



To: Texas Judges Hearing Child Protective Services Cases
From: Hon. John Specia (ret.), Jurist in Residence
Office of Court Administration
Date: December 1, 2010
RE: Bench Book for CPS Judges

Texas Judges hearing CPS cases now have a state-of-the-art information tool at their fingertips! The Children's Commission has created a web-based bench book that is the first of its kind for CPS Judges in Texas. Now, judges can link to the online CPS Bench Book anywhere that has internet access and scroll through its user-friendly navigation for guidance through a hearing or an entire CPS case. It includes a legal overview of the CPS process, hearing checklists, and useful topical information that covers most CPS matters, from Alternatives to Removal to Appeals and Adoptions.

Simply log-in to the CPS Bench Book through the Texas Center for the Judiciary's (TCJ's) website just like you would to access any of the other Bench Books on the TCJ site. For TCJ password help, call Michele at (512) 482-8986, or email her at michelem@yourhonor.com

Step by step instructions:

1. Go to: www.yourhonor.com
2. Click on **Texas Judiciary ONLY** on the top left of the screen
3. Click on **CPS Bench Book** at the bottom of the screen
4. **Enter your log-in and password**; for example:

User name: jjudge

Password: judge

This will take you directly to the Bench Book. The navigation is laid out in the "**How To**" section on the left side of the opening screen.

Judges who access the Bench Book through the TCJ website have free access through Lexis-Nexis to those statutes, case law and other periodicals that are cited in the bench book and linked from it. Live links are indicated by blue text that is also underlined in blue.

NOTE: Each time you access the Bench Book if you use Windows Internet Explorer 8 or IE8, you will be asked whether you would like to view mixed content (secure and non-secure information). You must choose "**NO**" in

order to prevent Internet Explorer 8 or IE8 from blocking the Lexis-Nexis site because it is a website external to TCJ's website and therefore presents "mixed" or unsecure content. From that point forward, you should be able to access any other Lexis link. If you use a browser like Firefox or Google Chrome, you will not see this message.

If you would like to disable this feature, you can do so by following these simple steps:

1. Open IE 8 and select **Tools > Internet Options**
2. Select the **Security** tab
3. Make sure that the "Internet Zone" is highlighted, then click on *Custom Level...*
4. Scroll down the list and look for "Display mixed content" (approximately ½ way down the list), then select **Enable**
5. Click on "OK" (this will close the box)
6. Click on "OK" again (this will close the Internet Options box)
7. Close Internet Explorer and then re-open it to begin with the new setting

NOTE: Depending on your level of access, your network administrator may need to change this setting for you.

The Bench Book has been tested by a workgroup of judges who contributed to its development. However, as with any new tool, user feedback is critical. Please let us know what problems you encounter, or if you find inaccurate or incomplete information. The Children's Commission will continually add and update content and repair broken links. If you have comments or corrections or if you would like to participate in the editing or updating of the Bench Book, please send an email to children@courts.state.tx.us or children@txcourts.gov or to Teri Moran at teri.moran@txcourts.gov.