



PREPARED FOR:
HENNEPIN COUNTY
JOINT COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

BY THE HENNEPIN COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS FAMILY COURT SERVICES
JUNE 3, 2004

FAMILY COURT EARLY CASE MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES

The Ad Hoc Work Group on Family Court Early Case Management recommends the following best practices guidelines for voluntarily implementing pilot projects in the First, Second, Fourth, Cass County in the Ninth and the Tenth Judicial Districts:

1. This pilot project is designed to expedite resolution of litigation, reduce acrimony among the parties, reduce costs to family court litigants by peacefully resolving disputes, and reduce the number of appeals and post judgment motions to modify decrees.
5. Pilot Courts should expand their awareness of and recommend services that support the early case management process and reduce the number of post-decree disputes and motions for relief. (Examples include (a) www.ourfamilywizard.com <<http://www.ourfamilywizard.com/>> and (b) use of a "Ready Response" Family Court Services Representative, who is available on short notice to help resolve fact issues.)
6. Pilot Courts should attempt to implement as many of these early case management best practices guidelines as possible consistent with the available district court resources."^{*}
^{*}Minnesota. The Hennepin County Department of Community Corrections Family Court Services. Family Court Early Case Management Best Practices Recommended Guidelines. Hennepin County: State Of Minnesota, 2004.

To view the full list of recommended guidelines ordered by Kathleen Blatz of the Minnesota Supreme Court visit the link below:

http://www.mncourts.gov/Documents/2/Public/Family_Court/ECM/Chief_Justice_Blatz-Order_for_Family_ECM_Pilot_Project_FINAL_4.21.04.doc

Order Language Packet

The following pages contain actual order language used by judges in several states when mandating parents to use the OurFamilyWizard® website.

Table of Contents:

- 1) Examples of court orders to use the OurFamilyWizard® website.
- 2) Family Court Early Case Management Best Practices Recommended Guidelines
Recommends the OurFamilyWizard® website to reduce post-decree disputes and motions.

Common order language

The Parties shall communicate regarding their children via www.Ourfamilywizard.com. The parties are ordered to visit the website and each enroll in the program for at least a one-year subscription not later than 10 calendar days from today. The parties shall thereafter conduct all communications regarding shared parenting matters using the website's features.

The parties shall utilize the Messaging feature only when information cannot be conveyed in the Calendar, Expense, and Info Bank features.

The parties shall not communicate by telephone or text messaging except regarding matters of an emergency nature regarding a child that must be acted upon in less than 48 hours. In the case of such an emergency the subject and general content of any such communication shall be memorialized by a Journal entry in the Calendar feature.

The Court orders the parties to utilize the OFWpay expense feature to record and formalize all potentially reimbursable expenses in order to mitigate the necessity to litigate in the future over such matters. An electronic file of the receipt for payment must be attached to each request or record. Each parent shall preserve the original of any scanned or photographed document posted.

All parents entries shall be viewable via a Professional Account to both parties' attorney(s) of record and the (Judge / Commissioner / Minor's Counsel/ Parent Coordinator/ Special Masters /GAL) assigned.

Neither party shall fail to renew the annual subscription to the website without a signed and filed stipulation by both parties or a court order.

Additional order suggestions

The parties are ordered to each establish a parent account at www.OurFamilyWizard.com. Each shall enroll in the program for a one-year subscription not later than June 30, 2012 by completing the online sign up process or calling the toll free number provided on the contact us page.

The parties shall thereafter not e-mail, text, or telephone, but shall post all communication exclusively on the website. They shall communicate by telephone only in matters of emergency regarding the child that must be acted upon in less than 24 hours.

The parties shall use the Calendar, Info Bank, and Expense features and reserve the Message feature for information the others do not accommodate. If an entry requires a response the receiving parent shall respond within 48 hours unless the entry itself indicates a longer time frame is acceptable.

All parties shall elect to receive text or email alerts about new activity using the Daily Digest or On Action option.

Both parties shall authorize Professional Access to the Guardian Ad-Litem using the "Permission for Professional Access" document.

The utilization of the "OurFamilyWizard" website shall not be deemed as a per se violation of the existing Protection from Abuse Order filed at No. ---- of ----dated November, 2010 and in effect until November, 2011.

Although no issues regarding health reimbursements are presently before the court, **the court orders the parties to** take advantage of the Expense tools, utilizing OFWpay, on the website to have a future record of all potentially reimbursable expenses in order to mitigate the necessity to litigate in the future over such matters.

This Order of Court shall remain in full force and effect until further Order of Court.