

## Right To Counsel

Mothers, legal fathers and other legal guardians are parties to dependency and termination cases and are entitled to be represented by counsel in those matters.

Parties are entitled to hire their own counsel. If parties desire to be represented in those proceedings but cannot afford counsel, they may apply for appointment of indigent counsel. If a party desires to apply for appointment of indigent counsel, they must properly complete an application for **indigent counsel** [link] and submit it to the court through the Clerk's office or directly to the Judge's office. If a party qualifies as indigent under the terms that the state proscribes, the party will be appointed an attorney who will represent them in the proceedings and will be paid by the county to do so.

Unless expressly made so by the court, parents and guardians are NOT parties to delinquency and CHINS cases and are not entitled to court appointed counsel.

All children are entitled to counsel in most proceedings in juvenile court and will be assigned indigent counsel to represent them at the beginning of each case. The child and his or her parents may elect to hire independent counsel of their choice in lieu of court appointed counsel if they so choose.

**The Tifton Judicial Circuit Public Defender's Office may be reached at 229-387-6488.**