

REPORT OF THE

**TEXAS COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS
PARENTING COORDINATION TASKFORCE:**

**Recommended Practice Guidelines, for Certified Family Life Educators, of
Parenting Coordination in the Context of Texas Family Law**

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The PC Taskforce was appointed by Texas Council on Family Relations (TCFR) President, Dr. Stephen Green on December 12, 2008 to address the following goals:

1. Review the Texas statute for parenting coordination, including future proposed changes from the Legislative Council;
2. Review currently available practice guidelines, including AFCC guidelines;
3. Review the Code of Ethics from the TX CFLE Board and from NCFR; and
4. Propose for TCFR Board adoption practice guidelines and training guidelines which comply with Texas statutory requirements and CFLE Codes of Ethics.
5. Create a State Review Board to approve CFLEs as Texas appointed Family Life Education/Interaction Experts (i.e. Parenting Coordinator, Co-parenting Educator, Social Studies Evaluator, Premarital Educator, or other Family Life Education/Interaction Expert appointment by the state).

**TEXAS COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS
STANDARDS OF PRACTICE FOR CFLE PARENTING COORDINATORS**

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TCFR STATE REVIEW BOARD GUIDELINES

For Approval of Certified Family Life Educators as a Texas appointed Family Life Education/Interaction Experts (i.e. Parenting Coordinator, Co-parenting Educator, Social Studies Evaluator, Premarital Educator, or other Family Life Education/Interaction Expert appointment by the state)

Membership

The TCFR Review Board will consist of the following persons:

- Two practicing Parenting Coordinators who are Certified Family Life Educators (CFLEs).
- Two additional CFLEs who are also members of TCFR and NCFR
- One Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) in Texas with Parenting Coordination certification

Terms

Board members will serve for multiples of three years with staggered dates of conclusion and reappointment. No Review Board member may serve more than two consecutive three-year terms.

Duties

The Board's duties:

- Review applications for state approval as a Family Life Education/Interaction Expert (i.e. Parenting Coordinator, Co-parenting Educator, Social Studies Evaluator, Premarital Education, or other Family Life Education/Interaction Expert appointment by the state)
- Meet monthly to review applications and make approval decisions. *Applicants will be notified monthly on the approval or rejection of their applications. The applicants will be told the reason for their denial of approval. Those denied will be allowed to update their applications and apply a second time, after a six month waiting period*
- Report board decisions every six months to:
 1. the state officer who updates the approved professionals list
 2. the TCFR Executive Board
- Review any ethical or professional practice complaints brought against a practicing CFLE who has been approved by the Board as a Family Life Education/Interaction Expert (i.e. Parenting Coordinator, Co-parenting Educator, Social Studies Evaluator, Premarital Education, or other Family Life Education/Interaction Expert described in the Texas Family Code). These complaints will be reviewed in a timely manner and all parties involved will be notified of the Board's decision to continue or rescind approval of the person/s brought before the Board.

Authority

The Board has the authority to grant, *deny*, or rescind approval of a Certified Family Life Educator *to work under the standards of practice as a Texas appointed Family Life Education/Interaction Expert (i.e. Parenting Coordinator, Co-parenting Educator, Social Studies Evaluator, Premarital Educator, or other Family Life Education/Interaction Expert service described in the Texas Family Code).*

DEFINITION OF PARENTING COORDINATION PRACTICE IN TEXAS

Definition of Practice:

Parenting Coordination is a practice which utilizes a family system approach to facilitate resolution of co-parenting issues arising from an order in a suit affecting the parent-child relationship. A Parenting Coordinator is an impartial third party who, regardless of the title by which the person is designated by the court, performs any function described by Section 153.606 of the Texas Family Code in a suit; and who is appointed under this subchapter by the court on its own motion or on a motion or agreement of the parties to assist parties in resolving parenting issues through confidential procedures; and is not appointed under another statute or a rule of civil procedure.

The court shall specify the duties of a parenting coordinator in the order appointing the parenting coordinator. Duties of the court-appointed Parenting Coordinator are limited to matters which will aid the parents in the following areas in accordance with Texas Family Code 153.606:

- (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 agreements 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; and
- (10) settling disputes regarding parenting issues and reaching a proposed joint resolution or statement of intent regarding those disputes.

The appointment of a parenting coordinator does not divest the court of its exclusive jurisdiction to determine issues of conservatorship, support, and possession of and access to a child and the authority to exercise management and control of the suit. An individual appointed as a parenting coordinator may not serve in any non-confidential capacity in the same case, including serving as an amicus attorney, guardian ad litem, or social study evaluator under Chapter 107, as a friend of the court under Chapter 202, or as a parenting facilitator under this chapter.

Texas Family Code Sections 153.606-610 provide practice guidelines for parenting coordinators. The parenting coordinator's role is to educate and empower parents to self-determine a parenting plan in the best interest of their child(ren) and resolve conflicts regarding implementing the parenting plan through effective communication. Agreements between the parents should be encouraged in order to help them communicate more effectively, but no modifications to existing orders, judgments, or the decree should be made. Agreements made by the parties with the assistance of the parenting coordinator can and should be reduced to writing, signed by the parties and given to their attorneys to be filed with the court. In addition, the parenting coordinator is required to submit a periodic report to the court as often as is ordered stating only whether or not parenting coordination should continue. The parenting coordinator determines the intervention procedures and techniques to use in working with parents to achieve effective co-parenting. The court may remove a parenting coordinator if both parties request removal or if one party requests removal and good cause is shown to the court, on the request of the parenting coordinator, or if the parenting coordinator ceases to satisfy the minimum qualifications required by Section 153.610. Unless the court or agreements indicate otherwise, fees are shared equally between parents.

SUPPLEMENTAL LEGAL DEFINITIONS

- (1) Alternative Dispute Resolution [ADR] processes and voluntary dispute resolution procedures— includes binding or non-binding arbitration by agreement only; binding or non-binding mediation by agreement or court imposed order; collaborative law by agreement only; and parenting coordination by agreement or court imposed order.
- (2) Conciliation—As described by Judge Debra Lehrmann [360th District Court in For Worth, TX] in a 2001 ABA Family Law Section presentation, the conciliatory phase of a lawsuit is distinguished from the adversarial phase by whether or not the professional intervener testifies in court. Conciliatory processes encourage parents to work together, while adversarial processes encourage each parent to prove that they are the better parent. The adversarial focus on winning escalates the conflict and creates greater barriers to co-parenting. The preamble to Texas Family Code 153.601 states: “The legislature further finds that conciliatory forms of dispute resolution, including mediation and the use of parenting coordinators, promote the policy set forth in Section 153.001, Family Code.” The identified policy is to promote healthy co-parenting by assuring contact with both parents who can work together; providing a safe, stable, and nonviolent environment; and encouraging separated parents to share parenting responsibilities.
- (3) Confidential process— In accordance with Texas Family Code 153.606(e), “A parenting coordinator may not: (1) be compelled to produce work product developed during the appointment as parenting coordinator; (2) be required to disclose the source of any information; (3) submit a report into evidence, except as required by Section 153.608; or (4) testify in court.”
- (4) High conflict case— The court can impose an order for parenting coordination when “the parties demonstrate a pattern of: (A) repetitious litigation; (B) anger and distrust; (C) difficulty in communicating about and cooperating in the care of their children; Section 153.601(2)]
- (5) Parenting plan—is a written plan to be included in a court order which sets out the rights and duties of a parent or a person acting as a parent in relation to the child; provides for periods of possession of and access to the child, which may be the terms set out in the standard possession order and any amendments to the standard possession order agreed to by the parents or found by the court to be in the best interest of the child, provides for child support and designed to optimize the development of a close and continuing relationship between each parent and their child.
- (6) Suit Affecting the Parent-Child Relationship [SAPCR]—is a lawsuit which details court orders for how a child is to be parented without regard to whether the parents are presently or have ever been married to each other. Texas Family Code Chapter 153 is the primary legal guide for making these determinations to be incorporated in a parenting plan.
- (7) Process of Parenting Coordination - As a conciliatory process, Parenting Coordination provides an alternative to litigation for solving parenting conflicts. Techniques used in Parenting Coordination combine family systems education, family mediation, and co-parenting education. The parenting coordination process may include a multi-disciplinary approach based on intensity of conflict and skill resources of the parenting coordinator and is prepared to work with other disciplines to provide interventions when deemed necessary by the court or by agreement of both parents.
- (8) Family Violence - Reaching a consensus definition of family violence has not been achieved by the mental health or legal communities. The CFLE will continue to work with other mental health professionals to determine more effective ways to assess levels which are appropriate for parenting coordination accurately and consistently. Cases which include family violence, untreated serious mental illness, or untreated active substance abuse may be excluded from parenting coordination and referred to more evaluative forensic interventions.

CERTIFYING THE CFLE PARENTING COORDINATOR

Family life education provides skills and knowledge to enrich individual and family life. It includes knowledge about how families work; the interrelationship of families and society; human growth and development throughout the life span; the physiological and psychological aspects of human sexuality; the impact of money and time management on daily family life; the importance and value of parent education; the effects of policy and legislation on families; ethical considerations in professional conduct; and a solid understanding and knowledge of how to teach and/or develop curriculum for what are often sensitive and personal issues. Parenting Coordinators, who are also CFLEs, practice under their full certification as a family life educator.

Certification recognizes a proven background and understanding in each of ten family life substance areas. While CFLEs may work specifically in one discipline, such as parent education or marriage enrichment, their understanding of the many areas that affect today's families enables them to be more effective in their efforts to educate and work with individuals and families. The Certified Family Life Educator designation recognizes the educational, preventative, and enriching nature of their work. CFLEs are held accountable to a governing board and are required to re-certify every five years. (See Appendix A.) Therefore, they must first meet CFLE credentials and training standards which include:

Families in Society – An understanding of families and their relationships to other institutions, such as the educational, governmental, religious, and occupational institutions in society. For example:

Structures and Functions; Cultural Variations (family heritage, social class, geography, ethnicity, race & religion); Dating, Courtship, Marital Choice; Kinship; Cross-Cultural and Minority (understanding of lifestyles of minority families and the lifestyles of families in various societies around the world); Changing Gender Roles (role expectations & behaviors of courtship partners, marital partners, parents & children, siblings, and extended kin); Demographic Trends; Historical Issues; Work-Family Relationships; Societal Relations (reciprocal influence of the major social institutions and families, i.e., governmental, religious, educational, and economic).

Internal Dynamics of Families – An understanding of family strengths and weaknesses and how family members relate to each other. For example:

Internal Social Processes (including cooperation & conflict); Communication (patterns & problems in husband-wife relationships and in parent-child relationships); Conflict Management; Decision-making and Goal-setting; Normal Family Stresses (transition periods in the family life cycle, three-generation households, caring for the elderly, & dual careers); Family Stress & Crises (divorce, remarriage, death, economic uncertainty and hardship, violence, substance abuse); special Needs in Families (including adoptive, foster, migrant, low income, military, and blended families as well as those with disabled members).

Human Growth and Development Over the Life Span – An understanding of the developmental changes of individuals in families throughout the life span. Based on knowledge of physical, emotional, cognitive, social, moral, and personality aspects. For example:

Prenatal; Infancy; Early and Middle Childhood; Adolescence; Adulthood; Aging.

Human Sexuality – An understanding of the physiological, psychological, & social aspects of sexual development throughout the life span, so as to achieve healthy sexual adjustment. For example:

Reproductive Physiology; Biological Determinants; Emotional and Psychological Aspects of Sexual Involvement; Sexual Behaviors; Sexual Values and Decision-Making; Family Planning; Physiological and Psychological Aspects of Sexual Response; Sexual Dysfunction; Influence of Sexual Involvement on Interpersonal Relationships.

Interpersonal Relationships – An understanding of the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships. For example:

Self and Others; Communication Skills (listening, empathy, self-disclosure, decision-making, problem-solving & conflict resolution; Intimacy, Love, Romance; Relating to Others with Respect, Sincerity, & Responsibility.

Family Resource Management – An understanding of the decisions individuals and families make about developing and allocating resources including time, money, material assets, energy, friends, neighbors, and space, to meet their goals. For example:

Goal Setting and Decision-Making; Development and Allocation of Resources; Social Environment Influences; Life Cycle and Family Structure Influences; Consumer Issues and Decisions.

Parent Education and Guidance – An understanding of how parents teach, guide and influence children and adolescents. For example:

Parenting Rights and Responsibilities; Parenting Practices/Processes; Parent/Child Relationships; Variation in Parenting Solutions; Changing Parenting Roles Over the Life Cycle.

Family Law and Public Policy – An understanding of the legal definition of the family and laws which affect the status of the family. For example:

Family and the Law (relating to marriage, divorce, family support, child custody, child protection & rights, & family planning); Family and Social Services; Family and Education; Family and the Economy; Family and Religion; Policy and the Family (public policy as it affects the family, including tax, civil rights, social security, economic support laws, & regulations.

Ethics – An understanding of the character and quality of human social conduct, and the ability to critically examine ethical questions and issues. For example:

Formation of Social Attitudes and Values; Recognizing and Respecting the Diversity of Values and the Complexity of Value Choice in a Pluralistic Society; Examining Value Systems and Ideologies systematically and objectively; Social Consequences of Value Choices; Recognizing the Ethical Implication of Social and Technological Changes; Ethics of Professional practice.

Family Life Education Methodology – An understanding of the general philosophy and broad principles of family life education in conjunction with the ability to plan, implement, and evaluate such educational programs. For example:

Planning and Implementing; Evaluation (materials, student progress, & program effectiveness); Education Techniques; Sensitivity to Others (to enhance educational effectiveness); Sensitivity to Community Concerns and Values (understanding of the public relations process).

Bredehoft, D., & Cassidy, D. (Eds). (1995). College and University Curriculum Guidelines in Family Life Education Curriculum Guidelines, pp. 12-14). Minnesota: National Council on Family Relations. Taken from www.ncfr.org

CFLE PARENTING COORDINATION TRAINING

1. The CFLE Parenting Coordinator, herein referred to as CFLE-PC, must have experience working in the field relating to families, have practical experience with high-conflict cases or litigation between parents, and hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree in counseling, education, family studies, psychology, or social work or a graduate degree in a mental health profession, with an emphasis in family and children's issues or be licensed in good standing as an attorney in Texas.
2. In addition to the qualifications, a parenting coordinator must complete at least 8 hours of family violence dynamics training provided by a family violence service provider; 40 classroom hours of training in dispute resolution techniques in a course conducted by an alternative dispute resolution system or other dispute resolution organization approved by the court; and 24 classroom hours of training in the fields of family dynamics, child development, family law and the law governing parenting coordination, and parenting coordination styles and procedures. See Texas Family Code Section 153.610. The course for the CFLE-PC covers the following topics:
 - Texas Family Law and the law governing Parenting Coordination
 - Parenting Coordination Process & Techniques
 - Family Mediation Overview
 - Systemic Family Dynamics Training, including the Divorcing Process
 - High Conflict Family Assessment, including Family Violence Assessment
 - Child Development
 - Parenting Education Models and Techniques
 - o Ginott's Parent Education Methodology: During or after divorcing, parents may lack confidence in their parenting skills and worry that they or their child's other parent may make many mistakes. The effective parenting coordinator/educator recognizes values each parent's concern as co-parenting skills emerge.
 - o National Extension Parenting Educators' Framework: One of the factors in high conflict divorce is each parent's concern about how the other is talking to and disciplining their children. Therefore, a large part of parenting coordination may include parenting education in order to help both parents focus on the best interest of their children.
 - o Understanding the difference between cooperative and parallel parenting.
 - Ethics [especially as related to high conflict and protracted custody cases, Code of Ethics for CFLEs, and Ethical Guidelines for Mediators adopted by the Supreme Court of Texas June 13, 2005.]
3. Continuing education in parenting coordination is included in meeting continuing education requirements. CFLE parenting coordinators will receive training as legislative changes are introduced and periodic opportunities to refresh parenting coordination skills.
4. Membership and participation in TCFR is highly recommended as a continuing education resource and for development of the practice of parenting coordination.
5. Parenting coordinators who are working in the collaborative law setting must also have training in the collaborative law interdisciplinary team process.
6. In addition, the following criteria from the AFCC Guidelines for Parenting Coordinators developed by the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts are recommended:
 - a The PC is recommended to have training and experience in interest-based negotiation family mediation and to become a qualified mediator under Texas law.
 - b The PC is recommended to be a licensed mental health or legal professionals in an area relating to families, or a certified family mediator under the rules or laws of the jurisdiction.
 - c The PC should have extensive practical experience in the profession with high conflict or litigating parents.
 - d The PC shall have training in the parenting coordination process, family dynamics in separation and divorce, parenting coordination techniques, domestic violence and child maltreatment, and court specific parenting coordination procedures. A model training curriculum incorporating four modules is included in Appendix B.

CFLE Parenting Coordination Standards of Practice

- e A PC shall acquire and maintain professional competence in the parenting coordination process and regularly participate in educational activities promoting professional growth. It is recommended that a PC participate in peer consultation or mentoring to receive feedback and support on cases. PC orders and/or private agreements should specify that such professional consultation is permitted.
- f A PC shall decline an appointment, withdraw, or request appropriate assistance when the facts and circumstances of the case are beyond the PC's skill or expertise.
- g A jurisdiction should consider “grandfathering” existing professionals with appropriate experience.

In order to market services and to verify to clients, attorneys, and judges what the qualifications of the CFLE-PC are, a summary of core credentials listed above in the form of a PCCAT [Parenting Coordinator Credentials and Training Program] is recommended. A master list of PCs who meet these criteria is recommended to be posted on the TCFR website to facilitate referral sources, especially when multiple CFLE-PCs are required to coordinate for families with substantial distance between the parents.

CFLE-PC CREDENTIALS AND TRAINING (PCCAT) PORTFOLIO

TRAINING CRITERIA	VERIFICATION
Bachelors, Masters or Doctoral degree in family science, psychology, social work, counseling or other mental health degree	Copy of the diploma
3 years related professional post-degree experience	Resume including a list of references who know your work history
Current professional certification	Copy of certification
8 hours of family violence training	Copy of certificate
24-hours parenting coordination training	Copy of certificate
Continuing education related to parenting coordination (Recommend yearly updates)	Summary of past 12 months CEU activities
Mediation training	Copy of certificate
Collaborative law training [if relevant]	Copy of certificate
Membership in NCFR or TCFR	Verification
Signed Ethics Agreement	Original Copy

ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR CFLE-PCS
Involved in the Practice of Parenting Coordination in Texas

Parenting coordination in Texas is defined by the Texas Family Code § 153-601-610. Parenting coordinators may be appointed by the court or by agreement of the parties in high-conflict or other cases where a parenting coordinator (“PC”) has been determined to be in the best interests of the children in order to assist the parties in resolving parenting issues.

PCs are required to follow the law governing the practice of parenting coordination in Texas. In addition to following the law governing parenting coordination in Texas, Certified Family Life Educators practicing under their Texas certification are also required to follow the ethical standards governing the practice family life education as outlined in the certification guidelines and the Ethical Guidelines for Mediators.

The following ethical guidelines for CFLEs were established by the Texas Council on Family Relations Parenting Coordination Taskforce in order to provide guidance so that both Texas laws governing parenting coordination and appropriate national ethical standards are being followed by CFLEs involved in the practice of parenting coordination (CFLE-PC).

Professional ethics are at the core of CFLE-PC services. This section provides a set of values, principles, and standards to guide decision making and conduct when ethical issues arise. Appropriate boundaries with families served and professionals the CFLE-PC interacts with are critical components. Maintaining boundaries not only promotes professional services to families, but protects families from conflicts of interest such as dual roles, dual relationships, bias, proceeding without consent, and betrayal of confidentiality. It further protects the professional from disciplinary actions, financial losses in malpractice suits involving professionals, and ethics complaints against service providers.

**ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR
MEDIATORS AND PARENTING COORDINATORS**

PREAMBLE: These Ethical Guidelines are intended to promote public confidence in the mediation/parenting coordination (PC) process and to be a general guide for mediator/PC conduct. They are not intended to be disciplinary rules or a code of conduct. Mediators and Parenting Coordinators should be responsible to the parties, the courts and the public, and should conduct themselves accordingly. These Ethical Guidelines are intended to apply to mediators/PCs conducting mediations/PC in connection with all civil, criminal, administrative and appellate matters, whether the mediation/PC is pre-suit or court-annexed and whether the mediation/PC is court-ordered or voluntary. *Please note, these guidelines have been formatted to include parenting coordinators as required by Texas Family Code 153.606(f) and will be in effect for parenting coordinators as of September 1, 2009.*

GUIDELINES

1. Defined. Mediation/PC is a private process in which an impartial person, a mediator and as of September 1, 2009 parenting coordinator, encourages and facilitates communications between parties to a conflict and strives to promote reconciliation, settlement, or understanding. A mediator /PC should not render a decision on the issues in dispute. The primary responsibility for the resolution of a dispute rests with the parties.

Comment. A mediator's/PC's obligation is to assist the parties in reaching a voluntary settlement. The mediator/PC should not coerce a party in anyway. A mediator/PC may make suggestions, but all settlement decisions are to be made voluntarily by the parties themselves.

2. Conduct. A mediator/PC should protect the integrity and confidentiality of the mediation/PC process. The duty to protect the integrity and confidentiality of the mediation/PC process commences with the first communication to the mediator/PC, is continuous in nature, and does not terminate upon the conclusion of the mediation/PC.

Comment (a). A mediator/PC should not use information obtained during the mediation/PC for personal gain or advantage.

Comment (b). The interests of the parties should always be placed above the personal interests of the mediator/PC.

Comment (c). A mediator/PC should not accept mediations/PCs which cannot be completed in a timely manner or as directed by a court.

Comment (d). Although a mediator/PC may advertise their qualifications and availability, the mediator /PC should not solicit a specific case or matter.

Comment (e). A mediator/PC should not mediate a dispute when the mediator/PC has knowledge that another mediator/PC has been appointed or selected without first consulting with the other mediator/PC or the parties unless the previous mediation/PC has been concluded.

3. Costs. As early as practical, and before the mediation/parenting coordination session begins, a mediator/PC should explain all fees and other expenses to be charged for the mediation/PC. A mediator/PC should not charge a contingent fee or a fee based upon the outcome of the mediation/PC. In appropriate cases, a mediator/PC should perform mediation/PC services at a reduced fee or without compensation.

Comment (a). A mediator /PC should avoid the appearance of impropriety in regard to possible negative perceptions regarding the amount of the mediator's/PC's fee in court-ordered mediations/PC.

Comment (b). If a party and the mediator/PC have a dispute that cannot be resolved before commencement of the mediation/PC as to the mediator's/PC's fee, the mediator/PC should decline to serve so that the parties may obtain another mediator/PC.

4. Disclosure of Possible Conflicts. Prior to commencing the mediation/PC, the mediator/PC should make full disclosure of any known relationships with the parties or their counsel that may affect or give the appearance of affecting the mediator's/PC's neutrality. A mediator/PC should not serve in the matter if a party makes an objection to the mediator /PC based upon a conflict or perceived conflict.

Comment (a). A mediator/PC should withdraw from a mediation/PC if it is inappropriate to serve.

Comment (b). If after commencement of the mediation/PC the mediator /PC discovers that such a relationship exists, the mediator/PC should make full disclosure as soon as practicable.

5. Mediator Qualifications. A mediator/PC should inform the participants of the mediator's qualifications and experience.

Comment. A mediator's/PC's qualifications and experience constitute the foundation upon which the mediation/PC process depends; therefore, if there is any objection to the mediator's/PC's qualifications to mediate/PC the dispute, the mediator/PC should withdraw from the mediation/PC. Likewise, the mediator/PC should decline to serve if the mediator/PC feels unqualified to do so.

6. The Mediation Process. A mediator/PC should inform and discuss with the participants the rules and procedures pertaining to the mediation/PC process.

Comment (a). A mediator/PC should inform the parties about the mediation/PC process no later than the opening session.

- Comment* (b). At a minimum, the mediator/PC should inform the parties of the following:
- (1) the mediation/PC is private (Unless otherwise agreed by the participants, only the mediator/PC, the parties and their representatives are allowed to attend.);
 - (2) the mediation/PC is informal (There are no court reporters present, no record is made of the proceedings, no subpoena or other service of process is allowed, and no rulings are made on the issues or the merits of the case.); and
 - (3) the mediation/PC is confidential to the extent provided by law. (See, e.g., §§154.053 and 154.073, Tex. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code.)
7. Convening the Mediation. Unless the parties agree otherwise, the mediator/PC should not convene a mediation session unless all parties and their representatives ordered by the court have appeared, corporate parties are represented by officers or agents who have represented to the mediator/PC that they possess adequate authority to negotiate a settlement, and an adequate amount of time has been reserved by all parties to the mediation/PC to allow the mediation/PC process to be productive. PCs have the option of meeting with either party separately if that meeting will be utilized to promote forward movement in the PC process.

Comment. A mediator /PC should not convene the mediation/PC if the mediator/PC has reason to believe that a *pro se* party fails to understand that the mediator/PC is not providing legal representation for the *pro se* party. In connection *with pro se* parties, see also Guidelines #9,11 and 13 and associated comments below.

8. Confidentiality. A mediator/PC should not reveal information made available in the mediation/PC process, which information is privileged and confidential, unless the affected parties agree otherwise or as may be required by law.

Comment (a). A mediator/PC should not permit recordings or transcripts to be made of mediation/PC proceedings.

Comment (b). A mediator/PC should maintain confidentiality in the storage and disposal of records and should render anonymous all identifying information when materials are used for research, educational or other informational purposes.

Comment (c). Unless authorized by the disclosing party, a mediator/PC should not disclose to the other parties information given in confidence by the disclosing party and should maintain confidentiality with respect to communications relating to the subject matter of the dispute. The mediator/PC should report to the court whether or not the mediation/PC occurred, and that the mediation/PC either resulted in a settlement or an impasse, or that the mediation /PC was either recessed or rescheduled. *Please note – the only report that goes to the court from a parenting coordinator states whether or not parenting coordination needs to continue. The frequency of that report is requested in the order for parenting coordination.*

Comment (d). In certain instances, applicable law may require disclosure of information revealed in the mediation/PC process. For example, the Texas Family Code may require a mediator/PC to disclose child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. If confidential information is disclosed, the mediator/PC should advise the parties that disclosure is required and will be made.

9. Impartiality. A mediator/PC should be impartial toward all parties.

Comment. If a mediator or the parties find that the mediator's/PC's impartiality has been compromised, the mediator/PC should offer to withdraw from the mediation/PC process. Impartiality means freedom from favoritism or bias in word, action, and appearance; it implies a commitment to aid all parties in reaching a settlement.

10. Disclosure and Exchange of Information. A mediator/PC should encourage the disclosure of information and should assist the parties in considering the benefits, risks, and the alternatives available to them.

11. Professional Advice. A mediator/PC should not give legal or other professional advice to the parties.

Comment (a). In appropriate circumstances, a mediator/PC should encourage the parties to seek legal, financial, tax or other professional advice before, during or after the mediation/PC process.

Comment (b). A mediator/PC should explain generally to *pro se* parties that there may be risks in proceeding without independent counsel or other professional advisors.

12. No Judicial Action Taken. A person serving as a mediator/PC generally should not subsequently serve as a judge, master, guardian ad litem, or in any other judicial or quasi-judicial capacity in matters that are the subject of the mediation/PC.

Comment. It is generally inappropriate for a mediator/PC to serve in a judicial or quasi-judicial capacity in a matter in which the mediator/PC has had communications with one or more parties without all other parties present. For example, an attorney-mediator/PC who has served as a mediator/PC in a pending litigation should not subsequently serve in the same case as a special master, guardian ad litem, or in any other judicial or quasi-judicial capacity with binding decision-making authority. Notwithstanding the foregoing, where an impasse has been declared at the conclusion of a mediation/PC, the mediator/PC if requested and agreed to by all parties, may serve as the arbitrator in a binding arbitration of the dispute, or as a third-party neutral in any other alternative dispute proceeding, so long as the mediator/PC believes nothing learned during private conferences with any party to the mediation/PC will bias the mediator/PC or will unfairly influence the mediator's/PC's decisions while acting in the mediator's /PC's subsequent capacity. *Please note, PC's cannot serve as an arbitrator. No agreements are binding unless signed by both parents and submitted to both party's attorney to incorporate into an order signed by the court in a form that meets applicable requirements as outlined in Section 153.6082.*

13. Termination of Mediation Session. A mediator/PC should postpone, recess, or terminate the mediation/PC process if it is apparent to the mediator/PC that the case is inappropriate for mediation/PC or one or more of the parties are unwilling or unable to participate meaningfully in the mediation/PC process.

14. Agreements in Writing. A mediator/PC should encourage the parties to reduce all settlement agreements to writing.

15. Mediator's Relationship with the Judiciary. A mediator/PC should avoid the appearance of impropriety in the mediator's/PC's relationship with a member of the judiciary or the court staff with regard to appointments or referrals to mediation/PC.

PROFESSIONAL CODE OF ETHICS FOR FAMILY LIFE EDUCATORS

A professional code of ethics provides guidelines when confronted with challenging and difficult ethical dilemmas. They serve notice to the public, and profession, as to the principles and values that will guide decision making under such circumstances. The ethical principles put forth in this Code of Ethics are standards of conduct which Family Life Educators consider in ethical and professional decision-making.

I. Relationships with Parents and Families

- I will be aware of the impact/power we have on parents and family relations.
- I will strive to understand families as complex, interactive systems where parents have the primary responsibility as educators, nurturers and limit-setters for their children.
- I will respect cultural beliefs, back-grounds and differences and engage in practice that is sensitive to the diversity of child-rearing values and goals.
- I will help parents and other family members recognize their strengths and work with them to set goals for themselves, their children, and others.
- I will respect and accept parents and other family members for who they are, recognizing their developmental level and circumstances.
- I will support and challenge parents to continue to grow and learn about parenting and their child's development.
- I will communicate respectfully and clearly with all family members.
- I will communicate openly and truthfully about the nature and extent of services provided.
- I will support diverse family values by acknowledging and examining alternative parenting practices that support healthy family relationships.
- I will include parents/other family members as partners in problem solving and decision-making related to program design and implementation.
- I will be proactive in stating child guidance principles and encourage non-violent child rearing.
- I will create data privacy and confidentiality guidelines respectful of family members and protective of their legal rights.
- I will provide a program environment that is safe and nurturing to all family members.
- I will ensure that all family members have access to and are encouraged to participate in family education.
- I will support family members as they make decisions about the use of resources to best meet family needs.
- I will support healthy interpersonal relationships among all family members.
- I will encourage family members to explore their values and promote healthy sexuality in their family.

II. Relationships with Children and Youth

- I will treat children and youth with respect and sensitivity to their needs and rights as developing persons.
- I will strive to understand children and youth in the context of their families.
- I will do no harm to children and youth and insist on the same from others.
- I will advocate for children and youth and their best interest at the same time that we work with the parents and other family members.
- I will provide environments that are respectful of children and youth and sensitive to their developmental and individual needs.

- I will support the right of all children and youth to have access to quality education, health and community resources.

III. Relationships with Colleagues and the Profession

- I will value and promote diversity in staff.
- I will provide staff with policies and support systems for addressing difficult situations with family members, colleagues and others.
- I will follow data privacy policies that meet legal standards and are based on respect for family members.
- I will follow the mandatory reporting of abusive family behavior in a respectful and prudent manner.
- I will define our role as parent and family life educators and practice within our level of competence.
- I will recognize the difference between personal and professional values in our professional interactions.
- I will support the ongoing development of a knowledge base that guides us towards ethical and effective practice.
- I will be committed to ongoing professional development to enhance our knowledge and skills.

IV. Relationships with Community/Society

- I will be knowledgeable about community resources and make and accept informed, appropriate referrals.
- I will be aware of the boundaries of our practice and know when and how to use other community resources for the benefit of family members.
- I will communicate clearly and cooperate with other programs/agencies in order to best meet family needs.
- I will advocate for laws and policies that reflect our changing knowledge base and the best interest of parents, families and communities.
- I will respect and uphold laws and regulations that pertain to our practice as parent and family life educators and offer expertise to legal authorities based on professional knowledge.

By my signature below, I verify that I have read the Ethical Principles for Mediators and the Code of Ethics for Certified Family Life Educators and that they will guide my professional practice as a CFLE-PC

Print Name

Date

Signature

This signed document must be submitted along with proof of trainings and certification prior to approval from the TCFR Review Board.

ETHICAL GUIDELINES OUTLINED IN PC SERVICES AGREEMENT

Key ethical areas that should be outlined in each CFLE-PC's services agreement ("PC Services Agreement") and communicated directly and openly with clients and their attorneys include:

Informed Consent

Appropriate informed consent is obtained from the participants in a parenting coordination case and should be clearly and directly communicated in the PC Services Agreement. The content of the informed consent should include a description of parenting coordination and specific duties of the PC according to the Texas Family Code as well as additional duties set forth in the order or agreed upon by the clients. The clients should also be informed of their rights to confidentiality (see below) and the limits of confidentiality (see below) as a result of giving their informed consent.

Confidentiality

Consistent with both the Ethical Guidelines for Mediators (and as of September 1, 2009 Parenting Coordinators) and the CFLE Code of Ethics, confidentiality is an ethical and legal practice of a professional to protect client communication, information, identity, and records of diagnosis, evaluation and plans that are created or maintained by a professional. Adherence of confidentiality will be governed by the Texas Mental Health and Safety code (Chapter 611) and other applicable laws related to mental health records and communication.

Also consistent with the parenting coordination statute under the Texas Family Code, parenting coordination is clearly identified as a conciliatory form of Alternative Dispute Resolution ("ADR") which is also confidential. Therefore, a CFLE-PC shall maintain confidentiality regarding the information shared during the parenting coordination process, except as set forth under "Exceptions to Confidentiality" or by written agreement of the respective parties.

Exceptions to confidentiality include the following circumstances:

- When participants sign a written release of information for a specified purpose and recipient (such as the participants' attorneys), information shall be disclosed by the CFLE-PC unless disclosure is judged by the CFLE-PC to be harmful to any of parenting coordination participant, including the children.
- When child abuse or neglect is suspected, a report shall be made to the Child Protective Services ("CPS") Division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, other state agencies, or local/state law enforcement officers.
- When a participant or a member of the family is a danger to self or others, a report shall be made to the appropriate authorities.
- When required by law such as the requirement under the parenting coordination statute that a written report be submitted to the court, a report shall be filed with the court as often as ordered stating only whether or not the parenting coordination should continue.
- When court ordered to allow confidential information into the litigation process following an in-camera review by the judge in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act ("HIPAA"), information shall be provided to the court.
- When a complaint has been filed with the CFLE's certification board, information shall be provided as required or deemed necessary in order to respond to the complaint.
- When required by management audits, financial audits, program evaluations, or research (by participant permission only), in accordance with Texas Health and Safety Code Section 611.004(a)(3).

Relationships with Other Involved Professionals

The “Relationships with Involved Professionals” section of the PC Services Agreement should address, at a minimum, the following areas:

- Confidentiality
- Release of information
- Boundaries with involved professionals

Confidentiality

As discussed above, the parenting coordination process is confidential. No information obtained during the parenting coordination process will be disclosed without a written release of information or in accordance with other “Exceptions to Confidentiality” defined above.

Release of Information

Upon receipt of a written release of information, information will be shared with individuals indicated on the release, but only to the extent necessary to achieve the purpose of consultation. Information will not be shared, even with consent, if it is judged by the CFLE-PC to be harmful to any of the clients, including the children, or the parenting coordination process and its intent under the Texas statute, i.e. to assist the parents in resolving parenting issues outside of the litigation process.

Boundaries with Involved Professionals

Boundaries with other professionals involved with participants including attorneys, therapists, custody evaluators, and financial advisors will be maintained by the CFLE-PC in order to protect the integrity of the parenting coordination process. Other professionals will be utilized to the extent that they are helpful to the process and its intent under the Texas statute, i.e. to assist participants in resolving parenting issues outside of the litigation process.

Termination of Parenting Coordination Services

The “Termination of Parenting Coordination Services” section of the PC Services Agreement should address a specific plan for terminating:

Reasons for Termination

The reasons for termination of the parenting coordination process should be specific, for example:

- Either party withdraws with good cause
- Goals are attained
- The CFLE-PC is unable to help participants
- Other services are necessary
- Family violence risk is determined
- Nonpayment of fees

Referrals

A plan for referring to another PC should be described in the event that the CFLE-PC is unable to assist the parenting coordination participants. The CFLE-PC should also determine what their participation will be in helping with the transfer to a new PC and whether or not they will share records, consult with the new PC, and/or charge for consulting time.

A plan should also be outlined for referrals to other professionals when necessary for individual therapy, evaluation, or other professional services.

Financial arrangements

The amount of fees and responsibility for payment should be outlined in the PC Services Agreement as agreed to by the parenting coordination clients and their attorneys or by court order. Once parenting coordination services begin, the CFLE-PC will provide reasonable notice of any changes in fees or other charges.

In addition:

- CFLE-PCs refrain from accepting goods and services from clients in return for services rendered.
- CFLE-PCs do not offer or accept kickbacks, rebates, bonuses, or other remuneration for referrals from attorneys or other professionals.
- CFLE-PCs give reasonable notice to clients with unpaid balances of their intent to seek collection by agency or legal recourse. When such action is taken, CFLE-PCs will not disclose personal information.

Advertising Parenting Coordination Services

CFLE-PCs engage in appropriate informational activities, including those that enable the public, referral sources, or others to choose professional services on an informed basis. Specifically, they:

- Accurately represent their competencies, education, training, and experience relevant to their practice of family life education and parenting coordination.
- Ensure that advertisements and publications in any media (such as directories, announcements, business cards, newspapers, radio, television, Internet, and facsimiles) convey information that is necessary for attorneys, judges, and others to make an appropriate selection of them as parenting coordinators.
- Do not use any professional identification (such as a business card, office sign, letterhead, Internet, or telephone or association directory listing) if it includes a statement or claim that is false, fraudulent, misleading, or deceptive.
- Claim as evidence only those earned degrees: (a) from institutions accredited by regional accreditation sources recognized by the United States Department of Education, (b) from institutions recognized by states or provinces that license or certify marriage and family therapists, or (c) from equivalent foreign institutions.
- Correct, wherever possible, false, misleading, or inaccurate information and representations made by others concerning qualifications, services, or products.
- Do not represent themselves as providing parenting coordination and/or other specialized services unless they have the appropriate education, training, or supervised experience.

APPENDIX A
CFLE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to receive Full Certification as a Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE), applicants must document sufficient family life education work experience activity. The number of hours of work experience needed varies depending upon the level and relevance of the applicant's degree.

Requirements for Full Certification	Bachelor's Degree	Master's or Ph.D. Degree
Family Degree	3,200 hours work experience	1,600 hours work experience
Non-family Degree	4,800 hours work experience	

Family Life Education Work Experience – NCFR considers family life education work experience to be employment that involves **prevention and education** for individuals and families relevant to the ten FLE content areas. Volunteer work may be considered but it should be supported with some kind of training or formal preparation. Employment is typically demonstrated through curriculum and material development, and the development or presentation of workshops, courses or programs involving life skills; i.e. communication, parenting, financial management, sexuality, etc. Family life education can also involve research program administration and policy development. Applicants who work in a non-traditional family life education setting, but have incorporated family life education methods, and/or a preventive and educational approach into their work, can provide clarification as to how this is done. (*An example might be someone who works in a nursing home and has developed a series of classes and support materials for residents and family members about coping with change, making decisions, and/or managing assets.*) Each work experience should be relevant to at least one of the ten content areas. At least two content areas should be addressed throughout the work experiences; not all experiences should focus solely on parent education or sex education, for example.

Relevant work experiences should have occurred within the past five years. Experience earned before graduation can be used, but the majority of the work experience should be earned post graduation. Experience used during an internship can be used but must be supported with other work experiences.

Recertification

In order to maintain the CFLE designation you must submit evidence of 100 hours of continuing education activity every five years. Continuing education includes additional academic courses completed, attendance at conferences, seminars, workshops and trainings, and work experiences that are new or different from those included in your original CFLE application, i.e. development and/or teaching of a new course/program, etc.

Requirements for Re-certification

- A. Active involvement in family education over the five-year period.
- B. Participation in continuing education activities.
 - 1. The CFLE must accrue a total of 10 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) or 100 Contact Hours within the five-year period following certification. One CEU = 10 Contact Hours. One Contact Hour is defined as 60 minutes in an approved learning experience. Ten CEUs = 100 Contact Hours. The amount of continuing education credit to be obtained in any one year is the decision of the individual.
 - 2. Continuing education credits must be earned through Academic Preparation, Professional Development, and/or Work Experience (See II). Credits must be earned in at least two of these

areas. For example, you may not earn all 10 CEUs by attending only professional conferences (Professional Development), or only through your Work Experience, or only through courses attended (Academic Preparation).

3. Continuing education activities must cover at least two of the ten Family Life Substance Areas. The content areas in which credit for continuing education may be received are the same as those established for the certification program:

1. Families in Society
2. Internal Dynamics of Families
3. Human Growth and Development
4. Human Sexuality
5. Interpersonal Relationships
6. Family Resource Management
7. Parent Education and Guidance
8. Family Law and Public Policy
9. Ethics
10. FLE Methodology

4. Continuing education activities must **not** be part of one's normal work responsibilities. For example, credit **would not** be given for the instruction of a course or workshop that has been taught before or was being taught at the time of the original certification. Credit **would be** given, *one time only*, for a new course, etc. which was developed and/or presented after the person was certified by NCFR or for a previously-taught course which has been substantially revised.

APPENDIX B

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING OF CFLE-PCS

*Adapted from Appendix A of Guidelines for Parenting Coordination
Developed by The AFCC Task Force on Parenting Coordination May 2005*

A Parenting Coordinator (“PC”) should have training in each of the following subject areas as reflected in the modules below. It is anticipated that mental health and legal professionals will have acquired some of the knowledge and experience in the competency areas listed, particularly in Section II, and in mediation training. Training programs may want to accommodate different levels of prior training and experience by offering training in these four modules and developing a process for exempting certain professionals from any of the modules where competency is established. Individual jurisdictions should set guidelines, approve trainings, and assign trainers to ensure that candidates can demonstrate minimum competencies in order to begin practice, and should require the completion of scheduled follow up trainings to achieve mastery within a reasonable amount of time. Individual jurisdictions and provinces might consider developing mentoring programs to provide consultation and support for beginning “PCs” to reinforce and develop the skills that are covered in the recommended subject areas.

Module 1: The Parenting Coordination Process

- A. The various functions of the PC
- B. Limitations of the parenting coordination process ...
- C. Professional guidelines of practice for PCs
 - 1. The interplay between other professional guidelines and professional practice guidelines and local/state guidelines for court-appointed PCs
 - 2. The potential for conflict of interest of the PC and the people to whom parenting coordination services are offered
- D. Issues that are appropriate and not appropriate for parenting coordination
- E. Characteristics of individuals who are appropriate and not appropriate to participate in the parenting coordination process
 - 1. Appropriate courses of action when confronted with substance abuse during the parenting coordination process
 - 2. Screening for domestic violence and appropriate courses of action when confronted with domestic violence during the parenting coordination process
 - 3. The effect of domestic violence on parents involved in the parenting coordination process
 - 4. Situations in which the PC should suggest that the parties contact the supervising judicial officer, independent legal counsel, postpone or cancel the parenting coordination session, suspend the parenting coordination process, or refer the parties to other resources
- F. When to refer parties to services for child protection or elder abuse, and the issue of confidentiality as it applies to each
- G. Special needs of the *pro se* or *pro per* party

Module 2: Family Dynamics in Separation and Divorce

- A. Psychological Issues in Separation and Divorce and Family Dynamics
 - 1. The impact divorce has on individuals and on family dynamics and the implications for the parenting coordination process
 - 2. Useful psychological research and theories applicable to the intervention for high conflict families
 - 3. How emotions impact on divorce issues and on a party’s ability to participate effectively in the parenting coordination process.
 - 4. Sources of divorce/separation impasses, including parental behaviors associated with personality disorders, and the related implications
 - 5. How to promote awareness by the parties of the interests of persons affected by actual or

- potential agreements, who are not represented during the parenting coordination process
- a. The impact of grandparents, step-parents and significant others on family systems and the parenting coordination process
 - b. Situations in which participation of non-parties (e.g., grandparents, children, new spouses) may be necessary in the parenting coordination process
- B. Issues concerning the needs of children in the context of divorce
1. The needs and adjustment of children and the effect of divorce on their relationships with their mother, father, step-families, siblings and others in the family relationship
 2. Child(ren)'s developmental stages and how they relate to divorce and parenting arrangements
 3. The impact the parenting coordination process can have on the children's well-being and behavior
 4. When and how to involve children in the parenting coordination process
 5. Indicators of child abuse and/or neglect and the process and duty to report allegations of child abuse and/or neglect
- C. Dealing with high conflict parents
1. The impact of parental conflict and appropriate parenting on children's well-being
 2. The dynamics of child alignments, estrangements and alienation
 3. Various parenting arrangements that consider the needs of the child(ren) and each parent's capacity to parent, including modifications for high conflict situations
- D. Dealing with domestic violence issues
1. The different research-based types of domestic violence, including conflict-instigated violence, violence involving power, control, and coercion (often referred to as male battering), female violence, and separation-engendered violence
 2. The unique problems and inherent dangers presented by domestic violence of all types in terms of parental contacts, and the need for safe PC procedures and child exchanges
 3. The importance of monitoring compliance with the parenting plan...
 4. The psychological impact of domestic violence on child and adolescent development
- E. The different co-parenting relationships of cooperative, parallel, and conflicted parenting

Module 3: Parenting Coordination Techniques and Issues

- A. Structuring the parenting coordination process
1. The initial session and preparing the parties for the process
 2. Scheduling the time and location, and establishing the format of each conference and focusing discussion
 3. Structuring and managing the discussion, maintaining control of the sessions, and utilizing appropriate case management skills
 4. Managing separate sessions, telephonic and e-mail communication
 5. Maintaining appropriate records and documentation as a PC
- B. The PC's informed consent, including limits on confidentiality
- C. The PC's service contract and fee allocation
- D. The role of the parenting plan in the parenting coordination process, including how to develop, monitor and modify a parenting plan
- E. The characteristics that enhance or undermine the effectiveness of the PC including, but not limited to: demonstrating empathy, building rapport, establishing trust, setting a cooperative tone, sympathetic listening and questioning, empowering the parties, remaining non-judgmental, language use, and non-verbal communication skills
- F. Awareness of personal biases, prejudices and styles that are the product of one's background and personal experiences that may affect the parenting coordination process
- G. Socio-economic, cultural, racial, ethnic, language, age, gender, religious, sexual orientation and disability issues, which may arise and/or affect the parties' negotiation styles, ability or willingness to engage in the parenting coordination process
- H. Building on partial agreements including when and how to switch between dispute resolution processes

- I. Arbitration procedures, appropriate arbitration decisions, and writing and filing arbitration decisions/awards
- J. Appropriate techniques for handling difficult situations
- K. Appropriate boundaries of a PC
 - 1. Safety procedures for those participating in the parenting coordination process
 - 2. Office safety policies and working with clients having current restraining and protective orders
 - 3. Establishing appropriate limits for client demands
- L. When and how to use outside experts effectively
 - 1. How to assist the parties in deciding on appropriate community resources
 - 2. Developing a list of social service resources, including those for domestic violence situations
- M. The impact of high conflict client behavior on the parenting coordination process and the PC and avoiding professional burn-out
- N. Reasons for a PC to decline an appointment, withdraw or request appropriate assistance including, but not limited to, when the facts and circumstances of the case are beyond the PC's skill or experience
- O. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and strategies for handling situations when faced with disability issues or special needs

Module 4: Court Specific Parenting Coordination Procedures

- A. The PC's responsibility to the court
- B. Knowledge of and adherence to jurisdiction-specific qualifications for a PC
- C. Mentorship and certification requirements, if applicable
- D. Local/state/province family law as it may pertain to the parenting coordination process
 - 1. The state statute and/or rule governing family parenting coordination
 - 2. The difference between neutrality and impartiality as it applies to parenting coordination and the ability to demonstrate each appropriately
 - 3. Legal concepts as they relate to the parenting coordination process including, but not limited to: geographic relocation, equitable distribution, child support, law of modification, parenting time adjustment, law of relocation, law of due process, law of ex parte communication, and law of privilege
 - 4. The statutory constraints of parenting coordination where domestic violence exists and/or protective orders are in place
- E. How and when the PC should interface with the court system
 - 1. The appointment and discharge processes of the PC
 - 2. The importance of a court designation to the parenting coordination process
 - 3. The ethical constraints on confidentiality and both in relation to the entire parenting coordination process and separate sessions within the process
- F. Forms utilized in local courts pertaining to parenting coordination and local court procedures
- G. How to work with legal, mental health and other professional disciplines, and promote cooperation among those dealing with the family
- H. When and how to utilize a qualified expert and/or a team approach to best serve the parties in the parenting coordination process
- I. The grievance procedure contained in the local/state rules for PCs, if any
- J. Possible ethical dilemmas that may confront a PC and how to avoid them

Domestic Violence Training: The need for additional and/or separate training on domestic violence should continue to be considered in setting up a PC training program.