

United Way – Review Committee

Mediation Center of Charlottesville

March 7, 2011

1. Have you been in communication with CYFS, since both agencies provide similar services?

We have been in communication with CYFS in the past concerning our Co-Parenting Class. This is the only similar service provided by both agencies. CYFS teaches the Transparenting Curriculum and we have developed and had approved our own. CYFS offers a class in the evenings and we offer ours during the day twice monthly – once during the week and once on a weekend. By coordinating with CYFS we were mindful of differing schedules by the individuals that have need of this service and our goal was to cover all contingencies. We also charge the same fee and offer a sliding scale based on income. CYFS does not offer mediation. Co-Parenting class providers are selected and approved by the Supreme Court of VA

2. Please clarify the beneficiary count. Are only individuals counted?

The beneficiary count is based on individuals served.

3. Is there a sliding scale for fees? If so, how is it administered? Do you advertise the scale?

- There is a sliding scale for both Co-Parenting and Mediation Services. The fee for the Co-Parenting Class is \$50. The Supreme Court of VA has approved charging up to \$50. For the class. If the individual cannot afford the fee, we either reduce the fee or suggest that they apply to the Department of Social Services, if the class is court mandated. If DSS will not cover the fee we offer discounted fees. Individuals that pay even a nominal fee for the class have a better, more lasting experience. Our website and materials that promote this class contain the following language: “Reduced fees and some scholarships are available, based on income.” Every year we apply for Co-Parenting scholarships to cover these classes.
- Court ordered mediation is paid by the Supreme Court of Virginia - \$100 for each mediation ordered by the Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court with no fee paid by the clients. Only mediations that take place are reimbursed by the court. The large majority of the mediations that are part of our proposal are court ordered. Self-referred cases – those that we are asked to mediate by the couple themselves are offered on a sliding scale based on the income of the clients. This scale is not advertised, but is discussed in the intake process with the individuals.

4. Please breakout the FTEs for the program.

The mediation center has one FTE – the Executive Director. We also employ two part time employees (15 hours each weekly) as Service Coordinators. The Service Coordinators keep a registration list of individuals for the Co-Parenting Class – adding to the list as individuals call to register for the class. Each participant receives a reminder letter with directions in the week before the class. The Executive Director spends a minimal amount of time collecting material for the class and having the manuals printed. The class is taught by mediator volunteers. Our volunteers wrote the program, filed and received the proper accreditation from the court and present the program each month.

Mediation services are organized by the Service Coordinators. We receive a copy of each order from the court, call the participants to arrange a convenient date and time and provide an intake process for each individual which explains the mediation process and asks basic questions including asking about their goals for the mediation. The mediation services are provided by volunteers. The volunteer mediators are all certified by the Supreme Court. They review the case file, which includes the intake notes and lead the participants through a two hour mediation process. They write a Memorandum of Agreement if such agreement was reached and a copy is mailed to each participant and the guardian ad litem if one has been appointed. When accounting for staff time, we allot 45 minutes for each participant in the mediation.

5. Do you have a waiting list?

We do not have a waiting list at this time. We have an amazing number of volunteers who have completed the training and are willing to mediate the cases we have pending. We anticipate the number of cases for mediation will grow in the next few years and we may need to find a larger space so that we may accommodate concurrent mediation services.