

## LIMITED SCOPE CUSTODY EVALUATION

Dear Parent:

We have received a stipulation to perform a limited scope psychological custody evaluation for your family from your attorney. Going through a custody evaluation can be a stressful experience, both because of the emotions and the many details to remember. This letter is to try to help you be informed ahead of time about what will happen and help you organize yourself, to help the process go as smoothly as possible. The directions to our office and the office door-code are attached or can be requested. Also, see the checklist at the end of this letter.

Usually, we will conduct all appointments in one day. The day of appointments will involve both parties and the children at issue, in this order: a half-hour orientation with the parents together, followed by one-hour individual sessions with each parent; a one-hour lunch break, followed by half-hour interaction sessions with the biological child/ren and each parent; then individual sessions with the child/ren. The evaluator may then conduct further meetings that day. Please phone our office as soon as possible to discuss and confirm the appointment day.

We will go over procedures with both parties at the beginning of the day and ask you to sign an informed consent and a custody release of information form. Please read the informed consent and the stipulation you signed in advance, as it covers many important details.

Remember you will be charged if you cancel less than 14 court days before the initial appointment day.

Please complete the Custody Evaluation Questionnaire and gather the extra materials described in the questionnaire. Make sure your requests and comments focus on the limited scope of the evaluation. You may add other materials relevant to the scope of the evaluation. Also complete the Potential Collateral Contact List. We want no original materials except for the Custody Evaluation Questionnaire. Please submit letter-sized materials, not legal-sized materials. Please do not submit binders.

All materials described above must be submitted to the evaluator at the time of the initial appointment with two extra copies that the evaluator will give to the other party.

We make a special effort to put children at ease and minimize disruption in their lives from the evaluation. You may prepare them for the session by saying that I am a psychologist who helps fathers and mothers make decisions about how to take care of children when they do not all live together anymore. You can also say that I will need to talk to them about their thoughts and feelings about their lives so I can help you with decisions.

You will not be asked to take any psychological tests.

We will prepare a written report and/or provide direct court testimony. We will notify you of the balance due prior to the release of the report or the testimony. This should be paid by cashier's check or money order.

My assistants are usually available to schedule appointments during business hours. If you cannot reach them directly by phone (310/392-6163) on those days, please leave a message about how they may reach you. If you use email to communicate with my office, you acknowledge the risk of misdirected communication.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Elizabeth Lund, Ph.D.

Angus Strachan, Ph.D.

## **Checklist For Starting A Limited Scope Custody Evaluation With Lund & Strachan**

### **To schedule an appointment, please provide:**

- Key contact information
- Initial deposit
- Stipulation signed by both parties and both attorneys

Then we will assign a date for the initial day of appointments.

### **Complete the Custody Evaluation Questionnaire:**

- You may complete it by hand or you can type it.
- If you want to type it, you can ask our staff to send a Word version.
- If you type it, please use double spacing and at least 12-point font.
- Please limit your responses to the space provided. For any one question, try not to add more than one page beyond the space provided.
- All materials must be letter-size.
- Please staple or clip the questionnaires and attachments. Do not put them in binders. Manila or accordion folders are good.

### **Bring to the initial appointment the original and two copies of:**

- The Custody Evaluation Questionnaire
- The Potential Collateral Contact List
- Other materials requested in the questionnaire attached at the end
- Other ancillary materials related to the scope

(The two copies are for the other parent and their attorney. Make two extra copies for yourself and your attorney.)

### **Be ready to sign at the initial appointment:**

- The informed consent form
- The Custody Release of Information Form

### **Further deposit requests:**

- There may be a further deposit request.
- All fees must be paid before the report is released or testimony given.