

Forensic Child Custody Evaluator
First Judicial Circuit
(Worcester, Wicomico, Somerset & Dorchester County Circuit Courts)

Starting Salary Range \$63,000.00 - \$72,000.00 (full-benefits)
(Full-Time Position – Monday – Friday; 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL FILLED

SUMMARY

This professional position is responsible for conducting all Court Ordered Forensic Child Custody Evaluations in the First Judicial Circuit. This position is an appointed, at-will position that serves at the pleasure of the Circuit Court Judges and reports directly to the Administrative Judge of Worcester County. The position's primary work location will be at the Circuit Court for Worcester County and may include partial telework. The position will require travel to the four jurisdictions as is necessary. The position requires conducting psycho-social interviews, preparing written reports with specific recommendations as to custody and/or visitation in contested family law cases, testifying in contested cases and may include conducting home visits.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

By formal training or work experience, the Custody Evaluator should have a working understanding of the complexities of the divorce process, and an understanding of many issues, (including legal, social, familial and cultural) involved in custody and visitation issues. Additionally, the Custody Evaluator shall be required to become familiar with the statutes and case law governing child custody and its legal proceedings.

- Conduct interviews with parents and children;
- Complete Collateral Contacts within Evaluations;
- Draft Parenting Plans when indicated;
- Give an Oral report to the Court when indicated;
- Give Testimony in Court when required;
- Conduct conferences with parties and attorneys when indicated;
- Conduct follow up sessions when indicated;
- Report monthly statistics;
- Attend meetings with Family Services Coordinator's as needed
- Attend all mandatory Trainings;
- Maintain all requirements of their profession, licensure, etc;

The role of the evaluator is to provide the Court with a psychosocial assessment of the family that identifies children's needs and parenting strengths and weaknesses and provides the Court with Parenting Plan recommendations. The custody evaluation model as practiced is a 5-interview session model.

The evaluator is expected to systemically conceptualize family dynamics; identify children's developmental needs (intellectual, psychological, social and physical); identify parenting strengths and liabilities, including identifying and/or ruling out underlying psychopathology that compromises parenting.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:

- Regular, punctual, and reliable attendance is required. Must have the ability to work independently;
- Personable, flexible, high-energy person with a commitment to working with Family Court litigants;
- Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with the Judges, Magistrates, and Court personnel;
- Ability to utilize conflict resolution skills;
- Ability to manage heightened emotional states (including anger, rage, depression, anxiety);
- Ability to manage complex family systems (including stepfamilies and extended families);
- Ability to manage complex multidisciplinary case management services;
- Strong organizational and problem-solving skills
- Ability to work with sensitive personal information and maintain appropriate confidentiality;
- Ability to maintain a professional relationship with community-based organizations and service providers;
- Ability to effectively access and utilize automated information systems and other computerized programs;
- Knowledge of available service providers and service delivery system;
- Knowledge of human behavior, human growth and development, interviewing techniques, and social work principles and methods;
- Knowledge of mental health and substance abuse disorders;
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with co-workers, the general public and persons from all socio-economic backgrounds;

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

A custody evaluator shall be one of the following:

- a. A Maryland licensed psychologist or a psychologist with an equivalent level of licensure in any other state;
- b. A Maryland licensed certified social worker-clinical or a clinical social worker with an equivalent level of licensure in any other state;

- c. A Maryland licensed clinical professional counselor or a clinical professional counselor with an equivalent level of licensure in any other state.
 - d. A Maryland licensed clinical marriage and family therapist or a clinical marriage and family therapist with an equivalent level of licensure in any other state; or
 - e. A physician licensed in any State who is board-certified in psychiatry or has completed a psychiatry residency accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education or a successor to that Council;
- *Additional Training and Experience.* In addition to complying with the continuing education requirements of his or her field, a custody evaluator shall have training or experience in observing or performing custody evaluations and shall have current knowledge in the following areas:
 - (A) domestic violence;
 - (B) child neglect and abuse;
 - (C) family conflict and dynamics;
 - (D) child and adult development; and
 - (E) impact of divorce and separation on children and adults.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

Must be able to effectively communicate and interact with other employees and the public through the use of the telephone and personal contact. Physical ability to effectively use and operate various items of office related equipment. Must have valid driver's license.

***THIS POSITION IS GRANT-FUNDED BY THE STATE (ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS) AND ADMINISTERED AS A PASS-THROUGH BY THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR WORCESTER COUNTY**

For consideration of hire, please send resume and cover letter via e-mail to the address below and complete a Worcester County application form available online: [Worcester County Employment](#),

Department of Human Resources,
Worcester County Government Center,
Attn: Ann Hankins,
1 West Market Street, Room 1301,
Snow Hill, MD 21863,

Fax: 410-632-5614, or e-mail: ahankins@co.worcester.md.us.