

PARENTING COORDINATION INFO SHEET

WHAT IS PARENTING COORDINATION?

Parenting coordination is a process where an impartial third person, appointed by the court in a family case, helps parties implement their parental rights and responsibilities or companionship time order by facilitating the resolution of disputes between parents and/or legal guardians.

IS IT CONFIDENTIAL?

No, the process of parenting coordination is **NOT** confidential.

WHAT A PARENTING COORDINATOR IS NOT:

A parenting coordinator is not a social investigator, parenting plan facilitator, mediator, therapist, financial advisor, attorney, arbitrator, or guardian ad litem.

IS THE PARENTING COORDINATION PROCESS FOR ME/FOR MY CLIENT?

Parenting coordination is appropriate for cases dealing with child related issues, such as when:

- Mediation has not been successful or has been determined by the judge to be inappropriate;
- A child is denied emotional and/or physical access to a parent or has severely limited parental/guardian contact;
- There are restrictions on a child's access to extended family members;
- There is interference or refusal of access to information about a child's health, education and welfare;
- There is a high rate of re-litigation especially concerning non-legal issues;
- There has been frequent change in lawyers for the parties.

Parenting coordination is **NOT** for cases in which it has been determined that the process may compromise the safety of any party, the minor child, or the parenting coordinator.

Parenting Coordination - WHY?

Parenting coordination helps families resolve their disputes outside of court and reduces the excessive use and cost of litigation.

Parenting coordination serves as an alternative dispute resolution method where cases with child related issues are not suitable for mediation or mediation was unsuccessful.

Parenting coordination helps families through conflict, resulting in a more intact family unit, even if separated. Parenting coordination reduces the harmful effects of conflict, which jeopardizes the well being of children.

Parenting Coordinators – HOW?

The Court may order parenting coordination on its own, or upon written or oral motion by one or both parties.

The parenting coordination rule, forms and a list of trained parenting coordinators are available on the Court's website at _____. You may also contact _____ at _____ with any questions regarding the parenting coordination process.

Parenting Coordinators – WHO?

A parenting coordinator is a qualified professional who must have completed specific training prior to his or her appointment as a parenting coordinator. A parenting coordinator must also have a master's degree or higher, a law degree, or education and experience satisfactory to the Court, as well as at least two years of professional experience with situations involving children, which includes parenting coordination, counseling, casework, legal representation in family law matters, serving as a guardian ad litem or mediator, or such other equivalent experience satisfactory to the Court.

Parenting Coordinators – WHAT?

Parenting coordinators educate the parties as to the child's needs, make recommendations to the parties, and, if parties are unable to reach agreements regarding their dispute, make decisions within the scope of the court order of appointment. The parenting coordinator may assist the parties by providing education regarding the developmental needs of the child, the effects of parental separation on family members, co-parenting and parental communication. The parenting coordinator monitors compliance with the established parental rights and responsibilities or companionship time order and assists the parties in effectively facilitating their timesharing arrangements. The parenting coordinator will use conflict resolution skills to assist the parties in resolving child related issues, thereby reducing the potential for future parental conflict.

Parenting Coordinators – WHEN?

The Court may appoint a parenting coordinator to assist parties with compliance with parental rights and responsibilities or companionship time orders when:

- The parties have ongoing disagreements about the implementation of a parental rights and responsibilities or companionship time order and need ongoing assistance;
- There is a history of extreme or ongoing parental conflict that has been unresolved by previous litigation or other interventions and from which a child of the parties is adversely affected;
- The parties have a child whose parenting time schedule requires frequent adjustments, specified in an order of the court or division, to maintain age-appropriate contact with both parties, and the parties have been previously unable to reach agreements on their parenting time schedule without intervention by the court or division;
- The parties have a child with a medical or psychological condition or disability that requires frequent decisions regarding treatment or frequent adjustments in the parenting time schedule, specified in an order of the court or division, and the parties have been previously unable to reach agreements on their parenting time schedule without intervention by the court or division;
- One or both parties suffer from a medical or psychological condition or disability that results in an inability to reach agreements on or make adjustments in their parenting time schedule without assistance, even when minor in nature.

Parenting Coordinators – WHERE?

The parenting coordinator may meet with you in person, by phone, or use other means they feel is effective for your situation. If you do not feel safe in the presence of anyone who has been ordered into parenting coordinator you should notify the court or the parenting coordinator before attending a session.