

Parenting Coordinators: WHY?

Because parenting coordination helps high conflict families resolve their disputes outside of court and reduces the excessive use and cost of litigation...

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

Because 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: WHO?

A parenting coordinator is a qualified professional pursuant to Fla. Stat. §61.125, who must have completed specific training, and meet national training standard guidelines. A parenting coordinator must have experience in the following disciplines: family systems theory, developmental psychology, high conflict divorce resolution techniques including mediation, children adjustment issues specific to divorce including parental alienation, domestic abuse, and knowledge of the legal facets of divorce.

Parenting Coordinators: WHEN?

The court may appoint a parenting coordinator to a family case to assist high conflict parents with compliance with court orders concerning shared parenting. The court may appoint a parenting coordinator when:

- A. The parties have failed to adequately implement their shared parenting plan in relation to the child; or
- B. Mediation has not been successful or has been determined by the court to be inappropriate; or
- C. The court finds that appointment of a parenting coordinator is necessary to protect the child from harm caused by the parents' failure to implement the shared parenting plan; or
- D. The court finds that there is a need for a parenting coordinator to protect and sustain safe, healthy, and meaningful parent-child relationships; or
- E. The court has entered a temporary or final order setting out the nature and extent of the contact between the child and each parent.

Parenting Coordinators: HOW?

The parties may agree upon a parenting coordinator who meets the qualifications or someone who, in the opinion of the parties and upon approval by the court, is otherwise qualified by training or expertise to serve as parenting coordinator for the case.

The Parenting Coordination Administrative Order, forms, procedures, and a list of parenting coordinators who have been trained on the policies and procedures developed by this circuit are available on the Twelfth Judicial Circuit's website at www.jud12.flcourts.org, under the link "Family Division Programs," or the list may be obtained by calling (941) 749-3600 ext. 7102.

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 parenting plan by facilitating the resolution of disputes between parents and/or legal guardians. Parenting coordinators educate the parties as to the child's needs, make recommendations to the parties, and with prior approval of the parties and the court, 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 parenting plan and assists the parties in effectively facilitating their time-sharing arrangements. The parenting coordinator will use conciliation skills to assist the parties in resolving child related issues, thereby reducing the potential for future parental conflict.

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, or guardian ad litem.

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

Parenting coordination is appropriate for high conflict 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;
- The parents/guardians are unable to agree on substantive issues concerning the child;
- 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 in the 12th Judicial Circuit Family Court



YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED