



Your adoption hearing

A practical plan for arriving prepared, participating honestly and keeping your family comfortable.

Start with the hearing notice. Confirm the adoption type, required attendees, location and unfinished steps. Follow your court's current instructions.

1 Confirm the appointment

Write down the date, time, department and case number. Ask who must attend and whether any remote appearance has been approved.

2 Organize the record

Gather the documents the court requested. Keep originals and copies separate. Check which signatures must wait for the hearing.

3 Prepare your family

Explain what the day may involve. Listen to the child's questions and wishes. Arrange an interpreter, accommodation or safety support early.

4 Plan the arrival

Choose comfortable, appropriate clothes. Allow for travel, parking, security and waiting. Check in with the clerk or bailiff as directed.

5 Answer in your own words

Explain the facts accurately. Ask when a question is unclear. Do not coach a child to repeat "Yes" or promise a fixed hearing length.

6 Clarify the next step

Ask how to obtain the filed order and needed certified copies. Check the records-update process. Take photos only with permission.

Comfort, privacy and choice.

A child does not need a special outfit, public adoption shirt or smiling photograph to participate respectfully. Ask about guest limits and photography before making plans.

Read the companion guides

[Questions and honest preparation](#) · [Clothing, comfort and courthouse planning](#)

[California court preparation example](#) · [California hearing-day example](#)



YOUR PRIVATE HEARING WORKSHEET

Make the day easier

Print and complete this for your own use. Record the court's answers and the facts you need to clarify.

COURT / DEPARTMENT

HEARING DATE / TIME

CASE NUMBER

COURT CONTACT / PHONE

PEOPLE THE COURT REQUIRES TO ATTEND

Before we leave

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Hearing notice checked | ☐ Required documents organized |
| ☐ Signatures / originals confirmed | ☐ Comfortable clothing ready |
| ☐ Travel and arrival time planned | ☐ Interpreter / supports arranged |
| ☐ Guests and photo rules checked | ☐ Child's questions heard |

Questions to resolve

Topic	Our question / the court's instruction
Outstanding forms, notice, consent or reports	
Attendance, access or safety needs	
What we do not yet understand about the legal commitment	
Filed order, certified copies and record updates	

Our next action:

Who will do it, and when:

Use case-specific legal help for an objection or unresolved rights issue. Keep this worksheet with your private records; it is not submitted through this guide.