

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT, FOURTH  
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR  
NASSAU COUNTY, FLORIDA

CASE NO:  
DIVISION: B

IN RE: THE MARRIAGE/MATTER OF  
\_\_\_\_\_, Petitioner, and  
\_\_\_\_\_, Respondent.

**ORDER REFERRING CASE TO FAMILY MEDIATION UNIT**

The Court *sua sponte* finds that this case should be referred to the Family Mediation Unit for mediation of all pending disputed issues, including, but not limited to, equitable distribution, parenting plan, child support and related issues.

**ACCORDINGLY**, it is **ORDERED** that:

(1) **REFERRAL.** This case is hereby referred to the Family Mediation Unit for mediation of all pending disputed issues. The Family Mediation Unit shall schedule a mediation conference for the purpose of assisting the parties and their counsel, if any, in resolving such issues.

(2) **MANDATORY ATTENDANCE.** The parties and their attorneys, if any, shall attend in person all conferences scheduled by the Family Mediation Unit, and shall mediate in good faith. If a party is represented. No party or attorney shall participate by telephone unless prior authorization is received through the Family Mediation Unit.

(3) **MANDATORY FINANCIAL AFFIDAVITS.** Each party shall bring to the first mediation conference, if not previously filed, a completed, notarized financial affidavit which satisfies the requirements of the Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure regarding such affidavits.

(4) **MANDATORY PAYMENT OF MEDIATION COSTS.** Unless it is otherwise ordered, each party shall be responsible for payment of one-half of all mediation costs assessed by the Family Mediation Unit. The costs shall be paid in advance of or at the commencement of mediation. A party's failure to timely pay such assessed costs may result in the issuance of an Order to Show Cause why that party should not be adjudged in indirect civil contempt of court or indirect criminal contempt of court.

Any party who files a Clerk's certificate of indigence or a Court order determining indigence in compliance with section 57.081, Florida Statute, shall not be assessed mediation costs.

(5) **FAILURE TO ATTEND MEDIATION.** In the event that one party fails to attend a scheduled mediation conference, the party who fails to attend shall be responsible for payment for the entire cost of the session, and the party who appeared shall not be responsible for payment of any of the cost of the session. In the event that both parties fail to appear, each party shall be

responsible for payment of one-half of the cost of the session. Failure of one party or both parties to appear may result in the imposition by the Court of appropriate sanctions which may include, but are not limited to, dismissal of a party's pending petitions or motions, or an adjudication of indirect civil contempt or indirect criminal contempt.

(6) **RESCHEDULING OF MEDIATION CONFERENCE.** If, because of an emergency, serious illness, or other unexpected event, it becomes necessary to reschedule the mediation, the parties (or, if the parties are represented by counsel, their counsel) shall provide the Family Mediation Unit at least two business days' notice of the cancellation, unless it is impossible to give such notice (as, for example, where an unrepresented party is unexpectedly hospitalized). Failure to give such notice, where it was reasonably possible to give notice, will result in the entire cost of the cancelled session being assessed to the party who failed to provide the notice.

(7) **SETTLEMENT PRIOR TO MEDIATION.** Should the pending issues be voluntarily resolved prior to the scheduled mediation conference, *each* party (or, if the party is represented by counsel, that party's counsel) shall immediately contact the Family Mediation Unit to advise of the settlement. Failure to provide the Family Mediation Unit at least 48 hours' notice of the resolution of the outstanding issues will result in the assessment of costs for the scheduled mediation session. It shall not be a defense to assessment of such costs that a party or his/her attorney believed that the other party or other attorney would notify the Family Mediation Unit of the resolution of the disputed issues.

(8) **TAXATION OF MEDIATION COSTS.** Where appropriate under the law, mediation costs may be taxed at the conclusion of the case.

**DONE AND ORDERED** in Chambers at Fernandina Beach, Nassau, Florida, on DDDD.

JJJJ

Copies to:  
Petitioner  
Respondent  
Family Mediation Unit a/k/a  
Alternate Dispute Resolution  
via email to danielle@coj.net, rhenkle@coj.net, mgyoungs@coj.net

**REQUESTS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS BY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES:** If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the ADA Coordinator Michelle Watson, Robert M. Foster Justice Center, 76347 Veterans Way, Yulee, FL 32097, Telephone 904-548-4917, email [ADA@nassauclerk.com](mailto:ADA@nassauclerk.com) at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.

## ZOOM ADDENDUM

Pursuant to the local administrative order entered on June 15, 2021, effective June 21, 2021, the Nassau County Phase 2 Operational Plan has been rescinded. **In person court appearances are now permissible. Facemasks and distancing are optional. However, Zoom will be the default for scheduled hearings, unless the parties file notice with the Clerk of Court that at least one (1) party intends to appear in person at least three (3) business days before the hearing.** Said notice shall also be provided to the Court via email to [astrickland@coj.net](mailto:astrickland@coj.net), and to all other parties by email, if possible.

Unless otherwise notified by Court Order or the Court's Judicial Assistant, the invitation to join the Court's Zoom™ Meeting for all hearings is:

<https://zoom.us/j/5789782431>

Meeting ID: 578 978 2431

Passcode: QjJ0nH

Dial by your location +1 470 381 2552 US

Passcode: 706394

Parties shall name their Zoom profile with their legal names such that they can be easily identified.

For Zoom hearings involving exhibits, proposed orders, or copies of cases cited, the parties are directed to send these to the Court's judicial assistant, [astrickland@coj.net](mailto:astrickland@coj.net), via email at least three (3) business days in advance of the hearing with copies to all parties who have not been defaulted as it custom and required by the Rules. **When the number of pages of the hearing materials exceed 50 pages, hard copies should be provided to the Court at least three (3) business days in advance of the hearing.** Emailed exhibits should be sent as one PDF file, or as few PDFs as possible, and include an index, cover sheets before each exhibit, and should be easily identified. Counsel submitting proposed orders should also furnish sufficient self-addressed stamped envelopes to the Court via mail for service of any orders when a party is not signed up for the e-portal.<sup>1</sup> **The Court's physical and mailing address is 76347 Veterans Way, Yulee, FL 32097.**

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<sup>1</sup> Individuals who represent themselves are strongly encouraged to Sign up for the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal to avoid delays in receiving documents. For instructions on how to do so, please check the following link: <https://www.myflcourtaccess.com/authority/trainingvideos.html>

Those appearing before the Court without video via Zoom that intend to testify will likely need to be in the presence of a notary public for the purposes of being identified and sworn in. Those appearing remotely by video via Zoom planning to testify should be prepared to furnish the Court with a **picture identification such as their driver's license via video.**

While the Court is not required to record all Zoom hearings, the parties may request the Court do so. It is the parties' responsibility to arrange for a Court Reporter to attend the hearing, if so desired.