of the dispositions set out in sections 232.100 to 232.102.

10. If the child is sixteen years of age or older and an order for an out-of-home placement is entered, the order shall specify the services needed to assist the child in preparing for the transition from foster care to adulthood. If the child has a case permanency plan, the court shall consider the written transition plan of services and needs assessment developed for the child's case permanency plan. If the child does not have a case permanency plan containing the transition plan and needs assessment at the time the order is entered, the written transition plan and needs assessment shall be developed and submitted for the court's consideration no later than six months from the date of the transfer order. The court shall modify the initial transfer order as necessary to specify the services needed to assist the child in preparing for the transition from foster care to adulthood. If the transition plan identifies services or other support needed to assist the child when the child becomes an adult and the court deems it to be beneficial to the child, the court may authorize the individual who is the child's guardian ad litem or court appointed special advocate to continue a relationship with and provide advice to the child for a period of time beyond the child's eighteenth birthday.

11. If after hearing pursuant to this section, the court finds, by clear and convincing evidence, that no remedy is available that would result in strengthening or maintaining the familial relationship, the court may order the minor emancipated pursuant to section 232C.3, subsection 4.

[C79, 81, §232.127; 82 Acts, ch 1260, §24]

92 Acts, ch 1229, §7; 2003 Acts, ch 117, §7; 2004 Acts, ch 1116, §12; 2009 Acts, ch 153, §2