

FOR MINORS: THINGS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE GOING TO COURT

Adapted from Jane's Due Process for Illinois

When you speak with your lawyer, she or he will explain the court process to you. For now, to prepare for court, you should think about your answers to the questions below.

You may be asked the following questions in court by your lawyer, the judge, or the guardian ad litem. (A guardian ad litem is someone the judge may appoint to participate in the hearing in addition to having an attorney represent you.) The information that you provide in response to these questions will help convince the judge that you understand all of the options available to you with respect to your pregnancy, that you are mature enough to make important decisions about your life, and that notifying a parent or adult family member about your abortion is not in your best interest. There are not necessarily right or wrong answers to many of these questions, but your answers must be truthful. Again, your lawyer will further explain all of this to you.

Some of these questions may seem personal or inappropriate, or make you feel uncomfortable. It is good, though, to think about your answers to these questions now because you may be asked some or all of these questions in court.

1. How old are you? In how many months is your next birthday?
2. Do you go to school? If yes, what grade are you in?
3. How do you do in school? What classes do you like best?
4. Do you think you will graduate from high school? If yes, when do you expect to graduate?
5. What do you think you will do after high school? Do you want to go to college or vocational school? Will you work? What kind of work do you want to do?
6. If you are not in school now, what grade have you completed? Why did you leave school? Do you plan to go back to school at some point?
7. Do you have a job? If yes, what do you do? What are your responsibilities? How often do you work?
8. Have you ever had a job in the past? If yes, what type of a job? What were your responsibilities?
9. Have you ever babysat for family members or other children? If yes, for whom? How often? What sorts of things do you do when you babysit?

10. Are you involved in any activities, clubs, or sports after school? If yes, what are they? Are you a leader in any of these activities?
11. Do you do any volunteer work? If yes, what kind of volunteer work do you do? What type of responsibilities do you have?
12. Whom do you live with?
13. What type of responsibilities do you have at home? Do you take care of your parents or other family members?
14. What kind of relationship do you have with your mother? If you have no relationship, why?
15. What kind of relationship do you have with your father? If you have no relationship, why?
16. Do you have a legal guardian or guardians who are not your parents? If yes, what sort of relationship do you have with him/her/them?
17. Do you have any brothers or sisters? How old are they? Where do they live? What kind of relationship do you have with them? Do you talk to them about personal issues or problems?
18. How have your parents or guardians reacted to you in the past when you have come to them with a problem? When you've had a crisis situation? When you've been in trouble?
19. How have your parents or guardians reacted to your brothers or sisters when they have come to them with a problem? When they/he/she have been in crisis situations? When they/he/she have been in trouble?
20. How did you first learn that you were pregnant?
21. Did you take a pregnancy test? If yes, when and where? What was the result?

22. Have you had a physical exam to confirm or date your pregnancy? If yes, when and where?
23. Have you talked to a doctor, a nurse, or a counselor about the options that you have for your pregnancy—to become a parent, to do an adoption, or to have an abortion?
24. Do you know how far along you are in your pregnancy (how many weeks pregnant you are)? How do you know?
25. When was the first day of the last time that you got your period?
26. Why do you want an abortion?
27. Why have you rejected the alternatives to abortion? Why do you not want to become a parent at this time? Why do you not want to continue the pregnancy and do an adoption?
28. Have you talked to anyone (friends, relatives, teachers, counselors, or other adults) about your pregnancy? If so, who? What did they say?
29. Does the male involved in your pregnancy know that you are pregnant? If so, what was his reaction?
30. Does the male involved in your pregnancy know about your decision to terminate your pregnancy? If so, what was his reaction? Does he support your decision?
31. Is anyone pressuring you to have an abortion? If yes, who?
32. What are the top three reasons why you can't notify a parent, grandparent, step-parent who lives with you, or other legal guardian of your decision to have an abortion?
- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

33. What do you think your parents would say or do if they found out that you are pregnant, and why? What about your grandparents? What about a step-parent who lives with you, if you have one? What about another legal guardian, if you have one?

34. What do you think your parents would say or do if they found out that you want an abortion, and why? What about your grandparents? What about a step-parent who lives with you, if you have one? What about another legal guardian, if you have one?

35. Have you ever talked to your parents, grandparents, step-parent who lives with you, or legal guardian about what would happen if you became pregnant as a teenager? If so, what was said?

36. Have you ever talked to your parents, grandparents, step-parent who lives with you, or legal guardian about another teenager you know who became pregnant? If so, what was said?

37. Have your parents, grandparents, step-parent who lives with you, or legal guardian ever told you their views about abortion? If so, what are their views?

38. Do you know the type of abortion procedure you will have? If yes, describe it.

39. Do you know what the recovery process is like for this type of abortion procedure? If yes, describe it.

40. Can you describe the possible risks or complications of this type of abortion procedure? What are they?

41. How will you get to the clinic and back for the abortion procedure? Is there anyone who will come with you? If yes, who?

42. Do you know how you will pay for the abortion? If yes, how?

43. If you have any physical problems after the abortion, whom will you contact for help? What has your clinic instructed you to do if you experience complications?

44. Do you know if you have any medical condition that could make your pregnancy more difficult? Have you

spoken with a health care provider about how this condition could affect the safety of carrying a pregnancy and/or of having an abortion?

45. Have you ever been treated for mental or emotional problems? If so, what was the diagnosis and when were you treated? What sort of treatment did you receive? Are you still receiving any treatment?

46. Were you using birth control or a family planning method when you got pregnant? If no, why not?

47. What type of birth control or family planning method will you use in the future? Do you have plans to speak with a health care provider to obtain contraception?