EvidenceCanvas

FAMILY COURT BUNDLE CHECKLIST
PD27A · 2026 RULES

England and Wales
Rules in force from 2 March 2026
Checked 21 October 2026

For children cases and other family cases that are not financial remedy cases. Tick each line as you check your bundle and hearing documents. Paragraph numbers refer to Practice Direction 27A. The judiciary's free guide, *Preparing court bundles for family proceedings: guide for litigants in person*, is on judiciary.uk.

Your court order comes first. If an order in your case says something different from this checklist, follow the order (paras 4.1, 7.1, 11.1, 13.1). This is general information, not legal advice.

01 Who prepares it
paras 4.5–4.9

- [ ] I know who prepares, files and serves the bundle. Normally the applicant. If the applicant has no lawyer and the other side has one, the represented party does it (paras 4.5–4.6).
- [ ] I have tried to agree the contents with the other side (para 4.9).
- [ ] I have checked whether my case is a financial remedy case. If it is, Chapter 6 applies instead of the sections below (para 2.6).

02 The timetable, counted back from the hearing
para 13.2

- [ ] **7 working days before:** contents agreed, or at least discussed.
- [ ] **5 working days before:** bundle filed with the court and served on the other side (preliminary documents can follow).
- [ ] **11am on the working day before:** preliminary documents (including position statements) filed and served.
- [ ] Once filed, the bundle is not changed before the hearing without the court's agreement (para 13.3).

03 Sections, in this order
para 7.3

- [ ] Preliminary documents, always Section A (para 7.12).
- [ ] Applications and orders. Orders sealed, or unsealed but marked as approved by the court.
- [ ] Statements and affidavits, each dated in the top right corner of the front page.
- [ ] Care plans (where they apply).
- [ ] Expert and other reports, including Cafcass and children's guardian reports.
- [ ] Relevant medical records.
- [ ] Relevant police disclosure.
- [ ] Public law only: the child's birth certificate for a Case Management Hearing.
- [ ] Other relevant documents, divided into sections.
- [ ] Documents in each section in date order, oldest at the front (para 7.2(a)).
- [ ] Statements and reports are copies of signed and dated originals.

04 Keep these out, unless the court directs otherwise
para 5.2

- [ ] Correspondence, including letters between lawyers and letters of instruction to experts.
- [ ] Emails, texts, WhatsApp and other social media messages.
- [ ] Voice notes and other recordings.
- [ ] Bank and credit card statements and other financial records.
- [ ] Notes of contact visits and foster carer logs.
- [ ] Social services files (except an assessment a party relies on).
- [ ] Photographs.
- [ ] Only documents the court needs to read or that will be referred to at the hearing. A specific item the court must read can go in.

05 Preliminary documents and page limits
paras 7.10, 8.1

- [ ] Case summary: up to 6 pages, if practicable. Each party files their own.
- [ ] Statement of issues, for this hearing and the final hearing: up to 2 pages. Agreed.
- [ ] Position statement: up to 3 pages (para 7.18). Each party files their own.
- [ ] Skeleton argument, if any. Each party files their own.
- [ ] Chronology: up to 10 pages, one sentence per entry if practicable, cross-referenced to bundle pages. Agreed. Needed for a final hearing, or if the summary is not enough.
- [ ] List of essential reading: 1 page. Agreed.
- [ ] Witness template for an evidential, contested or final hearing. Agreed.
- [ ] Any form FM5 that has been filed.
- [ ] Each one shows, under its heading, the date it was prepared and the date of the hearing (para 7.13).
- [ ] Where we disagree on an agreed document, the disagreement is set out in it (para 7.15).
- [ ] Other limits: witness statement 25 pages without exhibits; expert or other report 40 pages; care plan 10 pages (para 8.1).

06 Position statement

para 7.18

- [ ] No more than 3 pages, unless the court has allowed more.
- [ ] Numbered paragraphs, cross-referenced to bundle pages.
- [ ] Defines and confines what is in dispute at this hearing.
- [ ] Self-contained: no "see my last position statement"; a new one for each hearing (para 7.20).
- [ ] No new evidence, no exhibits and no long quotations.
- [ ] Sets out the orders or directions I am asking for.
- [ ] Where it applies, says how I have tried to negotiate and my views on mediation or other non-court options.

07 The e-bundle

para 11.2

- [ ] One PDF, no more than 350 A4 pages unless the court has given permission.
- [ ] Pages numbered by computer, not by hand, with section letters: A1, A2… B1, B2… (Bates numbering, paras 1.2, 7.2(d)). Divider pages, if used, are numbered too.
- [ ] Index at the front, not paginated (para 7.2(b)), and each entry linked to its document.
- [ ] Every section and significant document bookmarked, with a short description and its page number.
- [ ] Searchable: scanned pages put through OCR.
- [ ] No page upside down or sideways; landscape pages read left to right; default view 100%.
- [ ] No more than 300 dpi, and the file size kept down.
- [ ] Text at least 12 point, 1.5 or double line spacing, with margins; Arial or Times New Roman where possible.
- [ ] Authorities, if any, in a separate bundle of no more than 10, with copies or links given to anyone without a lawyer (Chapter 10).

08 Paper copies

paras 4.3, 12, 15.4–15.5

- [ ] A paper copy if the court directs it, or if a witness may give evidence in person (for the witness box).
- [ ] One A4 ring binder or lever arch file: no more than 175 sheets (350 sides), printed on both sides.
- [ ] Front and spine show the case name and number, the court, the hearing date and time, and the judge if known.
- [ ] Before magistrates, if a paper bundle is used: 4 copies.

09 Filing and later hearings

paras 14.2, 7.16, 11.2(m)

- [ ] File name shows the hearing date, case number, a short case name and what it contains.
- [ ] Uploaded to the HMCTS portal if the court uses one; otherwise by email as the court directs.
- [ ] Proof of filing and serving kept, with the date and time.
- [ ] Adding a document after filing: send the new document and, separately, the revised bundle.
- [ ] For the next hearing: new documents added at the end of their section; superseded summaries, chronologies and position statements taken out.

If the bundle does not follow the practice direction, the court can take the case out of the list or put it back, and can make a costs order (para 3.1).

10 Key numbers at a glance

PD27A

WHAT	LIMIT OR TIME	PARA
E-bundle	**350 A4 pages**	11.2(b)
Paper bundle	**175 sheets (350 sides)**	12.1
Position statement	**3 pages**	7.18(a)
Case summary	**6 pages**	8.1
Statement of issues	**2 pages**	8.1
Chronology	**10 pages**	8.1
Essential reading list	**1 page**	8.1
Witness statement	**25 pages, without exhibits**	8.1
Expert or other report	**40 pages**	8.1
Agree the contents	**7 working days before**	13.2
File and serve the bundle	**5 working days before**	13.2
Preliminary documents	**11am, working day before**	13.2
Authorities	**10 at most**	10.2

Source: Practice Direction 27A, Family Proceedings: Court Bundles (in force 2 March 2026, as amended), justice.gov.uk/courts/procedure-rules/family/practice_directions/pd_part_27a. Financial remedy cases follow Chapter 6 instead of sections 03 and 05.

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