



The **Sixth Judicial Circuit Parent Facilitator Program** is available in Pasco County.....

What is the Parent Facilitator Program?



The Parent Facilitator Program is an alternative dispute resolution program designed to target family litigants involved in high conflict custody and visitation disputes.

How are parties referred to the Program?

Upon court Order, a referral is made to the Parent Facilitator Program.

How are Parent Facilitators selected?

Attorneys/litigants may select a Parent Facilitator from a list of professionals who are licensed mental health providers or master's level professionals trained in family dynamics and child development, and who must also be a certified family or dependency mediator, or mediation certification eligible. A listing of Parent Facilitators who render services in Pasco County is available through the Administrative Office of the Courts and will be made available for attorneys/litigants use.

What is the role of the Parent Facilitator?

To assist parents in developing the skills necessary to successfully resolve parenting disputes, both short and long term, so that the children have conflict free access to both parents. The Facilitator works with the parties on such matters as: developing a co-parenting and/or visitation plan; developing and improving communication skills; mediating co-parenting disputes; and, educating parents on child development and alienating or other inappropriate behaviors. The Parent Facilitator is **not** a custody evaluator and cannot recommend any changes concerning primary residential responsibility.

For additional information, please contact Mary Ellen Broughman or Lillian Simon, Administrative Office of the Courts, at (727) 847-8118.

What is a Parent Facilitator?

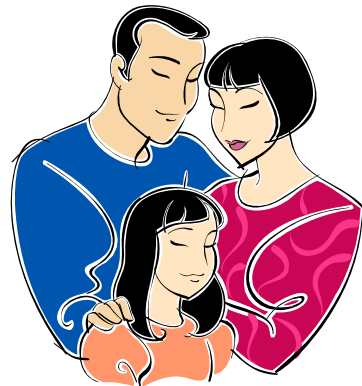
A parent facilitator is a licensed mental health professional or a master's level professional trained in family dynamics and child development that is also a certified family or dependency mediator. The role of the parent facilitator is to assist the parents in developing the skills necessary to successfully resolve parenting disputes, both short and long term so that the children have conflict free access to both parents.

The Program is designed to target family litigants involved in high conflict custody and visitation disputes. The facilitator works with the parties on such matters as:

- developing a co-parenting plan,
- details of such a plan
- communication skills
- co-parenting disputes
- educating parents on child development and alienating or other inappropriate behaviors.

Issues That Can Be Facilitated:

- Visitation Issues/Concerns/Changes
- Holidays
- Vacations
- Education
- Medical/Professional treatment;
- Extracurricular activities;
- Step parents/extended family and/or significant other concerns;
- Child care/supervision concerns;
- Substance abuse concerns;
- Mental health concerns;
- Discipline
- General/specific safety concerns;
- Communication problems;
- Alienating behaviors
- Any other issue that may be preventing successful co-parenting



How to Participate in the Program:

Upon court order, a referral is made to the Parent Facilitator Program. The parties may enter the program via stipulation or through Court Order. Parties may select a facilitator from the court approved list within seven days of the order of referral being entered. If the parties/attorneys are unable to agree on a selection, a facilitator is chosen by rotation. The required form order **MUST** be used to participate in the program for the flat fee.

Program Fee:

The flat fee for the program is \$750.

- The fee may be divided between the parties
- The Court might hold only one party responsible for the entire fee.

**IMPORTANT THINGS TO
REMEMBER:**

1. If you have trouble paying the fee that has been court ordered, YOU must address this issue with the Judge not the program.
2. Make all payments directly to your appointed parent facilitator.
3. Contact the parent facilitator's personal office to schedule your appointments.
4. This is your chance to reach agreements based on the best interest of your child(ren).
5. Child support matters cannot be addressed by a parent facilitator.
6. The Parent Facilitator is not a custody evaluator and cannot recommend any changes concerning primary residential responsibility.

The bottom line goal:

For parents to reach an agreement that is in the best interest of the child(ren). The program requires that any agreement reached must be placed in writing and signed by all parties including the parent facilitator.

If the parents are unable to reach an agreement, a Notice of Impasse will be filed and the facilitator will be discharged.

Who to Contact:

For additional information, please contact Administrative Office of the Courts, Family Law Section - Parent Facilitator Program, Mary Ellen Broughman at the West Pasco Judicial Center 7530 Little Road, Room 203, New Port Richey, Fl 34654. Phone 727 847-8118



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