

June 12, 1998

TO: All Dependency Court Judicial Officers and Attorneys

FROM: Presiding Judge Michael Nash
Juvenile Court

SUBJECT: DISSEMINATION OF THE 'START' REPORT

Effective Wednesday, June 24, 1998, and every Wednesday thereafter, a newly developed report will be available to alert attorneys representing minors in the Dependency Court of alleged criminal activity by their clients. The report, which will be known as the "START Report" (Start Taking Action Responsibly Today), will contain a list of all minors who are dependents of the court who have had contact with law enforcement involving an alleged criminal offense the previous week, from Sunday to Sunday.

The START Report will be printed weekly and will be made available on a clipboard in each courtroom.

CONTENTS OF REPORT

A sample copy of the START Report is attached to this memo which explains all the categories of information contained in the report. Essentially, the report will include the Dependency Court department number, the name of the minor's attorney and affiliation (whether panel or DCFS), the minor's name, Dependency JAI number, date of birth, Delinquency JAI number, arrest date, arresting agency, and the alleged offense.

This report is similar to the DEAR Report which has been used for the past few years. However, it does contain some significant differences. The DEAR Report lists only those minors with hearings scheduled in the upcoming week and who have had a law enforcement contact leading to a Probation Department referral. The START Report lists all dependent minors with law enforcement contact over the previous week without reference to any upcoming proceedings. It should also be noted that START does not include citations for offenses to the Informal Juvenile and Traffic Court. It is our intention to discontinue the DEAR Report after the START Report has been in existence for a few months.

UTILIZATION OF REPORT

Welfare and Institutions Code section 317(e) states in part that “...counsel shall investigate the interests of the minor beyond the scope of the juvenile proceeding and report to the court other interests of the minor that may need to be protected by the institution of other administrative or judicial proceedings.” The purpose of the START Report is to alert minor’s attorneys at an early point in time to the possibility of Delinquency proceedings . Early notice of alleged criminal activity will allow minors’ attorneys to contact their clients directly to determine what occurred. Potential follow-up may include contact with law enforcement and/or Probation to learn whether charges will be filed, early involvement in the WIC 241.1 process, or contact with the CSW regarding intensified services to the minor to prevent further delinquent behavior, assuming charges are not filed on the instant occasion.

Many participants in our system have long complained of a lack of communication between the Dependency and Delinquency systems, and the need for timely information when a dependent minor exhibits the type of behavior which threatens to bring that minor into the jurisdiction of the Delinquency Court. The START Report is designed to close the information gap between the two systems and to alert all of us to those minors who are in immediate need of additional services. Hopefully, productive use will be made of this source of information.

If there are any questions about the START or DEAR Reports, please contact Dependency Court Administrator Randy Henderson at (213) 526-6662.

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Attachment

cc: Presiding Judge Robert W. Parkin
Assistant Presiding Judge Victor E. Chavez
John A. Clarke, Executive Officer/Clerk
John Walker, Court Manager, Juvenile Court Services
Randy Henderson, Dependency Court Administrator
Michael Roussel, Delinquency Court Administrator
Richard Martinez, Assistant Dependency Court Administrator
Sylvia Wells, Assistant Delinquency Court Administrator
Sandy Montoya, Assistant Division Chief
Peter Digre, Director, Department of Children and Family Services
Richard Shumsky, Chief Probation Officer, Probation Department
Gil Garcetti, District Attorney
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