

## Writing a Witness Statement

Your statement should explain your side of things in writing. Do it in good time – the Court may not read your statement if you send it in after the deadline.

### How to lay it out

- Use A4 paper
- Write the case number and the names of the Applicant and Respondent at the top.
- Number the paragraphs and the pages
- Use headings to make it easy to understand
- If you are including evidence, attach this at the end as an 'appendix'.
- End by writing 'I make this statement believing the contents to be true and knowing that it may be placed before the court and used in evidence.' Then sign and date it at the bottom.

We can send you a statement template which you can fill in by hand or on a computer – please email [family@ncls.co.uk](mailto:family@ncls.co.uk) to ask for one.

### What to include

- Keep it fairly short. One or two pages is usually enough.
- Focus on what's best for your child/ren – see the Welfare Checklist (ask us for a copy or visit <https://bit.ly/2X7XSek>).
- Summarise the background. Stick to the facts, avoid blame and aggressive language. If you've done something you regret, you can say so.
- Say what you want to happen going forward.
- Include any concerns you may have about the other parent caring for your child/ren. If you mention something later, the Court will want to know why you didn't put it in your statement.

- Only include evidence if it is relevant and will help the court to make their decision.
- State what you wish the Court to order.
- Check your Court Order – if it asks you to cover something specific in your statement, be sure to include this.
- You may be questioned on your statement in court so make sure everything in it is true.

### **Where to send it**

Look at your Court Order to see how many copies to make. Usually you will need to send one to the Court and one to the other person in the case (or their solicitor if they have one). Often Cafcass will need a copy too. You can send it by post or email. Keep a copy for yourself and bring it when you go to Court.

Family Court Hearing Centre  
Bishopsgate  
Norwich  
NR3 1UP

family.norwich.countycourt@  
justice.gov.uk

CAFCASS  
Rosebery Court  
St. Andrews Business Park  
Norwich  
NR7 0HS

a14admin@cafcass.gov.uk

If emailing, the subject line should read:

*Document for placing on the Court File [insert case number]*

### **Getting help**

We can help you with your statement if you like and arrange for it to be checked over by a qualified solicitor. Please phone us to make an appointment, leaving plenty of time before the deadline. You need to write a rough version first and bring it with you.

*Remember, you should not talk to your children about your family court case.*

Please contact us if you would like this guide in another language.

### **Norfolk Community Law Service**

14 Prince of Wales Road, Norwich, NR1 1LB

**Tel** 01603 496623

**E-mail** info@ncls.co.uk

**Web** www.ncls.co.uk