Witness statement for family court

England and Wales · updated 18 November 2026 · checked against the court rules in force

What it is

A witness statement is your written evidence: what you saw, heard and did, in your own words. The judge reads it as evidence, and you may be asked questions about it.

How to fill it in

- There is an official GOV.UK witness statement template for child arrangements cases: form C120. If the court's directions tell you to use form C120, use that instead of this template.
- At the top right of the first page: the party, your initials and surname, the statement number, the exhibit references, and the date (Practice Direction 22A, para 3.2). The box below is set out for this.
- Write in the first person ("I saw...") and in your own words.
- Numbered paragraphs, one point each, usually in date order. Dates and numbers in figures.
- Make clear what you know yourself and what someone told you, and say who told you.
- Stick to facts relevant to what the court has to decide. No insults, no labels or diagnoses of anyone: describe what was said and done.
- Documents you rely on ("exhibits") are kept separate and labelled with your initials and a number, e.g. "CH1" (Practice Direction 22A).
- Follow the court's directions on what it must cover, any page limit and the date to file it. In a court bundle a witness statement is limited to 25 pages, not counting exhibits, unless the court directs otherwise (Practice Direction 27A, para 8.1).
- If your address is confidential, leave it out and give it to the court on form C8.
- End with the statement of truth exactly as written, then sign and date it.

Print or copy only the blank pages. Your court's own orders and directions always come first.

Free guide: mycaseorganiser.com/guides/doctype/witness_statement. General information, not legal advice. Check Practice Directions 17A (para 2.2), 22A (paras 3.2, 9.3) and 27A (para 8.1) (justice.gov.uk) or get advice before relying on it.

Made-up example

Hartley v Hartley is an invented case. It shows the level of detail to aim for.

1. I am the Applicant in this case and Ella's mother. I make this statement about the handover on 6 February 2026.

2. At about 18:30 on 6 February 2026 I took Ella to the handover outside the school. The Respondent raised his voice at me while Ella was standing next to me.

3. At 18:55 the same evening the Respondent sent me a WhatsApp message which said: "I only shouted because you pushed me to it." A copy of the message is exhibit CH1.

Made on behalf of: _____
Witness: _____
Statement: ____
Exhibits: _____
Date: _____

IN THE FAMILY COURT AT _____

Case number: _____

_____ Applicant

and

_____ Respondent

WITNESS STATEMENT

of _____

I, _____, of _____ (or "address given to the court on form C8"), will say as follows:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Statement of truth

I understand that proceedings for contempt of court may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth. I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed: _____ Full name: _____ Date: _____

Template by MyCaseOrganiser · free guide: mycaseorganiser.com/guides/doctype/witness_statement