

# The new way we help



Superior Court of California, County of Sonoma, Family Court Services

## Focus on Agreements

Starting January 1, 2022, Family Court Services will be scheduling parents to participate in a confidential mediation session focused on helping parents reach an agreement on a parenting plan.

The mediator will not make any recommendations to the Court if the parents are unable to reach agreements.

Only those agreed upon child custody/visitation items will be shared with the judge and the parties or respective attorneys, via a written report. The report will also include a brief list of any outstanding issues where the parties were not able to agree.

## Why the change

The Tier system is designed to give you (parents) the best opportunity to agree on a parenting plan for your children. It's an opportunity to work in good faith to resolve any difference around the plan for parenting, with the help of an expert mediator.

- **Help parents agree to a plan that is in the best interest of the children.**
- **Help parents agree to a plan that lets the children spend time with both parents as appropriate**
- **Help parents learn ways to deal with anger or resentment for each other, so it doesn't affect the children.**

Recommendations are meant to be a last resort only after; good faith efforts to reach an agreement have been made, sufficient information has been provided to the court for decision-making; and both have failed to result in a parenting plan.

Finally, the new way we help is in adherence to the two Statewide Commission's recommendations that Courts switch to this new way of helping parents;

The Elkins Family Law Task Force and The Futures Commission



## FAMILY COURT SERVICES

3055 Cleveland Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
707-521-6800 (voicemail only)