



**MacGregor Behavioral Health Services, LLC**  
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## Custody Evaluations

### **For all evaluations needed for any custody-related purpose:**

The evaluation requires a court order specifically naming JoAnn MacGregor, PhD as the evaluator.

**Appointments are scheduled AFTER receiving the 1) "Custody Evaluation Information" form, 2) a check for 50% of the total fee, 3) the court order naming the evaluator, and 4) each parent's signed informed consent contracts.**

All evaluation services are NEUTRAL, regardless of which parent pays the fee.

The evaluator is not agreeing to any completion deadlines, but will work as quickly and as efficiently as possible to complete the evaluation in a timely manner.

Fees for the evaluation do NOT include expert witness testimony.

Health Insurance will NOT pay any portion of the fee and credit cards are not accepted for payment.

All appointments are conducted at the MBHS office in **Gettysburg, PA** (travel expenses may be a consideration)

### **\$2,500 Comprehensive Parenting Evaluation**

The Comprehensive Parenting Evaluation (which includes 5329 and parental fitness evaluations) is the thorough evaluation of one parent. This evaluation includes 3-4 hours of clinical interviews, social history, psychological and mental status examination, psychological testing (including MMPI), any necessary collateral interviews (e.g., the other parent, involved professionals, extended family members, etc.), and the review of legal, mental health, substance abuse and other available records. The fee includes a detailed written report of clinical findings and recommendations.

These evaluations take about 4-8 weeks to complete from the first evaluation appointment. **These evaluations do NOT provide custody recommendations**, but will provide a comprehensive report regarding one parent's psychological and parental functioning with recommendations for the court to consider.

### **\$7,000 - \$9,500 Comprehensive Custody Evaluation**

The cost for custody evaluations is based on the number of individuals who will need to be evaluated and interviewed for the evaluation, and the complexity of the issues that need to be investigated. Complete the "Custody Evaluation Information" form to receive a specific cost for the evaluation based on the specifics of the family situation.

Custody evaluations are the only type of evaluation that can provide custody recommendations.

Custody evaluations include 4-5 hours of interviews with each parent, psychological testing with each parent, interviews and testing with step-parents, interviews with involved grandparents, interviews with each child (depending on age, usually about 2-3 hours), observations with each parent (and step-parent) interacting with the child(ren), review of any available medical, mental health, substance abuse, criminal/legal, and psychiatric treatment records, and phone interviews with other professionals (teachers, daycare, therapists, etc.), as necessary, and at the discretion of the evaluator.

Comprehensive custody evaluations take 2-4 months to complete **from the first evaluation appointment.**

All individuals residing in each parent's home must be included in the custody evaluation.

\*\* Custody evaluations are **priced WITHOUT a home study - NOTIFY the evaluator** if a home study of both parents' home is necessary and needs to be included in the custody evaluation price \*\*

## **Custody Evaluation Procedures**

Complete the “**Custody Evaluation Information**” form to obtain a price and/or begin the evaluation process.

Before obtaining the court order, obtain confirmation that the price for the evaluation is affordable to the individual responsible for paying the fees and that the evaluator is available to conduct the evaluation.

The attorneys must obtain a **court order** authorizing the evaluation - a court order provides liability protection for the evaluator, designates the evaluation as neutral and in the service of the court (rather than the individual paying the fee), and mandates compliance with evaluation procedures. At a minimum, the order must specifically name the evaluator.

Sample wording: **[name(s) of individual(s) to be evaluated] is directed to comply with a neutral [Custody Evaluation or Parenting Evaluation] conducted by JoAnn MacGregor, PhD. The evaluator is authorized to consult, interview, and/or obtain information and records from any person or entity that the evaluator deems reasonably necessary to complete the evaluation.**

When the “Custody Evaluation Information” form is received, the financially responsible parties will receive a fee contract and request for fee payment.

**Appointments are scheduled AFTER receiving the 1) “Custody Evaluation Information” form, 2) a check for 50% of the total fee, 3) the court order naming the evaluator, and 4) each parent’s signed informed consent contracts.**

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## **Important Information for Parents and Attorneys**

Custody evaluations are only contracted under **non-partisan (neutral) terms**, regardless of who is responsible for paying for the evaluation. The evaluation will focus on the best interest of the child(ren), and the person(s) paying for the evaluation needs to fully understand that the results of the evaluation may or may not support his/her legal case.

If any member of the family currently has, or has had in the past, any personal or professional relationship with JoAnn MacGregor, Ph.D., our office must be immediately notified and another evaluator may need to be appointed or selected.

**Notify the evaluator of any time constraints when requesting the evaluation**, and the evaluator will provide an estimate of whether the evaluation can be completed within the time frame. **The evaluator is not agreeing to a deadline** for report completion (and any expedited service will incur additional fees).

**Custody evaluations do not include a home study** - if needed, other providers are available to contract separately for this service or the evaluator may conduct the home study and integrate the results into the evaluation for additional fees.

Cost of evaluation **does NOT include fees for court testimony**, legal meetings, or phone conferences

**Expert witness testimony may be contracted by any party** regardless of who paid the fees for the custody evaluation

**Health insurance will not pay** for any portion - these evaluations are not medically necessary and are not a treatment

All fees must be paid in full before the report is prepared and **our office does NOT accept credit cards**

All appointments are conducted at the MBHS office **in Gettysburg, PA** (travel expenses may be a consideration)

Any information released from the custody evaluation file will be **released to all attorneys**

**ALL INFORMATION SUBMITTED AS EVIDENCE FOR THE EVALUATION MUST BE MADE IN WRITING.** Do not leave voice mail messages or request to speak directly with the evaluator to provide “updates” on ongoing events or critical incidents that occur during the course of the custody evaluation. Any information to be included as a basis for the evaluation must be submitted in writing.