

Where Do I Go?

Location of Court Room: Meskwaki Justice Center, 307 Meskwaki Rd.
(641) 484-9300 telephone

Mailing Address For Children's Court: Clerk of Children's Court
307 Meskwaki Rd.
Tama, IA 52339

You can get information about where your child is and about court processes from your child's social worker or Meskwaki Family Services staff.

**Please use the area below
to keep track of vital information**

Case Number/s: _____

Social Worker/s Name	Phone #
_____	_____
_____	_____

Hearing Date/s	Time	Day of Week
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Other people important to me or my case:	
Name	Phone #
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Children's Court



**“Emergency Removal”
Of Children
Information for
Parents & Families**





Dear Parents, Families, or Guardians:

THIS INFORMATION IS BEING PROVIDED TO HELP YOU AND YOUR FAMILY. PLEASE READ IT CAREFULLY.

Why is this matter being investigated?

There have been one or more reports about your child's safety and a police officer or social worker must investigate to see if your child's safety and protection require court intervention or require taking the child into emergency custody.

If my child was taken from me, why?

Your child may have been taken from you and placed in protective custody because a police officer or social worker believes your child is endangered and/or it is necessary for the safety of your child. Some of the reasons for a removal *may* be:

- Your child had inadequate care or supervision;
- Your child was neglected, abused, or molested;
- You child was left with someone who could not or would not provide adequate care;
- Your child is delinquent or dependent.

If my child is not with me, where is my child?

Your child may temporarily be with a relative, such as the other legal parent if you are not living together or an extended family member, or your child could be in a foster home. The social worker will provide additional information to you on the arrangements made for your child's care and future contact with the child. You may **contact Meskwaki Family Services, MFS, at (641) 484-4444 or toll free** at 1-877-484-4448 to learn more.

Will my child be returned to me?

The social worker will review the situation, including you, the home, and your child to determine if the safety concerns have been resolved and will then act in the child's best interest by either:

- If the situation has been resolved, the child can be returned.
- If concerns still remain, MFS and its attorney will submit formal documents to the Court. If your child is not returned to you, your child may be temporarily placed with the child's other legal parent, if you are not living together, or a relative, or a foster or shelter home.

What about relative placement?

Relatives are one of the first places that Meskwaki Family Services will look to care for your child while the child is out of the home. Tribal law establishes a placement preference when children are placed outside their home. Preference is for a member of the child's extended family, a member of the child's clan, another member of the child's Tribe who has been licensed by the Tribe to provide care for a tribal child, an Indian foster home located off the settlement, another Indian family, or a specialized care provider for children approved by the Tribe or operated by an Indian organization which has a program suitable to meet a child's special needs.



THE COURT PROCESS

The Tribal Prosecutor's Office will file an "Ex Parte Motion" with the Court, alleging your child is in need of assistance and requesting that temporary custody be awarded to Meskwaki Family Services. If the court grants this request in an "Ex Parte Order", a hearing will be held within 72 working-hours of the date of the Order, to review the child's removal from the home.



A "Summons" will be issued by the Clerk of Court regarding the date and time of the hearing, **but you can also call the Tribal Clerk's office directly at (641) 484-9300, or come in person to the Justice Center at 307 Meskwaki Road, to receive information and copies of all documents filed.** It is very

important that you also stay in contact with the MFS social worker during this time and to provide the worker with your residential address, mailing address, and any contact phone numbers.

At the initial hearing, the Court will determine if there is probable cause to believe the child is a "Child In Need of Assistance", commonly referred to as CINA, and to determine if there is probable cause to believe that continued removal is in the best interest of the child. **It is in your best interest to come to ALL COURT HEARINGS concerning your child.**