

DEPENDENCY DOCKET

BENCH CARDS

for Ohio Family and Juvenile Court Judges and Magistrates

Ohio's **Dependency Docket Bench Cards** were developed to support judicial officers in their duty to provide comprehensive and timely judicial action in child welfare cases and to encourage best practices. In recognition of the need to assure safe and permanent homes for abused and neglected children and to assist Ohio's juvenile and family courts in performing their critical and highly complex function, the Supreme Court of Ohio assembled a team of highly qualified professionals to create an Ohio-specific resource for navigating these cases. Ohio's **Dependency Docket Bench Cards** are designed to be used in conjunction with the RESOURCE GUIDELINES and the ADOPTION AND PERMANENCY GUIDELINES published by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. These bench cards are not intended to serve as an authoritative source, but rather, a resource to inform courtroom practice.

The Court wishes to extend special recognition and tremendous gratitude to **Judy Fornof**, Magistrate, Lucas County Juvenile Court, **Carla A. Guenthner**, Magistrate, Hamilton County Juvenile Court, and **Victor H. Perez**, Agency Attorney, Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services, who contributed countless hours and dedicated their collective effort, experience, expertise and energy to drafting these cards. In addition, thanks go to the members of the Beyond the Numbers Judicial Planning Committee and various members of the legal community who reviewed and provided comment on these bench cards.

The **Dependency Docket Bench Cards** grew out of the Beyond the Numbers project, a collaborative initiative of The Supreme Court of Ohio and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, designed to improve the way courts and agencies and their community partners address child welfare cases. By linking interdisciplinary county teams with resources and education, Ohio's courts and agencies will be better equipped to ensure the safety and well-being of the children at the heart of these cases by assisting them in achieving timely permanency and stability. Comments or questions about the Beyond the Numbers initiative or these bench cards should be directed to:

THE SUPREME COURT *of* OHIO
Judicial & Court Services Division
65 South Front Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3431
614.387.9400