Note: The following is an example of a template to use during your first meeting with a new client. You maywant to consider a layout like the one in this template, but with topics and questions broken down into smaller pieces. Leave space to add questions specific to each new case based on your review of the filings.

Initial-Client-Meeting Checklist Information to share with the client

	The state of the chemical state of the state
	Explain role as attorney.
	Provide overview of abuse, neglect, and dependency court, including possible
	nsequences.
	Review the roles of each party, including DSS and the guardian ad litem.
	Inform client of the right to contest the petition and the right to be present and heard.
	Remind client of when and where court is.
	Review client's need to make transportation and childcare arrangements for court.
Ц	Discuss possible accommodations the client needs, including a courtroom interpreter orassistance with reading.
	of assistance with reading.
Gen	eral questions and topics for the client
	Ask client to tell you about themselves.
	What does the client enjoy doing? Where does the client enjoy
	spending time?
	Where does the client live? Who does the client live with?
	Does the client work? Does the client receive disability assistance? How does the client
	support themselves and their family?
	Does the client have a doctor? Does the client have a therapist? Who are other service providers the client has interacted with?
	What is the client's medical history? Mental-health history? Substance-use
	history?Who did the client grow up with? What type of upbringing did the
	client have?
	What is the client's current relationship with relatives?
	What has been the client's experience as a parent? Ask the client about the client's
	child(ren), both named and unnamed in the petition(s).
	Does the client have a relationship with their child(ren)? Ask the client to describe the
	client's child(ren). What are they like? What are their needs? How do they typically
	spend time together? What have been the biggest challenges to parenting? What is the
_	best part of being a parent? If the glight could change compething about the mealure on their cituation, what
	If the client could change something about themselves or their situation, what would it be?
_	
	Find out about any previous DSS involvement or court history the client has. Ask the client about friends, family members, or others who could vouch for the
1	client. Discuss social media, text messaging, and other possible traps for the client
Jse ti	nis section to write additional questions that come up during the meeting or to take notes.

Appendix: Templates and Checklists

Initial-Client-Meeting Checklist

(continued) ☐ Ensure that the client has received a copy of the filings and any other documents. ☐ Review the allegations completely before discussing each allegation specifically. Ask the client about the client's relationship and history with the other parties. Does the client know, like, and trust the other respondent(s)? Do the respondents have a good relationship with each other? ☐ If applicable, is co-parenting happening? What are the good things and what are the challenges when it comes to the child(ren)'s other parent(s)? ☐ Review specific allegations one at a time. Ask for the client's reaction to each allegation. Then, ask more pointed follow-up questions. Learn who was there, what happened, and what happened next. Ask the client about any interactions the client has had so far with the social worker or guardian ad litem. Discuss what the client's interactions moving forward with those individuals should look like. ☐ Identify and discuss the client's goals for themselves, their child(ren), and the case. What are the biggest hurdles to those goals? How can the client best position themselves to achieve those goals? ☐ Identify potential alternative placements and supervisors for visits. Explain the necessity of being fully prepared for any possibility in court. Discuss who will contact these individuals and how. Steps for the end of the meeting with the ☐ Have the client review and sign any releases for records. Give the client a list of required tasks, including evidence gathering and report writing, if any. ☐ Remind the client again of when and where court is. Write it on your business card and give the card to your client. ☐ Schedule a second meeting with the client. Write it on your business card and give the card to your client. ☐ Encourage the client to reach out with questions or concerns. Remind the client that you are there to help the client and that they should keep you informed on what is happening in theirlife. Ask your client to give you multiple ways to contact them. For example, ask for the client's telephone number, mailing address, and email address, if any. Ask the client for the telephone numbers of friends or family members who may be able to help you contact the client. Use this section to write additional questions that come up during the meeting or to take notes.