

CAUSE NO. _____

IN THE INTEREST OF

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IN THE _____ JUDICIAL

DISTRICT COURT

CHILDREN

_____ COUNTY, TEXAS

ORDER APPOINTING PARENTING FACILITATOR

THIS CAUSE having come before this Court and this Court having reviewed the file and being otherwise fully advised in the premises this Court finds that there is good cause shown for appointment of a Parenting Facilitator and that such an appointment is in the best interest of the children in this cause.

1. IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that Aaron Robb, Ph.D., LPC-S, is appointed as Parenting Facilitator. All parties are ordered to provide a copy of this order along with their completed intake forms (Parenting Facilitation Data Form, Parenting Facilitation Advisement Form, and Acknowledgement Notice of Privacy Practices, each available online at www.texascounseling.org) along with their initial retainer to the Parenting Facilitator within three business days of the signing of this order. The Parenting Facilitator will select a date for the initial appointment. All parties are ORDERED to cooperate with the Parenting Facilitator in scheduling and are ORDERED appear as directed by the Parenting Facilitator for the initial appointment and all subsequent appointments.

2. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Parenting Facilitator may meet with the parties or the children jointly or separately. It is up to the Parenting Facilitator’s discretion as to whether appointments will be joint or separate, by telepresence or in person. The duration, frequency, location, and persons in attendance for each session with the Parenting Facilitator is at the discretion of the Parenting Facilitator.

3. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the expense of the Parenting Facilitator is to be shared equally between the parties, with the exception that the Parenting Facilitator may assess to each party a pro rata share for time expended for reviewing documentation, individual sessions, out-of-session time, and other services based on the time required per parent. The Court deems these payments be taxed as costs of suit. The parties must advance the cost of the Parenting Facilitator in the form of a retainer established by the Parenting Facilitator. The parties are ORDERED to pay their respective portions of the initial retainer within seven days of the signing of this Order and any additional retainer required within seven days of any invoice or bill from the Parenting Facilitator.

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4. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Parenting Facilitator has the following duties and the authority to take such steps as necessary to carry out these duties. The Parenting Facilitator will assist the parties in minimizing child-related conflicts between the parents and resolving issues related to parenting or other family issues through aiding them in:

1. identifying disputed issues;
2. reducing misunderstandings;
3. clarifying priorities;
4. exploring possibilities for problem solving;
5. developing methods of collaboration in parenting;
6. understanding parenting plans and reaching agreement about parenting issues to be included in a parenting plan;
7. complying with the court's order regarding conservatorship or possession of and access to the child;
8. implementing parenting plans;
9. obtaining training regarding problem solving, conflict management, and parenting skills;
10. settling disputes regarding parenting issues and reaching a proposed joint resolution or statement of intent regarding these disputes; and
11. monitor the parties' compliance with court orders.

In order to carry out the duties outlined above the Parenting Facilitator is specifically instructed and authorized to:

- assist the parties and the children to promote the children's rights of access to both parents and to protect the children's best interest in general in compliance with the previous orders of this court;
- communicate with the parties, children, educators, medical and behavioral health care providers, and any other third parties as deemed necessary by the Parenting Facilitator;
- when necessary, recommend to the parents that one or both avail themselves or their children of appropriate community resources, including, but not limited to, random drug screens, formal parenting classes, and individual psychotherapy or family counseling; and
- notify the Court if any party is failing to comply with the spirit or letter of this order or other orders of the Court.

5. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED the parties must

- cooperate with the Parenting Facilitator in the execution of the duties outlined above;
- execute any necessary authorizations to enable the Parenting Facilitator to obtain information about the children, the parties, or other caretakers;

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- direct any disagreements regarding the children to the Parenting Facilitator before seeking court action, unless a child's safety is jeopardized. The Parenting Facilitator will work with both parents to resolve the conflict and, if necessary, will recommend an appropriate resolution to the parties and their legal counsel;
- contact the Parenting Facilitator only during regular business hours or at other times scheduled by the Parenting Facilitator. The assistance provided by the Parenting Facilitator is not intended to be a crisis intervention service;
- utilize the Our Family Wizard application as directed by the Parenting Facilitator;
- follow communication guidelines as established by the Parenting Facilitator;
- fully complete homework assigned by the Parenting Facilitator by the deadlines set by the Parenting Facilitator;
- notify the Parenting Facilitator in writing within 24 hours of any changes in their contact information, legal representation, residency, or occupants of their home.

6. IT IS ORDERED that no information gathered by the Parenting Facilitator, including any conversation between the evaluator and any party, child, investigator, attorney or collateral source, is confidential or protected by any privilege. Information provided by the parties may be shared with others involved in the Parenting Facilitation (including where necessary and appropriate, children and collateral sources) so that verification of information provided can be sought and so that others are afforded the opportunity to respond to issues raised. The Parenting Facilitator must inform any party, child, attorney or collateral source that any information received is not confidential or protected by any privilege or discovery.

7. IT IS ORDERED that the Parenting Facilitator may testify at the final hearing or other hearing in this case, at the written request of any attorney of record, however, unless otherwise ordered by the Court, the requesting party is responsible for the Parenting Facilitator's customary and usual fees for testifying and said fees must be paid or advanced at least one week prior to the hearing and payment of said fees is a condition precedent to the Parenting Facilitator's required testimony.

8. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Parenting Facilitator must submit a written report regarding the status of this case to the court and attorneys of record as needed.

Signed on this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Judge Presiding

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