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## **Custody Evaluation Fee Agreement**

The Custody Evaluation fees are 225.00 per hour. In most cases, the fee for the complete evaluation will be between \$15,000.00 and \$20,000.00, based on this rate. This includes not only time spent in face-to-face interviews, but also time spent on the telephone, reviewing written material, correspondence, travel, scoring and interpreting psychological test data, and writing the evaluation report. In-office meetings, scheduled as 50-minute-hours, are billed at the full-hour rate to allow for record keeping. Court preparation, and any other time invested in connection with serving as Custody Evaluator, will also be billed at the 225.00 rate. The term "evaluator" henceforth denotes "court-appointed evaluator.

The evaluator requires that \$8,000.00 be paid before the first session to initiate the evaluation. In general, this means that each parent pays \$4,000. Payment of the initial retainer must be made by cashier's check or money order. Personal checks will not be accepted. The parties are responsible for all costs that exceed the retainer. Once the initial retainer is exhausted, subsequent billings shall be paid within ten days of receipt by the parties or all work on the Child Custody Evaluation will cease. The Evaluator shall be reimbursed for any expenses she incurs in association with her role as Evaluator. These costs may include but are not limited to the following: photocopies, messenger service, long-distance telephone charges, postage to include express and/or certified mail costs

and postage to foreign countries, parking, tolls, mileage, travel expenses, and word processing and editing, as well as time spent reading and responding to email and any other electronic communication. The evaluator further requires that all outstanding fees be paid prior to the writing of the final report. The evaluator will provide a written account of all costs.

**Missed Appointments:**

At least forty-eight hours' notice is required to cancel or reschedule an appointment. If at least forty-eight hours' notice is not received, the parent who missed the appointment will be billed an additional 225.00 per appointment hour. If both participants or another individual misses an appointment, both parents will be billed an additional amount for half of the scheduled time, unless they agree to divide this cost otherwise, and the evaluator agrees.

**Refund Policy:**

If, for any reason, one or both parents stop the evaluation prior to completion, any unused portion of the fees paid by the parents will be refunded, once the 730 order has been rescinded by Family Court. One-half of this refund will be paid to each parent, assuming they are sharing the cost of the evaluation. The amount of refund will be determined by subtracting, from the amount collected from both parents, 225.00 per hour spent on the evaluation plus incidental expenses. Should the evaluator reserve time for an evaluation that does not go forth, there will be a \$500.00 fee for such cancelled evaluations.

**Settlement Conferences, Depositions, and Court Appearances:**

If an attorney or party requests the evaluator's participation in a deposition or any court appearance, the charge will be an additional \$1600.00 per 4 hours (\$1800.00 per 4 hours for proceedings held outside of San Francisco County), billed at a four-hour minimum.

Settlement conferences will be billed at the evaluator's regular rate of 225.00 per hour for either in-court appearances or time reserved for telephone conferences.

The evaluator requires a subpoena for depositions or court appearances. A separate retainer for such time spent is required and must be paid at least ten days prior to the deposition or court appearance. All fees are the responsibility of the party issuing the subpoena. If both parties subpoena the evaluator to court, the associated fees will be shared equally unless otherwise agreed between the parties, and the evaluator concurs.

Appearances going beyond four hours must be paid for in additional four hour blocks of time at the time of the appearance. As is the usual and customary practice among evaluators, deposits for cancelled appearances will not be refunded.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent A

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent B

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluator