

Northeast Ohio Behavioral Health, Ltd.

Disclosure Statements Regarding Evaluations Involving Custody/Visitation Matters

The following points need to be clearly understood prior to the start of the evaluation process. Please sign and return the bottom portion of this document, while keeping the remaining portion for your records. Please ask any questions regarding the meaning of these statements, as well as additional questions that may arise during the assessment process.

1. Northeast Ohio Behavioral Health, Ltd. only performs evaluations regarding child custody/visitation matters at the request of the Court. All parties must participate, including spouses or companions who are involved in parenting activities. **If one party does not choose to become involved in the assessment, the assessment may continue, but recommendations regarding child custody/companionship cannot be made. At the discretion of the examiner, a report may not be issued unless data pertaining to both parties can be included. The examiner will seek consultation directly from the Court regarding this matter.**
2. Custody/visitation evaluations are used by the Court to help in the determination of the best interests of the children. The evaluator is appointed by the Court and assigned the task of gathering information that can be used in this determination. A comprehensive report will be compiled after all interviews and testing procedures are completed. This report will be submitted to the Court, and will contain recommendations regarding the resolution of the issues which prompted the request for the assessment. Information regarding data derived from the assessment of all parties involved will be integrated in this report. You will be asked to sign Release of Information forms so that a copy of the report can be sent to the Court, as well as to your attorney, and the attorney employed by your opposing party. If a Guardian ad Litem has been assigned, a Release will be requested so that the Guardian ad Litem can also receive a copy of the report. **When the report is sent to the Court, it becomes a public document. Thus, assurance of confidentiality is limited.**
3. Given the important issues that are to be addressed in the evaluation, a great deal of information must be gathered. This typically requires at least three sessions per adult involved, as well as time spent engaged in testing. Children are typically interviewed individually, as well as observed in interaction with both of their parents, scheduled separately. These procedures are modified depending on the age of the children and their ability to participate in the evaluation. **The design of your particular evaluation will be determined according to your situation.**
4. The completed report will not be released to the Court or any other designated parties until all fees have been collected. **The fee schedule for evaluations concerning custody/visitation matters is as follows:**
 - **Each adult ordered to be involved in the assessment will be charged \$2000.00.**
 - **A retainer of \$1,000.00 is expected prior to the scheduling of the first appointment. Any subsequent cancellations of scheduled sessions will be separately billed at \$140.00 per cancelled session.**

(Fees, cont.)

- Three to five interview sessions are conducted with each adult participant, with at least one of these sessions conducted with the child/children and the parent conjointly. During this conjoint session, parent-child interaction will be observed.
- The extent of each child's participation in the evaluation process will be determined by the examiner, and will be based on the child's developmental level and needs assessed by the examiner. At a minimum, each school-age or preschool-age child will be seen for **one** assessment session. If the examiner requires more time with a particular child to complete an assessment of the child's needs, additional sessions will be scheduled.
- If an adult participant is involved in a relationship with a significant other that lives within the residence or otherwise functions as a regular adult caregiver or step-parent for the children, one interview session will be conducted conjointly with the adult and his/her significant other.
- Psychological testing is conducted with each adult participant. Adult participants may schedule their testing session with NEOBH clerical staff. The administration of Psychological Testing does not require an office visit with the examiner, but must be completed in the NEOBH office setting.
- At the start of the assessment process, each adult participant will be asked to sign Releases of Information for the purposes of gathering data from outside sources that will assist the evaluation process. Each adult participant is welcome to bring in other data pertinent to the assessment process (i.e. calendars, journals, written logs, letters) that can help the examiner to understand the issues involved. **Data review shall be included within the assessment cost; however, this examiner reserves the right to limit the amount of data that can reasonably be reviewed without additional fees billed to the participant. Any data given to the examiner that requires over one (1) hour of review will be billed at \$150.00 per hour.** Please make appropriate choices regarding the nature and extent of the information you provide to the examiner for review.
- NEOBH may need to respond to inquiries from Family Court Services/Family Court Liaisons and individual attorneys regarding the process of the evaluation. In order to ensure the absolute clarity of this communication, it often must be put in writing by NEOBH, and submitted to all parties (Court, GAL, respective legal counsels). NEOBH reserves the right to bill additional fees for this additional work. **Letters and Phone Calls will be billed at \$50.00 per hour.**
- Report Submission: **Both parties involved in the Evaluation must pay all fees in full before a report will be produced and sent to the Court, respective legal counsels, etc.** Please be aware that the Evaluation Report is an extensive document. **Fees associated with the evaluation process must be Paid In Full no less than Two Weeks prior to the date when the Evaluation data will be expected by the court.**

