



Attending the Adoption & Permanence Panel

Guidance For Birth Parents



I intend to bring _____ with me

I intend to talk to the panel members

Yes No

I prefer to write my views for panel members

Yes No

Please indicate if you agree with the information contained in the Form E

Yes No

Please write here details of any information included in the Form E which you believe to be inaccurate

If you are dissatisfied with the service you have received during the assessment process you may wish to make your complaint via the Social Work Department complaints procedure.

You may also contact the Care Commission, Compass House, 11 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY.

Please complete and return form to Senior Officer, Adoption & Fostering, Social Work Office, Claverhouse East, Jack Martin Way, Dundee, DD4 9FF

Before the Panel meeting your child's social worker will share the contents of the Form E with you and may share the contents with your child if appropriate.

The Panel members will also be sent all of these papers a week before the Panel.

They know that all of the information they receive is confidential.

The social worker will be told the time and date of the Panel and will be asked to invite you, foster carer, young person and any other person they think will be able to give the Panel members information to help them make their recommendation.

At the Panel

Firstly the Panel members meet briefly on their own to consider the reports they have read and to decide which questions they need to ask the social worker, foster carer, parents or young person.

You will then be invited into the Panel meeting.

Depending on your views the child's social worker may or may not attend this part of the meeting.

You will be asked to tell the Panel members :

- Whether any facts in the reports given to the Panel members are incorrect
- Your views on the plans that are being recommended by the Social Work Department

When this is completed you will then be asked to leave the Panel meeting and the social worker, foster carer and any other workers will be invited in.

The Panel will consider all of the information presented to them and at the end of the discussion will make a recommendation about the plan for your child or young person.

After the Panel meeting

The Panel's recommendation and all the reports provided to the Panel members are passed to the Agency Decision Maker who is a Senior member of the Social Work Department. The Agency Decision Maker must make a decision within 14 days. This decision will then be sent by letter to the birth parent(s) who have parental responsibilities.

You may request a copy of the minute of the Panel that relates to your attendance. This request can either be made to the child or young person's social worker or directly to:

Senior Officer,
Adoption & Fostering,
Social Work Office, Claverhouse East,
Jack Martin Way,
Dundee, DD4 9FF

Tel: 01382 436007

Email: gail.aboim@dundee.gov.uk



What is the Adoption & Permanence Panel?

An Adoption & Permanence Panel is a group of people who meet to consider:

- Whether children and young people need to be looked after away from their home on a permanent basis
- Whether adoption or some other form of permanent care away from home, such as permanent fostering, is in the child's best interests and the legal route for this
- Whether an application should be made to the court to free a child for adoption

They also consider:

- The suitability of people who wish to become adoptive parents
- Whether a prospective adopter is suitable to look after a particular child(ren)

The panel members talk to people, read reports and use a voting system to help them make a recommendation to the Agency Decision Maker.

Who are the Panel?

Dundee's Adoption & Permanence Panel and Fostering Panel consists of 12 people with a wide range of knowledge and experience in relation to adoption, fostering and the needs of children and young people.

Panel members are:

- The Chairperson (who votes)
- The Professional Adviser (who does not vote)

- The medical adviser (who votes)
- The legal adviser (who does not vote)
- Panel members who are employees of Dundee City Council (who vote)
- Panel members who are independent of the council and include previous foster carers and adoptive parents (who vote)

There is also a minute taker who provides a written record of the meeting but is not involved in the discussion or voting.

Not all Panel members attend every meeting but the Panel can only sit if there are at least 3 voting members present not including the Medical Adviser.

Where and when are Panel meetings held?

The Panel meets fortnightly on a Thursday morning between 9am – 1pm at the Social Work Offices, Jack Martin Way, Claverhouse East, Dundee.

Can birth parents attend Panel meetings?

Yes. When a Panel is meeting to discuss the permanence plan for your child, the social worker for your child will invite you to attend part of the meeting. Foster carers and other workers who can offer helpful information may also be invited.

Panel members realise that coming to the Panel may be a difficult experience for parents. You may bring a legal representative or someone else to support you if you wish.

If you wish to attend the Panel meeting but do not wish to talk to the Panel members you may

write your views and bring them along with you. You can also send your written views to the professional adviser.

Parents may attend the Panel meeting together or separately if you prefer.

The Panel Chair and Professional Adviser may decide it is not appropriate to invite you if there is concern that to do so would place other people attending the Panel at risk. If the behaviour of anyone attending the Panel becomes aggressive or unacceptable to the Panel the person concerned will be asked to leave immediately.

If you decide not to attend the Panel or say that you are going to attend and then do not appear the Panel will go ahead in your absence.

Preparation before the Panel

The social worker for your child or young person will prepare a detailed report, called a Form E for the Panel meeting.

This report will state:

- Why your child needs to be looked after away from home
- Why it is recommended that they cannot return home
- What kind of care is needed for your child in future
- Your views and your child's views if these can be obtained

There may be other reports from the foster carer, school and health reports.

Birth Parent Attendance at Adoption and Permanence Panel

Parent's Name

Parent's Address

Child's Name

Date of Panel

It is the policy of the Social Work Department to invite birth parents to attend Adoption and Fostering Panels.

Please indicate below your intentions regarding attendance at the panel meeting

I intend to attend the panel meeting

I do not intend to attend the panel meeting