



Dr. Susannah Smith

www.creativeteamconsulting.com

- Clinical Psychologist, Mediation, Parenting Evaluations & Plans
- Business & Systems Consulting; Mergers; Culture; Handbooks
- Corporate Training, Executive Coaching, Equine Therapy/Learning

18474 Highway 550; Ridgway, CO 81432

970-728-5234; 877-861-5436 fax; 970-708-0740; shas14@gmail.com

FORENSIC INFORMED CONSENT CONTRACT

Evaluations, Consultations, Court Appointment:

This Forensic Psychological Evaluation/Consultation/ Appointment is being conducted at the request of

and is therefore somewhat different than other psychological services. It is important for you to understand how forensic services differ from more tradition psychological services.

Court Ordered Services: While the results of an evaluation, consultation, or court-ordered psychotherapy, for example, may or may not be helpful to you personally, the goal is to provide information about how you are functioning psychologically to the individual or agency requesting the evaluation, or to meet a court-ordered requirement for parenting, anger management, or individual or family therapy.

A court appointed forensic role, such as Child and Family Investigator, Parenting Coordinator, or Parent Responsibility Evaluator, Mental Health Assessment, or family or individual therapist specifies the limitations and boundaries of the particular role, and will be described in the court orders.

In contrast to other psychological services, these are intended for use in some type of a legal proceeding. As such, the confidentiality and the results are determined by the rules of that legal system. If the court has ordered this service, the report will go to the court, and/or to the parties as specified in the order. If your attorney has requested this service, and you have agreed, he/she will receive a copy of my report and will control how it is to be used and who has access to it.

Normally, tests, information, notes, and results from my office are protected by the psychologist-client privilege. Exceptions to this might include a determination on my part that you are dangerous to another person or if you reveal information that a child under the age of 18 has been abused. I may also have to release this information if a court orders me to do so. However, during a court ordered evaluation, all records are open for review by the court and attorneys.

Once a decision has been made to use information in a legal proceeding, reports, clinical and collateral interview notes, tests, and any information pertaining to them will probably be admissible into evidence as well as any other information that was provided concerning your mental health and functioning. If you have any concerns about the use or distribution of my reports and records, you should discuss these issues carefully with your attorney.

If someone other than your attorney requested the services, (such as a Court Order), that individual/entity is my client and he/she/it has complete authority over the results, including whether or not any information will be released to you or to anyone else. In addition, because the services were requested by another party, and is not for the purpose of treatment or psychotherapy, or, if so, is court-ordered treatment or psychotherapy, the confidentiality has fewer legal protections. I will not release the information unless instructed to do so by the person or entity that hired me or when I am legally required to do so.

Your participation for yourself or your children in this evaluation/consultation/appointment is your choice. I will not conduct the services without your signature on this document. You also have the right to stop the services at any time. There may be legal consequences if you stop the service or choose not to participate. Therefore, it would be in your best interest to consult with an attorney if you have concerns. In addition, if appointments are not kept or are cancelled within 24 hours of the appointment time, the person/entity requesting the services or ordered to pay my fees will incur charges for the unused time that has been set aside for these services. For court appointments, the way fees are handled is usually set out in the court order. In addition, you will need to read and agree to my Outpatient Contract for the way I handle confidentiality, fees, cancellations, etc., and my Parental Consent Form if this involves services to minors.

Court Ordered Evaluations:

Child Family Investigator (CFI): I do not conduct CFI's at this date.

Parenting Responsibility Evaluation (PRE): The role of the PRE is to investigate, report, and make recommendations to the court regarding the best interests of minor children. The scope of the issues to be investigated should be clearly defined in the court order. The standards for C.R.S. 14-10-127, define the role as "an investigative arm of the Court.

Procedures: The Order appointing the PRE will specify any requirements the Court has for the parties regarding contacting the PRE and payment. I require that my forms be signed and payment made by you before I begin the investigation. I also require Releases and Authorizations for each person I will be interviewing, including but not limited to physicians, therapists, teachers, and collateral contacts (step parents, grandparents, family friends, other relatives, etc.).

Meetings may be face-to-face or using teleconferencing, and I will meet with each parent; with the children involved; and with each parent with the child(ren). I will see the child(ren) in each parent's home. I will interview people that have key information regarding your child and your parenting, and will ask you for a list of contacts that you believe are most important for giving me information. These are called "Collateral Contacts," and most of these interviews will be conducted by telephone. My Statement of Understanding describes all policies and procedures used when conducting a PRE.

Parenting Coordinator and/or Decision Maker (PC and/or PC/DM): A Parenting Coordinator and/or Decision Maker (PC or PC/DM) may be appointed by the court pursuant to C.R.S. 14-10-128.1 to assist the parties with implantation and follow through of a parenting plan, and to help parties develop ways to work together in parenting the child(ren).

My State of Understanding for PD/DM gives an in-depth analysis of this role, and an explanation of all fees and procedures.

Evaluations: If you or your children are being evaluated, the evaluation itself consists of two separate parts: an oral interview and psychological testing. In addition, it may be necessary for me to review other related materials such as court records, depositions, transcripts, medical records, or even interviews with related parties, etc. The interview and testing may be video recorded in order to preserve an accurate record of the evaluation.

If, at any time, you have a question about any aspect of the evaluation or these procedures, please feel free to ask me. In addition, if at any time you need a break from an evaluation, please let me know and we will stop. Once the evaluation is completed, and with the permission of the requesting party, I may be able to have a meeting with you to explain the results and answer any questions you might have.

Forensic Consultations: Forensic consultations that are not court ordered can differ significantly from other types of psychological consultations. For example, witness preparation may involve role-playing, mock courtrooms, and even other witnesses wishing to participate. It can also involve research on voir dire (jury selection) and one's particular case. Preparation for depositions and/or trials can involve many hours of organizing materials for court and working closely with the client's attorney(s). Clients often need help in organizing and getting medical bills paid; getting credit cleared up; dealing with trauma associated with a court case; dealing with the original traumas exacerbated by the court case; preparing for depositions; organizing witness testimony and relevant issues associated with each witness; preparing a chronological schedule of events for the attorney(s); and getting themselves more clear regarding testimony and presentation in court. Anyone involved will be asked to sign this same contract, as well as my Outpatient Contract, insuring a complete understanding of confidentiality and agreement, by signing, to abide by this requirement.

Court Appointments: Court appointments differ, again, in that the specific duties I am to perform, the management of fees and billing, and the scope of the appointment are set out through the court order. In these cases, I will be ordered to report findings to the court. I will always talk to you about any of my findings, and be willing to help you with issues I believe need to be addressed. I am available if you want to talk or discuss any pertinent issue.

I have read and agree to the above: _____

Date: _____