

FAMILY COUNSELING SERVICE AGREEMENT

Dear Parents,

This document outlines additional terms and limitations for **Family Counseling**. Although at the onset, clients have reviewed and signed an **Informed Consent**, this document may help provide additional clarification about the Family process, procedures, and policies.

The primary goal of this service is to assist children to enjoy a healthy relationship with **both** parents and improve family functioning. Sometimes, in order to reach this goal, the intervention is exclusively focused on improving a relationship between a parent and a child(ren).

Purpose of Family Counseling

- In providing this service, the **family** is the **client**. In this regard, **Monika Logan, M.A., LPC, LSOTP** (*Ms. Logan*) is not working for either parent specifically, but her role is to improve the parent-child relationship, which in most cases it is in a child(ren)'s best interests to have a relationship with both parents.
- It is Ms. Logan's understanding that your child(ren) have become allied with a parent and are resistant to or refusing contact with a parent(s) or boundary issues may be present. The Family Counseling service intends to repair and/or improve the quality of the parent-child relationships, so as to help the child(ren) resume a healthy relationship with both of their parents.
- This intervention cannot and will not determine a child(ren)'s optimal or eventual schedule of care (*that is, when each parent exercises parental rights and responsibilities*).

Progress

- As your **Family Counselor**, Ms. Logan will provide parties and the court (*when applicable*) with a brief, written summary of progress. This will be provided approximately every four to six weeks or as deemed necessary by Ms. Logan. The **Treatment Summary** may also be sent to attorneys and/or the court.
- Ms. Logan asks that **each** parent support the treatment goals. Ms. Logan also asks that parties commit to support their child(ren) toward treatment goals in both word and deed (*i.e. arriving to appointments as scheduled, not scheduling your child(ren) for enticing activities when a session has been planned*), and recognizing that the process serves their needs even if it may be contrary to a parents stated wishes. The process is likely to be emotionally demanding on all involved. Ms. Logan requests that parents commit that these services will supersede all conflicting activities.

- Progress is more likely to proceed in a positive direction when **both** parents participate and **both** parents promote the family process.
- Please realize that although an estimated time-frame may be provided to parents and/or attorneys, sometimes the court-imposed timelines for a face-to-face child-parent meeting does not provide adequate time to prepare the child(ren) for reconnecting. This is especially true, for children who have not had contact with a parent for a designated time frame. Children who have been refusing time with a parent typically require more time than a child(ren) who is still seeing (*in contact with*) a parent, albeit reluctantly.
- There are **no guaranteed outcomes** for any case or any other therapeutic treatment, however, with cooperation and active involvement, we are optimistic that the relationship between the child(ren) and parents can be improved.

Measure of Progress

A common question is, “How progress is measured?” Clearly, each case is different, however, some common measures that indicates success in Family Counseling may include (*list not exclusive*):

- **Child(rens) Measure of Progress:** (*list not exhaustive*)
 - Child(ren) no longer resists contact with a parent.
 - Child(ren) can sit in the same room without having an intense hostile response.
 - Child(ren) and parent engages in activities together.
 - Child(ren) completes tasks and follows parental authority (*such as completing chores when asked to do so*).
 - Child(ren) demonstrate a healthy respect for both parents.
- **Parents Measure of Progress:** (*list not exhaustive*)
 - Parent understands how distorted memories or perceptions can occur.
 - Parent supports the other parent’s role in the child(rens) life.
 - Parent employs age and stage appropriate boundaries.
 - Parent can move from passive type of parenting style to that of an active/authoritative parenting style.
 - Parent confronts and resolves disagreements between themselves discretely and not in the presence of the child(ren).

Process

Please note that Ms. Logan retains the discretion to direct if and how each step proceeds. This includes the possibility that she may decide that continuing efforts is not likely to be successful, and/or poses an unacceptable risk of harm to any party.

- **Payment:** Payment must be received **prior** to the start of any services.
- **Court Order:** A Court Order that specifically names **Monika Logan** as the **Family Counselor** is required.
- **Parent Sessions:** In most cases, Ms. Logan conducts an **Intake Session** with each parent **without children** present. The Intake Session (*first session*) is designated for **1.5 to 2 hours**. In some cases, Ms. Logan will request to meet with the parents jointly, unless the parents are legally prohibited (*such as a Protective Order*) from meeting together, and/or if either parent would find such a meeting threatening.
- **Child Sessions:** Child sessions may occur with the child(ren) individually and/or together for several successive one-hour meetings. In some cases, Ms. Logan may request **90 minute** sessions.
- **Combined Sessions:** Sessions will combine mother/children and/or father children, depending on the nature and specifics of the case.
- **Clients:** The family is the client with the main goal(s) being to repair, improve, and/or reestablish a relationship between a parent and a child(ren). The ultimate goal is for the child(ren) to have a healthy relationship with both parents.

Payment(s)

- Payment(s) is expected in **advance** and/or when an invoice is received. Court hearings and/or trials will be paid in advance per the policy of Texas Premier Counseling Services. This is detailed in Texas Premier Counseling Services Informed Consent.
- Please note that Ms. Logan does not file Family Counseling Services with any insurance companies. Additionally, a “diagnosis” will not be made, as a diagnosis in the context of family law matters can sometimes have negative repercussions for the individual diagnosed. Our primary objective relative to parent’s, is to engage the parent in positive behavioral interactions with his/her child(ren).

Confidentiality

Please note that confidentiality as it pertains to this intervention:

- Unless ordered by the court, Ms. Logan will not keep and/or restrict information from either parent. Anything that Ms. Logan learns from **either** parent **may** be shared with the other parent in support of your child(ren)'s needs.
- When Ms. Logan requests a session with either parent, it is to update the parent, gain an understanding about a particular issue, and/or other tasks that Ms. Logan deems appropriate to help foster a reconnection between the child(ren) and his/her parents. The parent ("*individual*") sessions are not confidential and are not to be constructed as Individual Counseling.
- Although your child(ren) privacy rights are **limited** due to the fact that they are minors, they may still be old enough to understand and care about privacy. Therefore, please be cognizant and support of Ms. Logan's effort to establish a trusting relationship with your children.
- As a reminder, Ms. Logan cannot keep any concern about any person's safety private or confidential.
- Communication and correspondence usually involves all attorneys. Conference calls will typically include all parties and/or the party's attorneys. Communication may occur, however, with the Amicus Attorney as well (*when applicable*).
- As this type of Counseling is court ordered, please be aware that anything that Ms. Logan is made aware of can be disclosed to the courts. Generally reports are sent to the court for issues of non-compliance, such as failure to make payments, replenish a retainer, and or failure to attend scheduled session(s).

Definitions/ Best Practices

- Typically, the role of a Family Counselor is that of a **Court-Appointed Counselor**. The Court Order designates a specific person and may describe the expected treatment.
- In most cases an Intake Session (*an Individual Session at the onset*) will be required with each parent, and each parent's cooperation is requested (*case-by-case exceptions may apply*).
- It is recognized that situational pressures may adversely and temporarily affect a parent(s) as well as judgment, therefore this Family Agreement may/will be reviewed with you on more than one occasion as deemed necessary by the counselor. A copy of this **Service Agreement** will be provided to you.
- Ms. Logan will attempt to obtain all information necessary to conduct the Court-ordered Family Counseling. This may include, but is not limited to prior Counselor or other involved professionals, copies of prior Court Orders, Counseling records, and/or reports from Child Custody Evaluators or Child Protective Services (CPS).
- Please be aware that the Family progress can be hindered if litigation occurs, subsequently disrupting the therapeutic relationship. Disruption is more likely if the Family Counselor (*Ms. Logan*) is required to provide testimony, which may or may not be in a particular parent(s) favor.

Agreement of Understanding for Family Counseling

By signing the Agreement, I **ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE READ, UNDERSTOOD, AND UNDERSTAND TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS CONTAINED IN THIS FORM. I HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS ANY QUESTIONS AND/OR TO HAVE CLARIFIED ANYTHING THAT IS NOT CLEAR.**

Attorney's **NAME:** _____ (Mother)

Attorney's **NAME:** _____ (Father)

Attorney's **NAME:** _____ (Other)

Self/Parent or Guardian's Signature

Date

Printed Name

Parent or Guardian's Signature

Date

Printed Name

Texas PCS Counselor's Signature

Date

Printed Name