

Executive Summary  
Advanced Court Report Writing  
Roger Coffman

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This training is designed to provide the participant with the skills and knowledge of writing beyond the basic report writing standards. This course explores the application of given facts to substantive legal theory as well as recognizing and reinforcing utilization of legal procedure to reach satisfactory legal decisions. Exploring the different legal burdens of proof the social worker must meet for each step in the reunification process, to maximize the impact of the report while minimizing expended resources.

#### TARGET AUDIENCE

This course presumes that the participant has had some direct experience with the court process and is prepared to hone these skills to a more sophisticated level.

#### OUTCOME OBJECTIVES

- Staff will be able to identify the critical legal findings that need to be addressed at each stage of the dependency process for which a court report is prepared.
- Staff will be able to write reports that contain sufficient legally admissible evidence to support the recommendations to the court.
- Staff will learn to relate the analysis part of reports to the required legal findings to make their reports more persuasive to the court.
- Staff will be able to write reports that have logical internal structure and are “user friendly” for the court and other parties in the dependency process.
- Staff will be able to identify and avoid using biased, confusing, and other writing errors that detract from the effective report writing.

Ways the Supervisor can support the transfer of learning from the classroom to the job before the training.

1. Supervisors should ask the social worker to discuss the social worker’s understanding of cultural competence.
2. Supervisors should ask the social worker to consider how the different burdens of proof needed at different hearings can impact what is put in a report.
3. Supervisor should discuss with social worker the merits of sound writing skills.

After the Training.

1. Supervisors should ask the social workers why cultural competence is important and what statutes enforce the same.
2. Supervisors should ask the social worker what the different burdens of proof are for each hearing and how that may or may not impact the report
3. Supervisors should review examples of clear writing with the social worker