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# FORENSIC COUNSELING SERVICES

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## Parenting Facilitation Quick Reference Sheet

There are multiple styles of parenting facilitation services. This page is designed to give you a quick overview of our basic approach to services. For more information see our intake information on line at [www.texas counseling.org](http://www.texas counseling.org)

### Session format

Typically, initial intake sessions are conducted with each parent individually. Following intake appointments, parents should expect to meet with the PF at least four to six times in the first two months to address one-on-one skill building while exploring their own role in the family conflict. Depending on individual progress and the specific needs of the family, joint sessions with both parents to work on problem resolution will be scheduled as needed. During this time the PF will work online with the parents through Our Family Wizard as well, with the goal to steadily increase the time between sessions until the PF is no longer needed.

### Accountability and personal responsibility

Parenting facilitation is not magic – problems that often took years to create will not be solved in an hour or two. Likewise if a parent expects the PF process to “fix” their co-parent they are likely to be disappointed in the process. Each parent will be asked to focus on the only person they can really control, *themselves*. By changing their own approaches to interactions with their co-parent, parents can structure better outcomes for their children and themselves. At the same time, parenting facilitation can provide accountability for both parents by monitoring compliance with court orders and helping parents resolve disputes over differing expectations.

### Post-decree or active litigation services?

Different stages of legal conflicts have different needs. Prior to a final decree being entered the work is often about finding common ground and narrowing litigation issues, whereas post-decree the focus is often on follow through with the court’s determinations. In both situations court orders (temporary or final) form the “floor” or fallback plan for when parents cannot otherwise agree on co-parenting issues. By committing to learn and practice new techniques for interacting, and doing what each can in reducing co-parenting difficulties, both parents support the long term wellbeing of their children and can move forward with healthy, businesslike interactions.

## Underlying substantive issues

Each approach to PF services has to follow basic requirements as outlined in the Family Code:

A court order outlining the PF’s duties is required [TFC 153.6061]

A PF may not serve in any other individual professional role, as therapist, evaluator, etc., *ever* [TFC 153.6102(e)]

Looking for recommendations on parenting time (“possession” or “access”)? You want a custody evaluator, not a PF; PFs cannot make such recommendations [TFC 153.6081 and 153.6082]

## Decision making and “trigger” conditions

PFs can offer opinions and recommendations regarding parenting and other behavioral issues that may then activate various consequences for parents. By agreement of the parents PFs may also serve as a “tie breaker” in some situations. See our document on decision making language for more details.