

**WASHTENAW COUNTY TRIAL COURT
FAMILY DIVISION**

**TO: Plaintiff/Plaintiff's Attorney in new divorce cases
assigned to Judges Darlene A. O'Brien, Julia B.
Owdziej and Patrick J. Conlin**

**You have been designated to participate in a divorce mediation
program.**

**This packet contains the Notice, Order and a list of mediation
resources you need to proceed.**

**These materials should answer questions you may have about this
program. Please read them carefully upon receipt.**

**If you still have questions after reading these materials, please
direct them to the office of the Judge assigned to your case:**

**Hon. Darlene A. O'Brien
101 E. Huron, Rm 208
P.O. Box 8645
Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8645
(734) 222-3006**

**Hon. Julia B. Owdziej
101 E. Huron, Rm 202
P.O. Box 8645
Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8645
(734) 222-3351**

**Hon. Patrick J. Conlin
101 E. Huron, Rm 201b
P.O. Box 8645
Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8645
(734) 222-3399**

THANK YOU!

NOTICE OF ORDER FOR MEDIATION

PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH SERVICE

The divorce case you filed has been assigned to Judge Darlene A. O'Brien, Judge Julia B. Owdziej or Judge Patrick J. Conlin. The parties are required to participate in mediation *before* the Pretrial Conference. You will receive notification of the Pretrial date in the near future. **Plaintiff must serve a copy of this notice, a completed copy of the Order for Mediation, and the attached list of mediation resources with your Complaint and Summons upon the other party.** You must also return the original Order for Mediation and your completed Response to the Order for Mediation to the court with your Proof of Service.

The way a divorce proceeding begins can either aggravate pain and anger between spouses or frighten and sadden children, or it can be the start of a healthy reorganization of family life. Mediation is a highly effective method for reducing conflict in the family and allowing parties to fashion their own future.

Mediation is a confidential, non-adversarial process in which parties resolve their disputes with assistance of an impartial and neutral mediator. The mediator does not give legal advice, counseling or opinions. The parties always have the opportunity to consult with their attorneys. The agreement must be acceptable to both parties. **The mediator does not take the place of an attorney. If you have an attorney or intend to retain one, make sure the attorney receives this letter.**

The court maintains a list of court-qualified mediators for domestic relations cases, which is attached. To review biographical information, ask to see the ADR binder located in the Central Assignment office. The parties are also free to choose another mediator who is not on this list. The Michigan Council for Family and Divorce Mediators maintains a list of mediators throughout the state. For lower cost mediation the parties may contact the Dispute Resolution Center of Washtenaw County, or the Washtenaw County Friend of the Court for child-related issues.

The mediator is required to submit a Status Report to the Judge indicating only the status of the mediation and no other details (Form MC 280).

Exceptions to the Order for Mediation include:

- 1) The parties have a signed Settlement Agreement on all issues;
- 2) The case is already in mediation;
- 3) Defendant's whereabouts are unknown;
- 4) A party to this case is subject to a Personal Protection Order or a criminal No Contact Order is in effect; or
- 5) The parties are involved in a child abuse and neglect proceeding.

If an exception applies to your case, inform the Judge's office before the pretrial conference. At the time of the pretrial conference, the Judge anticipates that the parties will have: a temporary agreement on parenting time, financial support and management of property and completed Verified Personal Financial Statements listing assets and liabilities.

Your cooperation in the mediation process is appreciated. We hope you will find that mediation is the best way for you to resolve your family's individual and unique situation.

STATE OF MICHIGAN 22 nd JUDICIAL CIRCUIT WASHTENAW COUNTY	RESPONSE TO ORDER FOR MEDIATION DOMESTIC RELATIONS	CASE NO. _____ HON. _____
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Plaintiff's name, address, telephone number:	V	Defendant's name, address, telephone number:
Plaintiff's attorney, bar number, address, telephone number:		Defendant's attorney, bar number, address, telephone number:

DIRECTIONS:

1. Check / complete the section below that applies to this case.
2. Return this Response to the Order for Mediation, Domestic Relations with additional copies of the Response for
 - (a) The Judge (marked Judge's Copy); and
 - (b) The Friend of the Court (DM cases only) (marked FOC)

within 30 days of service upon the defendant of the Complaint, Summons and Order to:

Circuit Court Services - Domestic
101 E. Huron, P.O. Box 8645 Room 1105
Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8645

- The parties are prepared to proceed with mediation and have selected _____ as their mediator.
(name)
- The parties are prepared to proceed with mediation but cannot agree on a mediator and request that the ADR Clerk select a mediator for them.
- This case is exempt from the Order for Mediation, Domestic Relations because:
- ___ The parties have a signed Settlement Agreement on all issues.
 - ___ The parties are already in mediation (began mediation prior to the Order).
 - ___ Defendant's whereabouts are unknown.
 - ___ A party to this case is subject to a Personal Protection Order or a criminal No Contact Order is in effect.
 - ___ The parties are involved in a child abuse and neglect proceeding.

Signature of Plaintiff or Attorney for Plaintiff

Date of Signature