

# Legal Response to COVID-19 *Select Survey Findings*

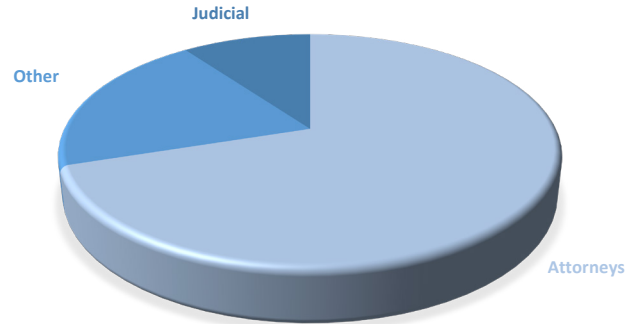
Between August 11 and September 1, 2020, the ABA Center on Children and the Law, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, conducted a survey to solicit input on solutions to COVID-19 induced legal challenges across the country. The Center then analyzed the aggregate data for a national perspective on how jurisdictions are addressing the issues.

## Survey Respondents

**1,529 legal professionals in all 50 states and the District of Columbia**

### Attorney and Judge Categories\*

Children's Counsel	32.77%
Parent's Counsel	23.54%
Agency Counsel	11.45%
State Government Counsel	9.29%
Attorneys Whose Work Intersects with Child Welfare	9.55%
Judges	6.93%

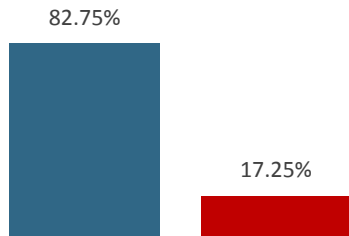


\*Chart reflects attorney and judge respondents only.

## Agency Visitation Facilitation with Parents & Children

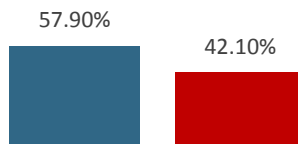
Are In-Person Visits Occurring?

■ Yes ■ No



Are In-Person Visits for Young Children And Infants Being Prioritized?

■ Yes ■ No



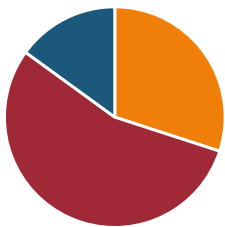
## Hearings

Is a hybrid hearing model being used?

■ No

■ Yes

■ Not yet but there are plans to offer them in the future

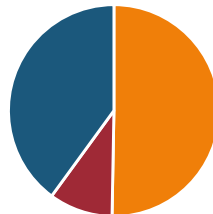


Are cancelled/rescheduled hearings or parents' inability to participate in services considered when assessing compelling reasons not to file a TPR petition?

■ Yes

■ No

■ Not an issue



### Remote Hearings

Participants reported the following:

#### Advantages:

- ✓ Improved participation
- ✓ Barriers to transportation removed
- ✓ Increased collaboration between parties
- ✓ Increased flexibility with scheduling

#### Disadvantages:

- ✓ Noncompliance with statutory timelines
- ✓ Difficulty with client access/communication
- ✓ Difficulty with feedback noise, poor recording quality and general confusion during virtual hearings



### Technology Access

46% of participants reported the agency has provided funding to children, parents, and caregivers to pay for phones or internet to maintain contact.

50% report that their jurisdiction prioritized access to computers/laptops.



### Relative/Kin Placements

30% report that upon entry into foster care, relative and fictive kin placements have been prioritized.



### Mental Health Services

Participants report that mental health counseling has been the most prioritized service to address the needs of families.

### Coming Soon:

A legal guide compiling all survey responses and strategies and information from the field.

### For more information:

- ✓ Contact Rhonda Serrano, JD, [rhonda.serrano@americanbar.org](mailto:rhonda.serrano@americanbar.org)
- ✓ Visit our [website](#) to join our mailing list and stay up to date on Center projects, including the Covid-19 report.