

Paperwork First Sort

A simple sorting guide for the night when the papers are the problem.

JT for ME - Maine children and families public-use guide

Pile one - orders and notices

- Court notices, orders, parenting plans, support orders, deadlines, and anything with an official date or signature.
- This pile usually matters first because it tells you what doorway is already active.

Pile two - support and stability records

- Housing notices, lease papers, utility notices, school records, child-care notes, medical records, or support paperwork that explain the strain on the family.
- Keep only what helps explain the next practical question.

Pile three - timeline and communication notes

- Your own short timeline, contact notes, missed exchanges, unanswered requests, or clinic notes.
- Do not turn this into a wall of text. Keep it short enough to use.

After the first sort

- Put the next hearing date, call date, or deadline on the top of the folder.
- Use the plain-English guide if the wording itself is blocking you.
- Use the Family Hub or call-notes sheet when you are ready for the next doorway.

This guide is for orientation and organization. It is not legal advice and should not replace urgent safety planning or case-specific legal counsel.