

The background features a large, faint seal of Tarrant County, Texas. The seal is circular and contains a central five-pointed star surrounded by a wreath. The words "TARRANT COUNTY TEXAS" are visible around the perimeter of the seal.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS OFFICE
LEGAL ENFORCEMENT: 817-884-1879
FAMILY LAW CENTER 2ND FLOOR
200 EAST WEATHERFORD, FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76196
[HTTP://ACCESS.TARRANTCOUNTY.COM/EN/DOMESTIC-RELATIONS-OFFICE/LEGAL-ENFORCEMENT.HTML](http://access.tarrantcounty.com/en/domestic-relations-office/legal-enforcement.html)

**TITLE 5. THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP AND THE
SUIT AFFECTING THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP**

SUBTITLE C. JUDICIAL RESOURCES AND SERVICES

CHAPTER 203. DOMESTIC RELATIONS OFFICES

DRO DEPARTMENTS

Executive Director, Christina Glenn

Child Support

Denise Martin – Director

Legal Enforcement

Clint Dupew – Director

Community Supervision Unit

Donna Larson - Director

Family Court Services

Janet Denton – Director



DRO POWERS & DUTIES

- (a) A domestic relations office may:
- (1) collect and disburse child support payments that are ordered by a court to be paid through a domestic relations registry;
 - (2) maintain records of payments and disbursements made under Subdivision (1);
 - (3) file a suit, including a suit to:
 - (A) establish paternity;
 - (B) enforce a court order for child support or for possession of and access to a child; and
 - (C) modify or clarify an existing child support order;
 - (4) provide an informal forum in which alternative dispute resolution is used to resolve disputes under this code;
 - (5) prepare a court-ordered child custody evaluation or adoption evaluation under Chapter [107](#);



DRO POWERS & DUTIES

- (6) represent a child as an amicus attorney, an attorney ad litem, or a guardian ad litem in a suit in which:
 - (A) termination of the parent-child relationship is sought; or
 - (B) conservatorship of or access to a child is contested;
- (7) serve as a friend of the court;
- (8) provide predivorce counseling ordered by a court;
- (9) provide community supervision services under Chapter [157](#);
- (10) provide information to assist a party in understanding, complying with, or enforcing the party's duties and obligations under Subdivision (3);



DRO DEFINED

- (11) provide, directly or through a contract, visitation services, including supervision of court-ordered visitation, visitation exchange, or other similar services;
 - (12) issue an administrative writ of withholding under Subchapter F, Chapter [158](#); and
 - (13) provide parenting coordinator services under Chapter [153](#).
- (b) A court having jurisdiction in a proceeding under this title, Title 3, or Section [25.05](#), Penal Code, may order that child support payments be made through a domestic relations office.
- (c) A domestic relations office may:
- (1) hire or contract for the services of attorneys to assist the office in providing services under this chapter; and
 - (2) employ community supervision officers or court monitors.



The background features the official seal of Tarrant County, Texas. The seal is circular with a double border of small dots. The outer ring contains the text "TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS" in a serif font. The inner circle contains a five-pointed star in the center, surrounded by a wreath of oak and olive branches. The text "ACCESS AND VISITATION ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM" is overlaid on the seal in a large, bold, blue sans-serif font.

ACCESS AND VISITATION ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM

DOMESTIC RELATIONS OFFICE

LEGAL ENFORCEMENT: 817-884-1879

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POLICY & GUIDELINES

TEXAS FAMILY CODE § 153.251 9 (B)

It is the policy of this state to encourage frequent contact between a child and each parent for periods of possession that optimize the development of a close and continuing relationship between each parent and child.



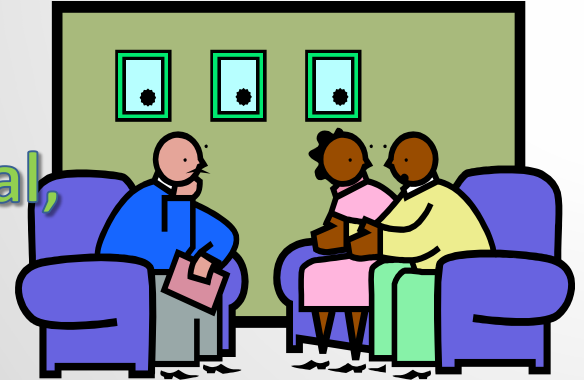
FAMILY COURT SERVICES



CHILDREN WHO ARE EXPOSED TO HIGH LEVELS OF PARENTAL CONFLICT SUFFER LONG-TERM ADVERSE EFFECTS. PARENTS WHO RESOLVE THEIR OWN ISSUES ARE LESS LIKELY TO EXPOSE THEIR CHILDREN TO DAMAGING CONFLICT.

FAMILY COURT SERVICES

Parenting Coordination is a confidential, alternative dispute resolution process



Parents in a custody or visitation dispute meet with a professional parent coordinator to:

- ❖ Help them learn to communicate about their children's needs and schedules
- ❖ Work out an access plan that takes into consideration :
 - the children's school and extracurricular activities, and
 - both parents' work schedules or other special issues that need to be considered.





FAMILY COURT SERVICES

- ❖ The goal of Family Court Services is to get you out of litigation as soon as possible.
- ❖ Both parents will be required to attend the Family Court Services Orientation.
- ❖ Parents should make every effort to resolve issues about their children outside the courtroom.
- ❖ The parent coordinators lead parents to agreements in more than 85 percent of cases.
- ❖ If you are unsuccessful in reaching an agreement, you may move forward with the other services.



COMPLETING THE APPLICATION TO ENFORCE VISITATION RIGHTS



1. Fill out each section completely
2. The Section marked “Respondent Information” helps to ensure successful service.
 - * If the respondent cannot be served, the case cannot proceed.
3. Information on Dates Visitation Was Denied
 - a) Attempts must be in person and in accordance with the order
 - b) Texts, emails and phone calls do not count as attempts



ATTORNEY REVIEW



LEGAL ENFORCEMENT REPRESENTS THE INTERESTS OF THE STATE OF TEXAS

- Legal Enforcement does not represent you, the custodial parent, or the child.
- Legal Enforcement provides information to assist you in understanding, complying with or enforcing court orders.
- Legal Enforcement's goal is to optimize the development of a close and continuing relationship between each parent and child.



MOTION TO ENFORCE

A motion for enforcement of the terms and conditions of conservatorship or possession of or access to a child must include the *date*, *place*, and, if applicable, *the time of each occasion of the respondent's failure to comply with the order.* §157.002(c)



MOTION TO ENFORCE (CONTINUED)

- If you cannot verify your *in person attempts*, the court may find you *voluntarily waived* your visitation.
- If you have not followed your portion of the order, such as *drug testing*, completing the “*stair-steps*”, *arriving on time* at the *designated location*, etc., you cannot enforce the order against the custodial parent.
- You must *continue to make attempts* in accordance with the order. Do not assume since you are participating in this program and/or with Family Court Services that you have completed the necessary steps.



FOLLOWING THE ORDER (TIPS FOR A BETTER VISIT)

♥ *SHOW UP ON TIME,*

♥ Wait 15 minutes before leaving if the other parent and child are not present

♥ *BRING AN IMPARTIAL WITNESS,*

♥ DO NOT BRING the new love interest or a family member that argues with the other parent

♥ *BE RESPECTFUL*

♥ If the other parent is being **HOSTILE**, do not engage, leave immediately

DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT



ORDER ENFORCING ACCESS & VISITATION

*THE UNDERLYING ORDER NEED NOT BE ENFORCEABLE BY CONTEMPT
TO RECEIVE OTHER APPROPRIATE ENFORCEMENT REMEDIES*

- Make-up time for time lost with denied parent
- Clarification of underlying order
- Attorney Fees to be paid by non-complying parent
- Contempt for non-complying parent
 1. Fees,
 2. Community Supervision, and/or
 3. Jail Time.



CO-PARENTING AS A TWO HOUSEHOLD FAMILY

- The Access and Visitation Enforcement Program's goal is to help families succeed together.
- Going to Court is the **LEAST DESIRABLE** option and is the option of last resort.
- While some cases result in jail time for a non-complying parent, jail time occurs only AFTER ALL OTHER OPTIONS HAVE BEEN EXPLORED FULLY.



ITEMS YOU WILL NEED TO PROCEED



A Complete Application



Non-refundable \$50 Application Fee,
\$40 Filing Cost, plus Varying Service Fees



The Complete Address and Phone
Number of the Other Parent



A Final Order Filed with Tarrant County



A Good Attitude and Willingness to
Cooperate with Everyone Involved



OBSTACLES TO ENFORCEMENT



Failure by You to Follow the Order



A Bad Address or Locate Information



A Child over the Age of 15 years



A History of Family Violence



An Unenforceable Order



An Ongoing CPS Case



A Negative Attitude



WHAT HAPPENS AFTER TODAY?

- Your case will be reviewed by the Legal Support Officer.
 - Any obstacles will be identified and discussed with you.
- After obstacles have been discussed, you should receive a letter directing you to contact a Parenting Coordinator.
- Once you receive your letter, contact the parenting Coordinator to schedule your appointment.
- If you do not receive a letter within two weeks please call 817-884-1879 to request a follow-up.



now?
what?

QUESTIONS?





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