

# Services for Family Court Cases in WA

---

## What is a Family Law Facilitator?

Some superior courts in Washington have facilitator programs to help you represent yourself in court. If you do not get help from a lawyer, you might be able to from a facilitator.

Facilitators help with family law cases (and guardianship, in King County). They are not lawyers. They **can** answer general questions and help with child support calculation. They **cannot**

- Give legal advice.
- Tell you how to fill out forms.

If you have general questions about local rules or filling out a form, start with the facilitator. Facilitator programs differ by county. They can

- sell forms for a fee
- tell you where to get forms online
- provide free “how-to” instructions
- send you instructions by mail or email

---

❖ Family Law Facilitators will not make a decision for you.

---

## What does the facilitator in my county do?

Contact the facilitator in the county where your case is filed (check the statewide directory [here](#)) to ask

- what services or classes they have
- can they help by phone or email

## Do I have to pay the facilitator?

Most charge a fee, some on a sliding scale. The fees are usually \$20 to \$40.

## What is a parenting seminar?

When your case involves child custody, you might have to take this. Some counties call it a **parent education workshop** or **parenting class**.

You must take the parenting seminar by a deadline and file proof (a certificate) of attendance with the court. You can only take the seminar from a court-approved provider. Check the local court’s website or ask the court clerk for provider names.

## Does everyone have to take the parenting seminar?

Maybe not. If you show good reasons not to, the court can waive (excuse) the requirement. Some **examples** of good cause:

- it is not in your child’s best interest
- your safety or your child’s safety is an issue

---

❖ If the court does NOT waive your attendance, and you do not take a seminar or delay doing it, it may negatively affect the final parenting plan.

---

Parenting seminar fees vary, about \$40 to \$60. Many counties use a sliding scale. If you have a serious financial hardship, read [Filing for Waiver of Your Filing Fee](#).

## Does my county require a parenting seminar?

These counties' rules do **not** address parenting seminars at the time of this writing. If you are responding to a case in one of them, ask the court clerk if they require a seminar:

- Adams
- Asotin
- Columbia
- Garfield
- Clark
- Gray Harbor
- Lincoln
- Mason
- Walla Walla

## What are the rules about parenting seminars?

The Washington statewide court rules are available at [www.courts.wa.gov/court\\_rules/](http://www.courts.wa.gov/court_rules/).

- Benton/Franklin - [LCR94.05W\(b\)](#)
- Chelan/Douglas - [LR94.04\(I\)](#)
- Clallam - [LCR95\(B\)](#)
- Ferry/Pend Oreille/Stevens - [LCR95.04.\(3\)](#)
- Grant - [LCR16A\(b\)](#)
- Island - [SPR94.08.2\(b\)](#)
- Jefferson - [LSPR95\(b\)](#)

- King - [LFLR13\(c\)\(2\)](#)
- Kitsap - [KCLFLR10\(c\)](#)
- Kittitas - [SPR94.04\(I\)\(2\)](#)
- Klickitat/Skamania - [Rule17\(II\)](#)
- Lewis - [LMPSR1.1\(A\)](#)
- Okanogan - [LSPR 94.94.02](#)
- Pacific - [LCR9\(B\)](#)
- Pierce - [PCLSPR94.05\(b\)](#)
- San Juan - [SPR94.08.2\(b\)](#)
- Skagit - [SCLSPR94.04.1\(b\)](#)
- Snohomish - [SCLSPR94.04\(d\)\(5\)\(B\)](#)
- Spokane - [LSPR94.03\(b\)](#)
- Thurston - [LSPR94.06\(b\)](#)
- Wahkiakum - [LCR9\(B\)](#)
- Whatcom - [WCSPR94.08\(d\)](#)
- Whitman - [WCLFLCR88\(b\)](#)
- Yakima - [LSPR94.04W\(G\)\(2\)](#)

## What are Family Law Orientations (FLO's)?

Some counties have these. An FLO gives you

- a summary of the court process
- info on resources available if you are representing yourself

---

❖ You do **not** have to go to the FLO at the same time as the other party.

---

The petitioner must serve notice of the orientation program with the Summons and Petition.

**In King County:** you must go to an FLO within 30 days of filing or service, whichever comes later, **if** both of these are true:

- You have a divorce, legal separation, or modification case.
- You do not have a lawyer.

**Exception:** you do not have to go if both of these are true:

- You live outside King County.
- It would be a hardship to go.

Even if the exception applies, you must read the Orientation Program materials and file a sworn statement that you have read them.

---

❖ Unmarried parents do not have to go to the FLO.

---

The King County local court rule about the FLO is [LFLR 20](#). [King County's Family Court website](#) has more info. Contact them at 206-296-9323 if you cannot go to the FLO.

**In Thurston County:** the petitioner must schedule the FLO for a date within 30 days of filing the petition. You must go **if** all of these are true:

- You have a divorce, legal separation, or dissolution of registered domestic partnership.
- Children are involved.
- You do not have a lawyer.

**Exception:** You do not have to go **if** you show a good reason. Having a lawyer excuses you from going to an FLO, but you must file a declaration that you will take a Parenting Seminar and go to mediation. The Thurston County Court Rule is [LSPR 94.11](#).

---

This publication provides general information concerning your rights and responsibilities. It is not intended as a substitute for specific legal advice.

This information is current as of August 2018.

© 2018 Northwest Justice Project — 1-888-201-1014

(Permission for copying and distribution granted to the Alliance for Equal Justice and to individuals for non-commercial purposes only.)