

Reference: RFI 2171

Request:

We are interested to see how the introduction of the PLO (Public Law Outline) Welfare Checklist 2008 has altered the outcomes for children.

I would be grateful if under the FOIA you could advise how many times your Local Authority has applied for care orders via the Family Courts WITHOUT the Welfare checklist set out in section 1 of the Children Act 1989 being completed. The completion of the Welfare Checklist would confirm that extended family members had in fact been contacted prior to any application for a care order.

Whoever signs the application for a care order is responsible for ensuring that the Welfare checklist has been fully completed, please state who within your authority holds this position.

**Response:**

The welfare checklist is always given consideration before proceedings are commenced and social workers cover it in their statements as appropriate.

The application forms for a care order do not specifically address the welfare checklist - see C1 and C13, which are attached for ease of reference.

The presiding magistrates always address the issue of the welfare checklist when they consider the making of an order.

A council lawyer signs the application forms in the name of the Head of Legal, Governance and Commercial.

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