



Advancing Child Welfare, together.

CWS-CARES supports the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families across California through enhanced data collection and informed decision-making.

The Court Hearing Framework: What's New in CWS-CARES?

In CWS-CARES, the *Court Record* section will house all court work items, hearings, hearing outcomes, and active and closed cases. CWS-CARES will also facilitate the preparation and automation of documents and reports to ensure timely delivery.

CARES Version 1 will include the following functionality in the Court Record:

Petitions

Petitions under WIC 300, 342, and 387, which pertain to removal and custody of children through the Dependency Court, can be created in CWS-CARES. WIC 388 petitions, Request to Change Court Order, will also be available. Petition allegations and counts will now be available for selection and the appropriate JV forms (120 – 129) will then auto generate based on the allegations in the petition. Petition statuses will also be tracked and modified once ruled on by the court to create the final petition.

Hearings

Hearing types, dates, and times will be documented in CWS-CARES, as well as the status of each hearing. As hearing dates are entered, noticing guidelines, timeframes, and details will be automatically generated in CWS-CARES, per WIC codes, for each hearing type.

Court Reports

Court Reports will look familiar; they are patterned after the INI templates used in CWS/CMS. Each county will be able to select the template that meets their court's requirements and make alterations if needed. Unlike CWS/CMS, Court Reports can be created using Adobe (AEM) or Word, using prepopulated information from CWS-CARES. To create the Hearing Packet, users will have the ability to merge any documents, such as Case Plans, Service Provider Reports and/or other documents, with the Court Report. Electronic signatures will be available in CWS-CARES to make document signing more efficient for case workers.

Warrants (New!)

Each County will be able to upload their own Warrant templates into CWS-CARES to comply with their practice and court preferences. Later updates of CWS-CARES may include an interface that supports sending and receiving Warrants in the system, along with many other court work items and documents.

Discovery Requests (New!)

Discovery requests can be easily processed and documented in CWS-CARES. The documents selected for the request can now be merged into a PDF and automatically stored in the system. The status of the Discovery Request can be tracked or assigned to another user. Once complete, the Discovery documents can be provided to parties via secure email, hard copy or flash drive, based on County policy.

Court Officer Notes (New!)

Documenting important case information has never been easier; child welfare workers will now be able to immediately enter the court's findings and orders in the Court Officer Notes section. These notes can be entered in the Hearing Results section of CWS-CARES and emailed to relevant parties (social worker, supervisor, eligibility). A signed copy of the Minute Order can also be uploaded into the system for easy reference once it is available.

Confidential Client Attorney Contacts (New!)

Confidential Client Attorney Contacts is a new feature in CARES V1. It will allow consultations between staff and County Counsel to be documented in a secure contact that, due to their legally confidential nature, will not be subject to discovery requests or any type of records request. They will only be viewable by those assigned to the case, the supervisor, and the manager.