

# The Supreme Court of Ohio

## PARENTING COORDINATION TRAINING PROGRAM STANDARDS

### I. GENERAL

A parenting coordination training program shall last a minimum of 12 hours, not including welcome, introductions, breaks and closing remarks.

Materials (written or electronic) shall be distributed to all participants prior to or at the training program.

This is an advanced training pursuant to Rule 90.05 of the Rules of Superintendence for the Courts of Ohio. The purpose of the rule required prerequisites is to ensure participants have the necessary training, education, and experience to be successful in this training and to create an advanced level of collaborative learning. Prior to participating in parenting coordination training participants shall have:

- (A) A master's degree or higher, law degree, or education and experience satisfactory to the court or divisions;
- (B) At least two years of professional experience with situations involving children, which includes parenting coordination, counseling, casework, legal representation in family law matters, serving as a guardian ad litem or mediator, or such other equivalent experience satisfactory to the court or division;
- (C) Completed the following training that has been approved by the Dispute Resolution Section of the Supreme Court and that meets standards established by the Supreme Court Commission on Dispute Resolution:
  - (1) Fundamentals of mediation training;
  - (2) Specialized family or divorce mediation training;
  - (3) Specialized training in domestic abuse and dispute resolution;

### II. FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS

Faculty shall be qualified by education, or have the necessary practical skills to conduct the program effectively in accordance with standards set by the Supreme Court of Ohio Dispute Resolution Section. A sponsor shall have an ongoing duty to report any activity, criminal or otherwise that would adversely affect the faculty's ability to perform the functions of faculty delivering a training program.

### III. TRAINING PROGRAM METHODOLOGY

A combination of at least three of the following teaching techniques shall be utilized:

1. Lecture;
2. Group discussion;
3. Written exercises/activities (drafting mediation documents such as confidentiality agreement, memorandum of understanding, etc.);
4. Mediation demonstration;
5. Role plays.

#### **IV. TRAINING PROGRAM SUBSTANTIVE CONTENT MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

- A. Introduction and Overview of Parenting Coordination (minimum .5 hours)
  1. History, definition, policy
  2. Sup. Rules 90-90.12
- B. The Parenting Coordination Process (minimum 3 hours)
  1. The various functions of the Parenting Coordinator (PC)
  2. Limitations of the parenting coordination process, including the difference between parenting coordination and parent education, therapy, custody evaluation and dispute resolution processes
  3. Professional guidelines of practice for PCs
    - a. The interplay between other professional guidelines and professional practice guidelines and local/state guidelines for court-appointed PCs
    - b. The potential for conflicts of interest between the PC and the people to whom parenting coordination services are offered
  4. Issues that are appropriate and not appropriate for parenting coordination
  5. Appropriate and inappropriate participants to the parenting coordination process
    - a. Appropriate courses of action when confronted with substance abuse during the parenting coordination process
    - b. Screening for domestic violence and appropriate courses of action when confronted with domestic violence during the parenting coordination process
    - c. The effect of domestic violence on parent involved in the parenting coordination process
  - d. Situations in which the PC should suggest referrals to other resources
    6. When to refer parties to services for child protection or elder abuse, and the issue of confidentiality as it applies to each
    7. Special needs of the *pro se* party
- C. Parenting Coordination Practice (minimum 3 hours)
  1. Forms
  2. Preparing the parties for the process and the initial session
  3. Scheduling the time and location, and establishing the format of each conference and focusing discussion
  4. Structuring and managing the discussion, maintaining control of the sessions, and utilizing appropriate case management skills

5. Managing separate sessions, telephonic and e-mail communication
6. Maintaining appropriate records and documentation as a PC
7. Appropriate boundaries of a PC
  - a. Safety procedures for those participating in the parenting coordination process
  - b. Office safety policies and working with clients having current restraining and protective orders
- c. Establishing appropriate limits for client demands
  8. When and how to use outside experts effectively
    - a. How to assist the parties in deciding on appropriate community resources
    - b. Developing a list of social service resources, including those for domestic violence situations
  9. Effective communication skills with clients in conflict
  10. Managing grievances
  11. Reasons to decline an appointment, withdraw or request appropriate assistance
- D. Family Dynamics (minimum 1 hour)
  1. Relationship dynamics in conflict
  2. Child development in conflict
- E. High Conflict Personalities and Stress (minimum 1.5 hours)
  1. Domestic Abuse
  2. Substance Abuse
  3. Child Abuse
  4. Strategies with high conflict
- F. Conflict Resolution/Facilitated Negotiations (minimum 1.5 hours)
  1. Written correspondence
  2. Writing agreements
  3. Making decisions
  4. Writing decisions
- G. Court Specific Parenting Coordination Procedures (minimum 1.5 hours)
  1. The PC's responsibility to the court
  2. Knowledge of and adherence to jurisdiction-specific qualifications for a PC
  3. How and when the PC should interface with the court system
    - a. The appointment and discharge processes of the PC
    - b. The importance of a court designation to the parenting coordination process
    - c. The ethical constraints on confidentiality in relation to the entire parenting coordination process and separate sessions within the process
  4. How to work collaboratively with other professionals
  5. The grievance procedure contained in the local/state rules for PCs
  6. Possible ethical dilemmas that may confront a PC and how to avoid them

## V. APPROVAL

Any mediation training program, approved by the Supreme Court of Ohio Dispute Resolution Section as meeting these standards, is approved for a period of two calendar years. However, the trainer shall submit a listing of scheduled courses at least 45 days before each course, giving the date, time, location, and cost, if applicable of the training program. Any material change in the course (such as a change in a primary trainer, expert or the curriculum) requires a new application to the Supreme Court Dispute Resolution Section.

## **VI. REVOCATION OF APPROVAL**

The Supreme Court Dispute Resolution Section has the right to audit approved training programs during the period for which the training program has been approved. Such an audit may include, but is not limited to: attendance of any part of the course; examination of evaluation forms; examination of curriculum and written materials; and, interviewing participants. Approval of programs which are determined to no longer comply with these standards and/or the “Obligations and Responsibilities For Sponsors” outlined in the *Instructions, Obligations, and Responsibilities for the Approval of Required Dispute Resolution Trainings under the Supreme Court Rules of Superintendence for the Courts of Ohio* will be revoked.