

SIJS Predicate Order cases are discrete matters that can be completed in as little as six weeks, depending on the complexity and type of case. How fast they are completed usually depends on how quickly the attorney is able to move the case forward. Urgent cases must be completed prior to the child's 18th or 21st birthday. For cases without a specific deadline, NIJC generally expects pro bono attorneys to move the case forward and complete it within four months of receiving the case file.

Guardianship Timeline

Guardianship cases can generally be completed within 6-7 weeks of filing. This is a general timeline to assist pro bono teams in calendaring their case. Please speak with your NIJC point of contact regarding case-specific nuances.

1 Week

• Within **1 week** of receiving the case from NIJC: meet with client, establish a communication plan, begin drafting petitions. Obtain signature pages.

2-3 Weeks

- Within 2-3 weeks of receiving case: submit first drafts to NIJC to review
- NIJC returns drafts with comments within 5 days

4 Weeks

- Within **4 weeks** of receiving case: file initial petition. You will be scheduled for a hearing date, usually **5-7 weeks** out.
- Immediately after filing: send notice of hearing and/or submit for publication. Send clients to be fingerprinted and submit signed consents to background check to court.
- 30 days from notice/first publication: Respondent(s) can be defaulted.

6-7 Weeks

• Within **6-7 weeks** of filing the petition: you'll have your final hearing date! If notice is proper and background checks complete, final order of guardianship with SIJS findings can be entered.



Custody (APR) Timeline

Custody cases can generally be completed within 7-15 weeks of filing. This is a general timeline to assist pro bono teams in calendaring their case. Please speak with your NIJC point of contact regarding case-specific nuances.

1 Week

• Within **1 week** of receiving the case from NIJC: meet with client, establish a communication plan, begin drafting petitions. Obtain signature pages.

2-3 Weeks

- Within 2-3 weeks of receiving case: submit first drafts to NIJC to review
- NIJC returns drafts with comments within 5 days

4 Weeks

- Within 4 weeks of receiving case: file initial petition.
- Immediately after filing: serve Respondent(s) and/or submit for publication.
- 30 days from service and/or first publication: file and schedule Motion for Default.

8-10 Weeks • First hearing date (**default hearing**). Once the Respondent is ordered defaulted, you can schedule your final hearing.

11-15 Weeks • Second hearing date (**proveup hearing**). If all goes well, final judgment of APR with SIJS findings can be entered.

For more resources on SIJS Predicate Orders visit: https://immigrantjustice.org/for-attorneys/legal-resources/topic/special-immigrant-juvenile-status-preparing-predicate-order-il

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