

Sherri H. Rawsthorn, LCSW, CCE
265 W. Pike Street, Suite 4
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(678) 377-6992

Informed Consent for Evaluation Services

Purpose:

Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW, has been either appointed by Court Order, referred by the Guardian Ad Litem, and/or agreed upon by your attorney to conduct an Evaluation. Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW's purpose in conducting this evaluation is to gather information that will enable her to formulate an impartial professional opinion so to assist the Court, the Guardian and/or your attorney in addressing issues before the Court. This Evaluation will examine your personality, parenting skills and your psychological strengths and weaknesses. The results from this Evaluation may have implications for the Court in determining the outcome to the issues the Court is considering.

The Evaluation Process:

The process of this Evaluation will include interviews, observations and objective mental health testing. If appropriate for your case, other family members such as your spouse, ex-spouse, or children may be requested to be interviewed and/or be observed interacting with you. Also, if deemed appropriate for your case, Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW may request access to other "collateral contacts," including, but not limited to, consultations with physicians, therapists, grandparents, neighbors, teachers, childcare providers, etc. who interact with you or members of your family. You will need to sign a Release of Information form before each "collateral contact" is made. Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW will also talk to the attorneys and the Guardian Ad Litem (if one is appointed) at her discretion. Any interactions with such individuals will increase the financial costs of the evaluation as well as take additional time, thereby possibly extending the date of when Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW's written report will be issued.

Materials:

Please organize and label any materials you submit to Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW for her review. Anything submitted to Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW (e.g., photos, documents, drawings, etc.) will be placed in your case file and will not be returned.

Testing:

During the administration of mental health testing, no one may accompany you. Spouses, children, parents, companions, etc. can serve as sources of distractions. Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW

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wants to get honest and truthful responses and does not want the person being tested to be influenced in any way by another party.

Confidentiality:

The principles of confidentiality and privileged communication are modified when an individual participates in an Evaluation. The general rules of confidentiality still apply in that no information will be released to anyone not involved in the Court proceedings without your written consent. However, any information obtained during this evaluation can and may be included in the written Evaluation report and/or discussed with the attorney(s) and/or the Judge.

Collateral Contacts:

If family members or other “collateral contacts” are interviewed by Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW, please do not mislead them by telling them what they say to Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW is confidential, because that is not totally true as what they tell Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW may be included in the Evaluation report. If Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW testifies in your case, whether in deposition or on the witness stand, all information he obtained is open to discussion and none of it is protected as privileged communication.

Fees:

Regardless of the method of payment for your evaluation and even though the Court does not pay for Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW’s services. Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW will operate as if she is an impartial evaluator employed by the Court. This means that she will be objective in reporting her findings to the Court. A separate document, the Services Contract, reviews Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW’s billing policies and fees. However, a few issues are also covered here. Fees are based on services provided, including interviewing, testing, document review, phone conversations, consultation with other professionals, report preparation, etc. The Evaluation report will be written and issued only after all bills have been paid in full. These services are billed at \$350 per hour.

There are also separate and additional fees for depositions, court appearances, and consultations after the written report has been issued. Depositions and Court appearances are charged at a daily rate of \$3500.00 per day unless a half day rate (for up to four hours) of \$2000.00 has specifically been agreed to. These fees take into consideration time required to reserve a full day or half day of time for the appearance and additional time required to prepare for testimony. Travel costs are additional if more than 25 miles from Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW’s office.

Fees are charged whether or not Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW actually testifies since preparing to testify and time waiting to testify is time away from the office thereby preventing her from seeing other patients and earning income for that period of the work day. If the appearance at trial or deposition is canceled 72 hours (Three full court days) in advance, excluding Saturdays, Sundays,

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and holidays, the entire fee shall be refunded. If the appearance is canceled with 48 to 72 hours notification, one-half or 50% of the fee shall be refunded. There is no refund for cancellations received within 48 hours of the scheduled appearance.

Limitations:

There are not specific methods and procedures used for Evaluations that are universally accepted. It should be noted that other evaluators use many of the same methods and procedures, while other evaluators may employ somewhat different methods and procedures. The criteria that Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW utilizes and the methods and procedures she uses have been chosen by her to reflect, in her judgement, a reliable and valid system of collecting the necessary information to form a professional opinion regarding your case. Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW uses methods and procedures that she has many years of experience using and that address the mental and behavioral health issues she believes are important.

Reporting of findings:

In the written Evaluation report, Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW will offer the Court conclusions and recommendations that are within a reasonable degree of certainty. However, these conclusions and recommendations are not perfect or infallible but are reasoned professional opinions by a highly trained and experienced licensed clinical social worker. It should be noted that it is impossible to have all the information regarding an individual. Also, not all information is necessary, helpful or relevant in an Evaluation. Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW always tries to balance obtaining necessary, sufficient and useful information vs. completing the report without adding unnecessary additional costs and time. Thus, Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW strives to be pragmatic and balance these issues.

Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW will try to complete the report in a reasonable amount of time. However, no guarantee can be made as to exactly when the written report will be issued. This is because she cannot tell in advance how many interviews will be necessary, how flexible your schedule is for scheduling appointments, how many collateral interviews need to be conducted, or how long it will take to obtain and analyze the information required to come to a reasonable professional opinion about your case.

The written report will be sent to the Judge, all attorneys and/or the Guardian Ad Litem at approximately the same time unless the Court has ordered another arrangement. If significant time elapses between the issuance of Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW's report and the date of the Court hearing, Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW may request additional interviews and consultations so to be updated of events and circumstances prior to providing testimony.

Withdrawal:

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I may withdraw from the case at any time prior to submitting the evaluation report to the court, if there is good cause to do so. Good cause shall include but is not limited to: illness or the discovery of a conflict between myself and one of the parties or their attorneys. If I withdraw from the evaluation, the court in this family law case shall have jurisdiction to determine the amount of any remaining payment due or refund of any deposit made for the evaluation. If I withdraw from the evaluation, my entire file, including but not limited to interview notes, correspondence, administrative data, test materials and profiles, collateral data and all written or recorded observational of other matter collected by me in furtherance of the evaluation will not be available to the parties or their attorneys, but shall be retained by me to be released only as directed by court order. Upon withdrawal, I shall no longer be subject to subpoena in the case and cannot be called to render an opinion or testify at deposition, at a trial or at any other hearing in the case. If I withdraw from the case, I shall retain court ordered and statutory quasi-judicial immunity.

Indemnity:

Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW's written report of the Evaluation may include recommendations. However, the Court is not obligated to accept any of Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW's recommendations. Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW, and any assistants, consultants, or staff shall be held harmless from any claims, demands, causes of action, damages of loss or any kind whatsoever resulting from procedures, testing, conclusions, recommendations, reports, or testimony in connection with the evaluation. The evaluator shall be engaged in an arbitral function for the Judiciary and shall be entitled to and shall be deemed to possess and hold all common law and statutory privileges and indemnities available. The evaluator is not responsible for the outcome of the legal proceedings.

Having carefully read this document, and agreeing to the terms and conditions stated above, I hereby give my informed consent to have an Evaluation to be conducted by Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW, CCE.

Patient's Printed Name

Patient's Signature

Date

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