

Provisions for Serving as a Treating Clinician for Caretakers Involved in Domestic Relations, Dependency, or Criminal Litigation

Position Statement

Client(s) Name:

DOB:

As a clinician working at the intersection of domestic relations and counseling, it is essential that the differences in the roles of Treating Clinician and Expert be clarified with a presenting family at the outset of evaluation and treatment. It is imperative for you to know that it is my opinion, for treatment to be effective, therapy needs to be conducted in a confidential environment where family members can work productively on personal material. When caretakers bring their children for assessment and treatment of psychological symptoms, or specific issues, it is preferable that both parents consent to treatment knowing that the role of the clinician is as the family or child therapist and not as an expert witness.

- In the capacity of treating clinician, I will do my best to keep case material confidential within the limits of the law.
- As the treating clinician, I will not offer opinions in court regarding custody or visitation of the children, for that is the realm of an expert witness, not a treating clinician.
- I will not testify in court for any reasons pertaining to mental health issues/challenges, and/or cases of abuse towards a minor.
- At my discretion, I may communicate with a Parenting Coordinator and/or a Child Custody Evaluator regarding general issues pertinent to working with children/adolescents, but I refrain from discussing material originating in the therapeutic/clinical hour. *Exceptions may be made with informed consent by the parties on a case by case basis.

In signing this agreement, I _____, acknowledge that the treating clinician, Stacey Bruen, MC, NCC, LPC, has discussed with me the differences between the roles of treating clinician and expert witness, and *I agree not to ask the treating clinician to testify or provide opinions in a Court of Law regarding the custody, visitation, or access to the children in this case or for cases pertaining to mental health challenges and/or abuse type situations.* I understand the boundary between treating clinician and expert is established so that the treating clinician may maintain the integrity of the therapeutic relationships established through therapy.

Signed _____ Dated _____