

"From Parents to Co-Parents"

Parenting Coordination Process

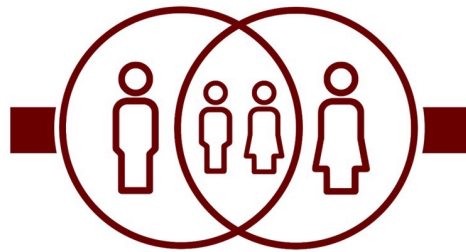
Parenting Coordination is a post-parenting plan service designed to assist parents experiencing high-conflict separation/divorce to settle disputes regarding their children in a timely manner.

My process is as follows ...

1. Once I receive a referral or request for PC, I usually begin by speaking to both co-parents and their lawyers in a brief telephone conversation following which I will send out a copy of the Parenting Coordination Contract to the parents and their lawyers for their review.
2. Following the initial contact I will send both parents a confidential Initial Intake Questionnaire to complete and return prior to the face to face Intake & Screening session. This questionnaire is to inform myself about the relationship between the parents, the level of conflict they have experienced, how long the conflict has existed, the types of issues which create conflict, what resources the family has accessed to address the conflict and the stage of the parents' negotiations or court proceedings. The information also helps me to prepare for the face to face Intake and Screening with each parent.
3. The face to face Intake and Screening session is an opportunity to meet individually with each parent in order to find out how they are experiencing the relationship with the other parent and screen for a variety of issues (domestic violence, power imbalances etc) which will allow me to determine whether or not, in my view, the co-parents are suitable for the parenting co-ordination process and whether, given my professional training and experience, I am the appropriate parenting co-ordinator for the family. These meetings with each parent are confidential and they last about 2 to 2.5 hours. They are billed to each parent on at a flat fee.

It is important to note that, accepting the parents as clients for Parenting Coordination only takes place after the Intake and Screening session has been completed with both parents.

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4. If it is determined that we will move forward and that I will be the Parenting Coordinator, I will review the terms of the Parenting Co-ordination Contract with both parents and their lawyers wherein I will draw attention to the choices that the co-parents will have to make about the terms of my mandate. We will also discuss and review other issues such as the duration of the parenting co-ordination process, so
5. that everyone knows the length of their commitment to the process and the costs associated with the parenting co-ordination process, etc.
5. It should be noted that with Parenting Coordination a retainer is required with a signed contract. The amount of the retainer will be discussed as part of the contract.
6. Once both parents, their lawyers, and I have signed the parenting co-ordination contract, as disputes arise, I will schedule mediation sessions with the clients to help them discuss and resolve the issues. Whenever both parents agree about how specific disputes will be resolved, as the PC I will draft these agreements in a written Memorandum of Understanding that reflects what they have agreed to which they will sign with or without legal advice.
7. If the co parents are at any time unable to mediate a resolution of an issue which is in dispute, as a PC I have the ability to enter into the decision making phase of the PC process and can schedule an Arbitration hearing to provide both clients with the opportunity to put forward their proposals about how the issue should be addressed and a summary of the facts which support your proposals. In these situations, as part of the PC process, I will arbitrate these issues and prepare an arbitration award which will become binding.
8. Before scheduling any arbitration hearing, I will discuss with each of the parents (and when necessary their lawyers), the type of process and the level of formality that is most suitable for them to properly address the issues in dispute.

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