

SOLUTION FOCUSED FAMILY CENTER

**Interview Offices:**

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CHILD CUSTODY EVALUATION ADVISEMENT FORM

Cause Number: _____

Children's Names: _____

I, the undersigned, understand that the court has appointed Mindy Harrison, LCSW-S, of Solution Focused Family Center to conduct a child custody evaluation regarding the above-named child(ren). I understand that Mindy Harrison, the program director of Solution Focused Family Center has been designated by the court and/or a formal agreement of the parties.

I further understand that meetings and interviews with the evaluator are for the purpose of assisting the court and the parties involved in making decisions in the best interest of the child(ren) involved. I acknowledge that the evaluation is intended to be thorough, objective, independent, and in conformity with recognized best practices at the time this evaluation is conducted as appropriate to the specific situations of this case.

I understand that the evaluator will attempt to obtain all relevant information from all sources needed to address the issues before the court. I understand and acknowledge that the evaluator will use their professional discretion in making any and all decisions regarding who must be

Child Custody Evaluation Advisement Form Initial: _____

Adapted from Dr. Aaron Robb, Forensic Counseling Services

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contacted, how extensive those contacts will be, and what information should be obtained and reviewed. I recognize this includes review of any previous evaluations or home studies if such reports exist.

I understand that although I may be providing payment to the evaluator they are working for the court, under court appointment, and the outcome of the evaluation may or may not favor my position or be something that I am in agreement with. I recognize that I may refuse to participate in the evaluation, and acknowledge that the nature and extent of the consequences of any refusal to participate should be discussed with legal counsel.

Retainer: I understand that a retainer for the full fee of the evaluation is due in advance. The court may order each participant to pay an equal share of the fees, assign one participant to pay the total fee for the evaluation, or order a disproportionate split of the fees for the evaluation. At least half of the retainer must be paid in prior to scheduling the first interview and the remainder paid at or before the first interview. Payment may be made by check or money order made out to "Solution Focused Family Center." I understand that this retainer may be increased based on additional individuals to be interviewed, the necessity of extensive records review, or other case-specific factors, and that any additional retainer amount is due upon billing and prior to submission of the report to the court.

Fees: I understand that a completed evaluation is billed at a flat base rate of \$4,000 per party. This base rate covers interviews of up to five (5) persons (adults and/or children) involved in the case. There is an additional charge of \$250 per party for each additional person to be interviewed beyond the first five (5).

The base rate also covers collection of standard collateral information, review of basic documentation, and completion of a report to the court. It does not cover review of depositions, review of Child Protective Services records, or other substantial records review over one hour in length per party. It does not cover any administrative or other hearings related to this case. Unless otherwise specified, such additional work is billed in quarter hour increments based on a standard hourly rate of \$250 per hour:

Primary Evaluator	Base rate (per party)	Additional interview charge (per party)	Standard hourly rate for evaluations
Mindy Harrison, LCSW-S	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00

Unless otherwise specifically ordered by the court fees for services will be split between the parties. In the event that the case settles or our services are terminated before the completion of the child custody report is filed with the court, a refund will be issued based on the actual time worked on the case. This will be billed at Ms. Harrison's hourly rate of \$250 per hour. Any administrative time prior to the start of interviews Until the time services are terminated will be billed. Please note that refunds will only be processed if there is a remaining balance in the retainer for the case. Should one side fail to provide full payment, issues of reimbursement may have to be addressed in court.

Each of the parties will be responsible for any fees for production of records or other information related to the evaluation. Generally, any adults or any children not involved in the litigation but living with the children in question must be interviewed as a part of the evaluation. Additionally in most cases any long-term boyfriend, girlfriend, or fiancé of either of the parties will be interviewed as well. Who is interviewed and what documents are reviewed are decided solely at the evaluator's discretion.

Unanticipated circumstances may necessitate additional hours of service outside those estimated in the retainer. These include but are not limited to: additional interviews; extensive telephone contact time; additional document review; any and all procedures to assess fresh allegations or issues which were not included in the original retainer estimate; and other case specific factors.

Should costs rise above the retainer estimate the attorneys will be notified and the original retainer will be revised.

Expedited evaluations:

On certain occasions, we can provide an expedited evaluation for an additional fee of \$1,500 per party. Please have your attorney reach out to confirm this is available. Completion of the expedited evaluation can be achieved within eight (8) weeks following the first interview of one of the parties; however, meeting this deadline is contingent upon the cooperation of both parties. Clients must clear their schedules to be available to attend individual interviews, which may involve 3 to 4 separate sessions, as well as group interviews with individuals living in the home, interviews with the children, and home visits. Clients must accept the appointment times offered by the evaluator and should make a reasonable effort to accommodate the expedited timeline. While it's understandable that personal scheduling conflicts, such as work commitments, may arise, clients are expected to prioritize making themselves available for the evaluation process. Flexibility is appreciated to ensure we can meet the deadlines for expedited evaluations.

While the evaluation is expedited, there will be no shortcuts in gathering detailed information or making thorough recommendations. Delays may occur due to factors such as notifications from Child Protective Services regarding a current open case with the family or the need to wait for additional records from past open cases. Clients must also be willing to reach out to providers

who may stall in providing requested documentation, and they may need to advocate for the timely release of these documents.

If a client pays for an expedited evaluation but is nonresponsive, fails to attend scheduled appointments, no-shows, or is uncooperative in scheduling timely meetings, does not return phone calls in a timely manner, does not sign release of information as needed, does not assist in obtaining documentation from providers, or provides additional documentation to be reviewed such as depositions, review of Child Protective Service records, or other substantial records not included in the base rate or requiring extensive extra time, there will be no refund if the evaluation takes longer than eight (8) weeks.

Form of Payment: Payment should be made in the form of check or money order made out to Solution Focused Family Center; no electronic payments are accepted. Returned checks will be charged the maximum evaluator fee allowable under law. I understand I am responsible for any and all fees incurred by the in relation to this case, and any and all work done by the evaluator in relation to this case.

Other costs: I understand that each of the parties will be responsible for any fees for production of third-party records or other information related to this evaluation. I understand that if this case settles costs for postage, copying of records, and other administrative costs will be deducted from the retainer. I acknowledge that time in administrative tasks is billed at the standard hourly rate and that copies of records produced by Solution Focused Family Center are billed at the same fee as charged by the Denton County District Clerk's office. Additionally, I understand cancellation of any appointment with less than 72 hours' notice will incur a one-hour service fee. After the report is filed any updates which are ordered will be billed at the standard hourly rate with a minimum four-hour retainer due in advance. After a final report is made to the court we will not have further direct contact with the parties unless the court orders an update to be conducted.

I understand that if the court determines that the primary language of the parties is not English, the evaluator will select a licensed or certified interpreter to assist. All costs associated with the use of the interpreter will be paid in accordance with the court order.

Court Appearances Fees:

If Mindy Harrison, LCSW-S receives a subpoena, the requesting lawyer must contact our office to arrange a time for the subpoena to be served. The fee for any requested appearance, including subpoenas, settlement conferences, or dispositions, is \$350 per hour, with a minimum charge of \$1,400 for four (4) hours, payable upon receipt of the subpoena. A retainer of \$2,400 is required for a full day (8 hours), and a \$1,400 retainer is required for a half-day (4 hours), both payable in full upon receipt of the subpoena.

We require a minimum of 7 working days' notice to accommodate any schedule changes for our other clients. Legal cases necessitate significant time to be cleared from our calendar, along with

additional professional preparation for any requested appearance, including subpoenaed or telephonic appearances. Fees are due no later than 7 days prior to the court date and are nonrefundable, as we must clear our schedule regardless of whether the hearing occurs.

Please note that if an appearance request is received with less than 7 days' notice, the appearance fee is due immediately, along with an express charge of \$350. Additional fees for documentation preparation may also apply, as outlined in the advisement form. Any additional time spent by our evaluator in case preparation, travel, and witness time will be billed at an hourly rate of \$250.

Clients are responsible for any attorney fees and costs incurred by Solution Focused Family Center and Mindy Harrison, LCSW-S, due to legal actions, such as filing a Motion to Quash. If Mindy Harrison, LCSW-S is requested to appear in court by you or another party, you will be billed for all professional time, including preparation and transportation costs, given the complexity of legal proceedings. Failure to provide the specified fees constitutes a release from the requested appearance.

Travel Fees:

If Mindy Harrison, LCSW-S is required to travel outside of Tarrant County and its contiguous counties (Collin, Denton, Dallas, Parker County) to testify, an additional travel fee will apply. This fee structure is as follows:

- Commute of up to 2 hours: \$500
- Commute of up to 4 hours: \$1,000
- Commute of up to 6 hours: \$1,500
- Commute of up to 8 hours: \$2,000

These fees cover travel time to and from the court hearing or deposition for out of county meetings or hearings. For evaluations requiring airline or overnight travel I understand that fees are charged for travel time and travel expenses. Such travel time is logged as any time spent between originating airport and hotel, and is charged as noted above. Travel expenses include the full expense of the airfare, additional travel retainer will be calculated based on expected travel time and expenses and is due before any travel arrangements will be made. Additional costs for travel-related expenses, such as airfare, lodging, parking, meals, and transportation, will also apply.

An invoice will be sent to the requesting party, and payment is due upon receipt. Please be advised that failure to pay the minimum required fees as specified will constitute a release from the requested or subpoenaed appearance.

Unanticipated costs: I understand and acknowledge that unanticipated circumstances may necessitate additional hours of service outside those estimated in the retainer. These include but are not limited to: additional interviews; extensive telephone contact time; additional document

review; any and all procedures to assess fresh allegations or issues which were not included in the original retainer estimate; and other case specific factors. Should costs rise above the retainer estimate I understand the evaluator will notify my attorney and the original retainer will be revised.

Audio Visual Record: I acknowledge and understand that interview(s) with any child subject to a Child Custody Evaluation suit shall and must not be audio-visually recorded, as it is not in the best interests of any child subject to such suit. As such, I agree to waive any future objection(s) to not require the evaluator to make audio-visual recordings.

Furthermore, regarding a child custody evaluation, the term "child interview," as referenced in Family Code Section 107.112(b-1), shall refer specifically to any individual interview of a minor child. This term should not be interpreted to encompass other components of the child custody evaluation in which the minor child participates, including, but not limited to, parent-child interview(s) or observation(s) of the child or parent(s) that are part of the child custody evaluation.

Contacting the Evaluator: All communications with the evaluator should occur in writing, either via email or sent to the designated mailing address. Please do not deliver information to the interview office outside of scheduled times; all correspondence should be directed to the mailing address or email. The evaluator may respond in writing or by telephone at their discretion. Generally, the evaluator will only discuss administrative matters related to the evaluation with the litigants and their attorneys. We encourage direct communication; please refrain from discussing substantial issues related to the case via email or telephone.

Services not provided: I understand and acknowledge that the evaluator is not providing, nor am I requesting, therapy, counseling, or any form of treatment. Should these or other service needs be indicated during the course of the evaluation appropriate recommendations will be made. I understand that the evaluator is not providing mediation, parenting coordination, parenting facilitation, or any other service outside of a child custody evaluation. I understand should the court or the attorneys request the evaluator to participate in a settlement conference they will do so only as an evaluator and only for the purposes of clarifying, explaining, or otherwise communicating the results of their evaluation and report.

I understand that the evaluator is not an attorney and that if I have any questions regarding legal matters I should consult with an attorney. I understand that it is inappropriate for someone not trained as an attorney to respond to questions concerning legal matters and recognize I cannot request the evaluator to do so. I understand I am to provide my attorney copies of any information I provide to the evaluator so that proper discovery procedures may be complied with. I understand that any copies of electronic records submitted by me to the evaluator must be sent through my attorney. I understand that the evaluator will not review any audio or video recordings unless all parties have been provided copies and all parties have agreed in writing for the evaluator to do so, or the court has ordered such a review.

Professional practice statements: For the purposes of reporting violations of licensing rules or regulations the Texas State Board of Examiners of Social Workers can be contacted by mail at Complaints Management and Investigative Section, P.O. Box 141369, Austin, Texas 78714-1369, and by telephone at 800-942-5540.

I understand and acknowledge that the outcome of the evaluation may or may not favor my position or be something that I am in agreement with. I understand that complaints regarding conclusions and recommendations in the evaluation must be directed to the court, as the licensing board handles only complaints regarding violation of licensing rules and regulations.

I understand that the program director is custodian of records for Solution Focused Family Center. In the event of the program director's death, incapacity, or termination of practice, custody and control of records maintained by Solution Focused Family Center will be turned over to Aaron Robb, Ph.D or, in the event of Dr. Robb's death, incapacity, or termination of practice, other successors as selected by the program director.

Insurance coverage: I understand that none of the services provided to me in this case are covered by insurance as the evaluation is for legal (not treatment) purposes, and is not therapy. I have been informed and I understand that any communications or statements by me or the children will NOT be privileged or confidential and that:

- The evaluator may be required to testify in open court in the course of litigation. Any information provided to the court may become public record.
- The evaluator is required to make a report to the court and the attorneys of record. A copy of the written report and the written materials provided to the court are provided to the attorneys of record and clients who represent themselves at the time the report is filed with the court.
- All information provided to the evaluator will become part of the evaluator's records and is available for review by the attorneys of record and clients who represent themselves. After the report is completed, information will be released following written request from attorneys or clients who represent themselves.
- The evaluator may confer with mental health professionals, doctors of medicine, education and childcare personnel, personal references, other governmental entities, attorneys of record, and such other persons as have or need information directly related to the evaluation as necessary.
- The evaluator may be required to disclose situations where clients are a danger to themselves or someone else; abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child, elderly, or disabled person; or as otherwise required by law.

Do not sign this form unless you have read and understood it.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Signature

Printed Name