



Parenting Coordinators and Your Family

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How Can My Spouse and I Resolve Our Parenting Disputes Without Going to Court? Parenting Coordinators and Your Family

In high-conflict divorces involving children, one or both parents often return to court for post-divorce parenting disputes either before or after a Judgment of Divorce is entered. Although the court system is available to help parents resolve disagreements, this approach can be time-consuming and expensive. An alternate solution to resolving parenting issues is through the use of a Parenting Coordinator.

What is a Parenting Coordinator?

A Parenting Coordinator is a professional with child development knowledge and mediation skills who works with families to resolve parenting issues without court intervention. The Parenting Coordinator may be an experienced Family Law attorney, a psychologist, a professional mediator, or a mental health expert who has experience working with high-conflict families. The Parenting Coordinator facilitates mediation style sessions between parents and acts as an impartial decision maker when parents are unable to come to an agreement. Parenting Coordinators often work with parents on a detailed parenting plan to eliminate conflict areas, although the parties may agree to limit the Parenting Coordinator's determinations to specific issues. Frequent issues addressed by Parenting Coordinators include: parenting time schedules, holiday schedules, extracurricular activities, medical appointments, parent/teacher meetings, school vacations, household rules, and religious schooling. The Parenting Coordinator may also work to educate parents about the impact divorce has on their children and may monitor compliance with court orders and agreements.

How do I Find a Parenting Coordinator and Who Will Pay?

Parents may specify in their Property Settlement Agreement that they will utilize the services of a particular Parenting Coordinator to help resolve parenting issues. Judges may also appoint Parenting Coordinators to help

parents develop or follow post-divorce parenting agreements in high-conflict cases. The parents or the court may empower the Parenting Coordinator to make recommendations binding on the parents should a dispute arise. In other cases, if either parent feels there is sufficient reason to challenge the recommendations of the Parenting Coordinator, they may make an appropriate application to the court. Parties may allocate the costs associated with the Parenting Coordinator's services between themselves in their Property Settlement Agreement or the court may specify how such costs will be divided.

What are the benefits of using a Parenting Coordinator?

The use of Parenting Coordinators is a growing trend within the judicial system available to aid families in resolving their disputes. Parenting Coordinators benefit families by resolving disagreements essentially without court intervention. This avoids costly court appearances and allows parents a forum to openly communicate with one another. Parenting Coordinators also benefit families by empowering parents to act in the best interests of their children. This allows parents, not judges, to make decisions regarding their families.

If you find yourself returning to court on parenting issues either before or after you are divorced, retaining the services of a Parenting Coordinator may be a good alternative. For more information on Parenting Coordinators, please contact a Riker Danzig Family Law attorney.

Practices:

Alternative Dispute Resolution · Family Law