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Agreement to Psychological Evaluation

Common questions and problems that come up in the psychological evaluations are discussed below. Please read all of this agreement carefully and talk about it with your lawyer. Please ask your lawyer about anything you don't understand. You will be asked to sign this agreement at your first meeting with Dr. Cole.

What is an Evaluation For?

This evaluation is for legal purposes and Dr. Cole's job is to make suggestions to the judge about what is best for you and/or your children. Your job is to let Dr. Cole know your point of view. It can be a very hard and painful job to make suggestions about you and your children. Dr. Cole's job is to look at your emotional and psychological health, and how you get along and work together with your children and the other parent. You may not like some of the suggestions Dr. Cole makes to the judge because the results of the evaluation may not support your views about this court case.

What will happen?

Before you see Dr. Cole, you will fill out a long form. This is so Dr. Cole can find out more about you. Part of the evaluation is a personality test and an interview. When you talk with Dr. Cole you can stop and not answer a question or questions. You can ask to take a break from the meeting. At this point your evaluator may write up a report of the findings. At the end of the evaluation, Dr. Cole will talk with you about the evaluation results. Throughout the process, your evaluator will provide you with the opportunity to correct errors or provide information that responds to the findings about you.

What does Dr. Cole do?

Dr. Cole will take notes as he interviews you and on all contacts made in the evaluation process. After the evaluation, these notes will be saved. Dr. Cole will videotape your interviews and all interactions he has with you during your evaluation. The videotapes will only be used to help your evaluator make the right decisions. All videotapes will be destroyed before the end of the evaluation. You agree that they will not be given to anyone other than the evaluation team.

Will Dr. Cole provide counseling to my children and me?

Dr. Cole will provide a psychological evaluation, and a report of the results will be provided to your attorney and the Guardian *ad litem*. The report may recommend counseling services for you. **Dr. Cole cannot provide the counseling services in cases where they have provided a psychological evaluation for the court.** He can provide you with referrals to individuals that can provide counseling services.

Case Records

You agree that none of the case records (tests, interview notes, observations notes, and notes from others) will be given to either parent (party) until the evaluation is finished. Then, the lawyers of the parents (parties) may look through and ask for copies of these records. The tests, though, cannot be copied. The tests can only be given to another psychologist. Copying fees for all case records are 96 cents per page for the first 30 pages and 73 cents per page after that. You also agree to pay \$25 for a secretary to copy the records. In addition, you will pay a \$40 per hour case review fee. This covers the cost of the time Dr. Cole spends with you while you review the file. Dr. Cole will not discuss your case with you during your case review appointment.

Will I get the report?

At the end of the evaluation, your lawyer and Guardian *ad litem* will be given a written report with recommendations.

Can I know what Dr. Cole is going to say?

Dr. Cole's findings and opinions are important to you. Please do not ask Dr. Cole to give you any information until Dr. Cole has completed the evaluation process. Dr. Cole must look at the tests and all the information necessary to complete a thorough evaluation. You will get to hear and respond to the results of the evaluation about you before the report is finished. Then, your lawyer and the Guardian *ad litem* will receive the report.

Legal facts

Dr. Cole's statements, report, and other actions might harm your court case. Dr. Cole must look at what is best for your child (children), over any adult's wishes. When you start this evaluation you give up your right for confidentiality and release Dr. Cole and the KCC from any and all legal responsibility from harm that might result from talking about your case with people who know your family or you.

Additional disclosures may be required

Some information must be released because of the law in limited circumstances: if Dr. Cole becomes aware that you may be abusing, exploiting or neglecting a child under age 18, a developmentally disable person, or an elderly person (RCW 26.44); if you become a danger to others, Dr. Cole must protect the other person(s) and you (RCW 71.05.120); if you become mentally ill and become unable to take care of your basic

needs or become a danger to yourself or others and also refuse treatment (RCW 71.05); and if you tell Dr. Cole that you are suffering from an infectious disease, such as HIV (WAC 246-101-105).

What is the cost?

You will pay between \$750 and \$1500 before the evaluation starts. The charge for the evaluation will be discussed prior to signing the agreement, and includes:

- Interviews
- Scoring tests
- Writing the report
- Talking with the lawyer and Guardian *ad litem*

You pay before the evaluation begins, so that Dr. Cole cannot be blamed for making decisions because you have paid or not paid your bill. Paying the bill before the evaluation starts is best for everyone.

Additional costs for going to court

KCC could bill for record reviews, answering questions asked by your lawyer or going to court as a witness. Fees depend on the amount of time involved. The bill will include all travel, and waiting for the judge. The added cost changes with the number and difficulties of the problems, the number of children involved, and the amount of lawyer contact and time with the court. If Dr. Cole has to do extra work, you will find out an estimated amount of added time and cost for the evaluation. Payment is required before Dr. Cole does any additional work.

Please make sure you understand what you have to do during the evaluation and what Dr. Cole has to do. **I have had time to talk with my lawyer about this agreement.** This information and the procedures of a parenting evaluation have been **explained to me. I agree to follow** these policies, the procedures of the evaluation, and have received a copy of this agreement.

DATE: _____ SIGNATURE OF PARTY: _____

I have reviewed this information with the party and the party agrees with the policies as evidenced by his/her signature.

DATE: _____ SIGNATURE OF EVALUATOR: _____