

## Truth about WA state Family Court

### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE FAMILY COURT SYSTEM THERE IS NO FAMILY COURT IN WASHINGTON STATE

All domestic relations cases are heard in Superior Court and not even in front of a real Judge. All cases are first heard by Commissioners (appointed attorneys). This poses many serious problems.

- The Superior Court gets bogged down with too many cases -- leaving too little time for complicated divorce issues.
- The Judges/Commissioners are not specialized in the very complicated field of family law -- leaving them to rely on Family Court Services ("FCS") and a list of unqualified, unsupervised counselors and evaluators, who are running a made for profit business.
- Commissioners are not Judges and are not elected -- leaving us no way to get rid of them if they are incompetent, bias, or corrupt.

- You seldom end up in front of the same Commissioner. Therefore, they do not know the history of your case.

Many factions of this system are now relying on made for profit businesses. This introduces serious conflicts. For example:

- DV Program (needed or not they make \$\$\$);
- Assessment counselors (find a problem which requires Treatment = \$\$\$)
- Evaluators (drag out Evaluations = \$\$\$). You may ask what the DV (Domestic Violence) program has to do with Family Court? Sadly, it is commonly used by vindictive parents to gain the upper hand in custody disputes. Once this route is taken, the wheels of a very bias system are set in motion. There are very few ways out. Often the vindictive parent has no idea what they are getting themselves into. When a vindictive parent uses this tactic, they simply have to file for a Protection Order alleging that they are afraid of the other parent. The accuser is supplied an advocate by the State (the accused stands alone). This advocate supports the allegations and writes the Order for the Commissioner to sign. This Order will more then likely contain many restrictions and requirements for the accused. The case is then referred to FCS for and evaluation. FCS (to be on the safe side) has to believe the accuser, regardless of the evidence. Months later, the Protection Order (largely based on the FCS report) is granted for at least one year. The accused will more then likely have restricted visitation (even if the children are not a part of the Protection Order). This is done to prevent having to modify the parenting plan (due to the no contact order), which in itself is a long drug out process. Now the accused feels they must hire an attorney because they cannot have any direct contact with the accuser.

Some of the above problems have been recognized by the State and they have addressed the problem by implementing something resembling a Family Court -- Unified Family Court (UFC). However, because of the limited staff, they can only accept a small fraction of those who apply. If accepted into UFC, you will always be in front of the SAME JUDGE -- no more Commissioners. This Judge will KNOW YOUR CASE. The notification requirements change from 14 days to 6, (moving things along much faster). Also, you will not be rushed out of the court room because the Judge hears only one case at a time.

Sadly UFC will be relying on the same evaluator list, filled with unqualified evaluators in made for profit businesses. This will more then likely lead to the case being drug out for much longer then necessary, and the cost could be more then the families can bear. Putting more undue financial burden on the already broken family. You will now be caught up in a system of which there seems to be no way out.