

2003

LINCOLN COUNTY
CIRCUIT COURT

SUPPLEMENTARY LOCAL RULES

Effective February 1, 2003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1

1.151	Hours of Court Operation	1
1.171	Court Website	1

Chapter 5

5.061	Ex Parte Matters and Show Cause Hearings	1
-------	--	---

Chapter 6

6.081	Exhibits	1
-------	----------------	---

Chapter 7

7.005	Arraignments	1
7.015	Early Resolution Conference	2
7.018	Final Resolution Conference	3
7.025	Rules Relating to Small Claims	3

Chapter 8

8.011	Parent Education Program	3
8.043	Orders to Show Cause Prior to Trial	5
8.051	Content of Order to Show Cause	5
8.075	Parenting Time	6

Chapter 9

9.015	Notice Regarding Free Legal and Other Relevant Services	10
9.035	Visitor's Fee	10
9.061	Content of Affidavits in Support of Attorney Fees	10
9.081	Place for Making Oral Objections	10
9.185	Vouchers Not Required	11

Chapter 11

11.051	Juvenile Proceedings	11
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Chapter 12

12.005	Matters Subject to Mediation	11
12.015	Mediation Orientation	11
12.025	Cases Excluded from Mediation	12
12.035	Relationship to Court Jurisdiction	13
12.045	Mediation Panel	13
12.055	Authority of Mediators	14
12.065	Mediation of Financial Aspects of Domestic Relations Cases	14
12.075	Substitution and Waiver of Minimum Qualifications of Mediators	14
12.085	Referral to Mediation and Assignment of Mediator	15
12.095	Scheduling of Mediation Sessions	17
12.105	Compensation of Mediator	18
12.115	Limit on Mediator's Time	18
12.125	Unsuccessful Mediation	18
12.135	Counselors Not to Serve as Mediators	19
12.145	Completion of Mediation	19

Chapter 13

13.005	Arbitration	19
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**LINCOLN COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT
SUPPLEMENTARY LOCAL RULES**

The following Rules supplement the UTCR and apply to the Lincoln County Circuit Court:

Chapter 1

1.151 HOURS OF COURT OPERATION

The Office of the Trial Court Administrator is open to conduct business and papers will be received and filed from 8:00 a.m. to noon and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. each judicial day.

1.171 COURT WEBSITE

The internet address for the Lincoln County Circuit Court website is www.ojd.state.or.us/lincoln.

Chapter 5

5.061 EX PARTE MATTERS AND SHOW CAUSE HEARINGS

Ex parte matters requiring a hearing, and show cause hearings shall be scheduled by contacting the judicial assistant for the judge assigned to hear the case, or if no judge has been assigned, the judicial assistant for the Presiding Judge.

Chapter 6

6.081 EXHIBITS

In order for the Trial Court Administrator to comply with Oregon Judicial Department Policy pertaining to the listing and valuing of exhibits received as evidence, all exhibits will be assigned a value of zero, unless the party submitting the exhibit supplies a written opinion as to their value to the trial court clerk.

Chapter 7

7.005 ARRAIGNMENTS

1. All cases, other than probation violations, arraigned within a week will be assigned to the “designated

court” for that week. The presiding judge determines the schedule, rotating the assignment as “designated court”. For purposes of this chapter, if Monday is a legal holiday, the hearing shall be held the next day.

2. In custody arraignments will be heard at 1:15 p.m. each judicial day in a courtroom designated by the presiding judge. The courtroom can be determined by contacting the office of the trial court administrator or by visiting the court’s web site.
 - a. After arraignment, a case will be set for an early resolution conference pursuant to UTCR 7.010 on a Monday at 9:30a.m. not less than 21 days from the date of arraignment when the court to which the case is assigned is the “designated court”.
 - b. Probation violation cases will be set following defendant’s first appearance arraignment at a time and date as deemed appropriate by the court based upon those issues in the case known to court and counsel.
3. Out of custody arraignments will be heard each Monday at 8:30 a.m. in courtroom 300 unless otherwise provided.
 - a. After arraignment, a case will be set for an early resolution conference pursuant to UTCR 7.010 on a Monday at 9:30 a.m. not less than 35 days from the date of arraignment when the court to which the case is assigned is the “designated court”.

7.015 EARLY RESOLUTION CONFERENCE

1. At the Early Resolution Conference the parties shall:
 - a. Report any problems requiring additional time to resolve;
 - b. Report whether judicial assistance is needed to:
 1. Resolution of discovery issues;
 2. Decide motions or schedule hearings or any kind;
 3. Facilitate settlement discussions.
 - c. Have made such offer of settlement as deemed appropriate by that party;
 - d. Request, if necessary that the matter be calendared for a final resolution conference;
 - e. Report to the court whether the case is settled, and if so that the matter can be calendared for disposition; and

- f. Report, if it be the case, that further plea discussions are unnecessary and that the matter be scheduled forthwith for trial.
2. A final resolution conference shall be set for a Monday at 9:30 a.m. in a week that the court to which the case is assigned is the “designated court”.
3. An in-custody defendant is authorized to request a special-set final resolution conference, however, the final resolution conference shall not be at 10:00 a.m. on a Monday unless the court to which the case is assigned is the “designated court” for the week in which the hearing is set.

7.018 FINAL RESOLUTION CONFERENCE

1. Criminal cases not reported settled, and civil cases determined to be at issue, shall be set for a final resolution conference.
2. At the final resolution conference, the parties shall report whether the case has been settled or that the case is ready to proceed to trial.
3. Reporting ready for trial constitutes a representation to the court that:
 - a. A good faith effort to settle the case has been made and that neither party is willing to make further concessions to the other party concerning disposition of the case.
 - b. All motions have been filed and decided.
4. No plea negotiations will occur after the final resolution conference unless otherwise authorized by the court.

7.025 RULES RELATING TO SMALL CLAIMS

UTCR 7.020(2) and (3) shall apply to small claims cases.

Chapter 8

8.011 PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

- (1) Mandatory Parent Education Program

- (a) A parent education program of the type authorized by ORS 3.425 is established. The program shall provide information on the impact of family restructuring on the children to each person named as a party in the following types of proceedings, when such proceedings involve minor children:
 - (i) Annulment or dissolution of marriage,
 - (ii) Legal separation,
 - (iii) Petition to establish custody or parenting plans (including paternity), and
 - (iv) Post-judgment litigation involving custody, [*visitation*] or parenting plans.
 - (b) Each party who files an appearance in a proceeding of the types described above shall complete the program unless exempted by the Court. A final judgment shall not be entered in the proceeding until each party not otherwise exempted by the Court who has filed an appearance has completed the program.
 - (c) The party initiating the proceeding shall register for the program within 21 days after filing the first pleading with the Court. A copy of this local rule and instructions on how to register for the program shall be served by the initiating party on all parties against whom relief is sought. Service shall be completed in the manner provided in ORCP 7 at the time the initiating documents are served. All other parties shall have 30 days after service of the notice upon them to register for the program.
 - (d) The Court shall provide a copy of this rule to the initiating party for service upon all parties against whom relief is sought, together with a statement describing the program including contact telephone numbers, and addresses.
 - (e) The program provider shall issue a certificate of completion to the participant when the participant has completed the program. The participant must file the certificate with the Court.
 - (f) The Court may exempt one or both parties from the program if, after reviewing the requesting party's motion and supporting affidavit, the Court determines that participation is unnecessary or inappropriate.
- (2) Sanctions
- (a) Failure or refusal to complete the program in a timely manner shall be considered by the Court in making its ruling on issues which are in dispute.
 - (b) A party who has completed the program shall have the right to:

- (i) Request that the pleadings of a party who has appeared be stricken if that party has not completed the program in a timely manner without good reason.
- (ii) Request entry of an order from the Court to compel the non-complying party's completion of the program should the non-complying party not have completed the program in a timely manner without good reason. The Court may enter an award of attorney fees in favor of the complying party who utilizes this option to force the non-complying party's compliance with this rule.

8.043 ORDERS TO SHOW CAUSE PRIOR TO TRIAL

- (1) All Orders to Show Cause shall be served not less than twenty-one (21) days prior to the time set for hearing or appearance, unless another time is ordered by the Court or provided by law. Except for Orders for Temporary Support, the Order to Show Cause shall contain a notice plainly and specifically stating the hearing date and time.
- (2) The order shall require the adverse party, if the adverse party desires to appear and be heard or to otherwise contest the issues, either in whole or in part, to file a Responding Affidavit within fourteen (14) days following service or as the Court may otherwise direct. The Responding Affidavit shall respond to the original Affidavit and allege matters to the extent the adverse party wishes to put matters of fact at issue. Except for good cause shown, no further filings are required or permitted.
- (3) Temporary support shall be determined without testimony, based on the affidavits filed by the parties. The moving party may respond to the adverse party's Responding Uniform Support Affidavit. In any case involving temporary child support, the financial affidavits filed by the parties with the Court shall include applicable SED child support computation worksheets. When the matter is ready for decision, the moving party shall notify the Court by filing a Notice Of Readiness For Decision.

8.051 CONTENT OF ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE

- (1) An order to show cause shall contain a statement advising the adverse party to file a written appearance within 14 days from the date of service, or the Court may grant the relief requested. A contested change of custody matter will be specifically set for hearing by the Court Administrator].
- (2) The order to show cause shall be served by delivering a certified copy thereof, together with a certified copy of the motion, affidavit and uniform support affidavit, if applicable, in the manner necessary to obtain jurisdiction.

8.075 PARENTING TIME

- (1) Unless the Court rules differently, or the non-custodial parent requests a lesser schedule of parenting time, or the parties stipulate to a different schedule of parenting time which is approved by the Court, a non-custodial parent shall have the right to parenting time with the minor child (child = children) of the parties according to the schedule and guidelines which are hereafter stated.
- (2) For purposes of this rule, a weekend is defined as commencing at 6:00 P.M. on Friday and ending at 6:00 P.M. on the following Sunday.
- (3) Subject to the parenting time guidelines as set forth in subsection 15 of this rule which adapt Rule 8.075 to the particular circumstances of the child's age, and also take into account the parenting skills of the non-custodial parent, the non-custodial parent shall have the following PARENTING TIME SCHEDULE:
 - (a) **ALTERNATE WEEKENDS;** and
 - (b) **ALTERNATE WEDNESDAYS,** commencing at 9:00 A.M. and ending at 6:00 P.M., providing the child is not in school; and
 - (c) **WINTER BREAK:** Regardless of whether the child is attending school, parenting time shall be during the period of Winter vacation of the district in which the custodial parent resides (measured from the day school adjourns through the day before school resumes). Parenting time for the non-custodial parent shall commence at 6:00 P.M. on the day school adjourns through 8:00 A.M. on December 25 in odd-numbered years, and from 9:00 A.M. on December 25 until 9:00 A.M. on the last day of the break in even-numbered years; and
 - (d) **THANKSGIVING BREAK:** In even numbered years, commencing on Wednesday at 6:00 P.M. and ending on Sunday at 6:00 P.M.; and
 - (e) **SPRING BREAK:** In odd numbered years, spring vacation of the school district of the custodial parents residence from 6:00 P.M. on the day that school adjourns until 9:00 A.M. on Sunday prior to the commencement of school; and
 - (f) **SUMMER BREAK:**
 1. **CHILDREN 6 AND OVER:** Regardless of whether the child is in school, for a period of five weeks during summer school vacation commencing at the beginning of the break in even numbered years and the last five weeks of the summer in odd numbered years (except that the child shall be returned to the custodial parent at least thirty-six hours prior to the commencement of school in the fall).

- a. When the non-custodial parent exercises their right to a parenting time period of more than twenty days, the custodial parent shall have the right to a weekend parenting time. At the option of the non-custodial parent, the weekend parenting time for this summer break shall occur on the third or fourth weekend and shall be preceded by notice to the custodial parent at the commencement of the summer parenting time period. Further, this parenting time shall not extend beyond the summer parenting time period of the non-custodial parent; and
 2. **CHILD UNDER THE AGE OF 6:** If the child is under the age of 6, the summer parenting time shall be for a period of four weeks, and shall be divided into two (2), two-week blocks of time with at least a two-week block in between. One block shall commence in June or July, and one in August. Prior to May 1st, the non-custodial parent shall select and notify in writing, the custodial parent of the dates of two parenting time periods. If the non-custodial parent fails to provide such written notice prior to May 1st of the year of the summer parenting time, the non-custodial parent will be limited to such a block of time in August for which the custodial parent receives four weeks advance notice.
- (g) **HOLIDAYS:** The non-custodial parent shall be entitled to alternate legal holidays as set forth in ORS 187.010 et seq, excluding Sundays and those holidays previously mentioned or explicitly covered, commencing with Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday on the third Monday in January in even numbered years, and in odd numbered years with Presidents Day on the third Monday in February.
1. Any holiday not falling on Friday, Saturday, Sunday or Monday, the period of parenting time shall be from 9:00 A.M. through 6:00 P.M., unless the holiday falls on a school day in which case there will be no parenting time. Any holiday falling on a Friday or a Monday, will entitle the party to the holiday, to have the child for the entire weekend, including the holiday. If the holiday falls on Friday, parenting time will be from 6:00 P.M. on Thursday to 6:00 P.M. on Sunday. If the holiday falls on Monday, parenting time is from 6:00 P.M. on Friday, through 6:00 P.M. on Monday.
 2. Fourth of July shall be included in the non-custodial parents summer parenting time during even numbered years, regardless to whom the holiday belongs.
- (h) **PERSONAL HOLIDAYS:** The non-custodial parent shall be entitled to have parenting time on the day of his or her birthday from 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., if occurring on a non-school day. If the custodial parent's birthday falls during a period of parenting time, the custodial parent shall be entitled to parenting time with the child for that day from 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., unless it causes a substantial interference with the scheduled parenting time of the non-custodial parent. Further, each parent is entitled to parenting time on their respective Mother's

or Father's Day, from 9:00 A.M. until 6:00 P.M.; and either parent may include this day in a whole weekend and trade the upcoming parenting time weekend for Mother's or Father's Day weekend.

- (i) **CHILD'S BIRTHDAY:** The non-custodial parent shall be entitled to parenting time with the child on the child's birthday in even numbered years. The parenting time will be from 9:00 A.M. if the birthday falls on a non-school day until 6:00 P.M., and if the birthday falls on a school day, from 5:00 P.M. until 8:00 P.M.
- (4) All parenting time periods shall be exercised in a prompt manner so that both parties can make their plans accordingly. The non-custodial parent shall pick the child up from the front steps of the custodial parent's residence no earlier than 15 minutes before and not later than 15 minutes after the parenting time period commences. Return of the child to the front steps of the custodial parent's residence shall also be subject to the 15 minute rule. The non-custodial parent shall notify the custodial parent by telephone at least 24 hours in advance if he or she is going to be unable to exercise parenting time rights as scheduled.
- (5) The custodial parent shall have the child fed and ready on time for parenting time with sufficient and proper clothing packed and ready for the parenting time period.
- (6) The non-custodial parent shall feed the child the evening meal before returning from the parenting time period, and return the child with the same clothes as when they arrived, laundered and ready to wear.
- (7) In the event the child is ill and unable to visit, a makeup parenting time will be allowed to the non-custodial parent on the next succeeding weekend. However, if the non-custodial parent fails to exercise their parenting time, for reasons of health or for any other reason, there will be no makeup parenting time period. The child will not be permitted to determine whether they wish to visit with the non-custodial parent.
- (8) Personal plans of the custodial parent or child, school activities, church activities and other considerations will not be reasons for failing to adhere to the parenting time schedule set forth in the court's order. Only substantial medical reasons will be considered sufficient for postponement of parenting time.
- (9) Both parties will provide addresses and contact telephone numbers to the other party and will immediately notify the other party of any emergency circumstances or substantial changes in the health of the child. Both parents shall be entitled to complete access to all medical, dental and other records concerning the health of the child.
- (10) The non-custodial parent shall, in addition to the parenting time, have the unlimited right to

correspond with the child, and to telephone the child during reasonable hours without interference or monitoring by the custodial parent or anyone else in any way. Unless otherwise agreed upon between the parties, telephone conferences between the non-custodial parent and child shall be limited to no more than 3 per week and each call shall be of 10 minutes or less in duration. The custodial parent shall have the same rights as set forth above during the period that the child is with the non-custodial parent.

- (11) Both parties shall be restrained and enjoined from making derogatory comments about the other party or in any way diminishing the love, respect and affection that the child has for the other party.
- (12) In addition to the parenting time specified above, the non-custodial parent shall have the right to visit with the child at school, attend the child's school activities, and have full access to school teachers and administrators for complete information about the child in school. The non-custodial parent does not have the right to take the child out of school without the written authorization of the custodial parent.
- (13) No modification, or acquiescence in changes of these specific parenting time conditions will be allowed or recognized, unless such modifications are in the form of a written stipulation signed by the parties, or a court order.
- (14) As is state law, unless otherwise set forth in the judgment of dissolution, no modification or abatement of support shall occur during the periods of parenting time, including the summer.
- (15) The following are **PARENTING TIME GUIDELINES** in reference to the age of the child:
 - (a) **INFANTS TO AGE TWO:** The parenting time previously mentioned shall be reduced to a three-day block, with the non-custodial parent selecting the days of the block. The summer period shall be six three-day blocks, interspersed by at least three days during the June-July period and the August period. Both parents shall know and understand the basic skills of parenting an infant.
 - (b) **INFANTS AGE THREE TO FIVE:** Follow the parenting time schedule in subsection 3.
 - (c) **CHILDREN AGE SIX TO TWELVE:** The parenting time schedule should be flexible enough to insure the child's participation in ongoing or special activities. During the summer, residence with the non-custodial parent is suggested with the custodial parent having weekly or bi-weekly access.
 - (d) **ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS, OVER TWELVE:** Flexible parenting time is the basic principle, with the child having some input to avoid scheduling conflicts. At this age, it seems the quality of time is more important than the quantity. During the summer, consideration should be given to the child's employment, organized athletics and other activities.

- (e) **LONG DISTANCE PARENTING TIME:** Unless otherwise specified by court order, the non-custodial parent shall make appropriate arrangements for travel, taking into account the age of the child.

Chapter 9

9.015 ALLEGED INCAPACITATED PERSONS - NOTICE REGARDING FREE LEGAL AND OTHER RELEVANT SERVICES

In a proceeding for the appointment of a guardian for an alleged incapacitated person, the notice required under ORS 125.060 shall include the following language or its equivalent:

- (1) There may be free or low-cost legal services or other relevant services in your local area that may be helpful to you in the guardianship proceeding. For information about these services, call the following telephone numbers and ask to talk to people who can help you find legal services or other types of service:
 - (a) Free legal services for people at least 60 years of age who are subject to guardianship proceedings may be obtained by calling the Senior Law Program of Oregon Legal Services at 1-800-817-4605. Many other kinds of free or low cost services for people at least 60 years of age may be obtained by calling Senior Services at 265-7719.
 - (b) Help finding a lawyer, and a low-cost one-time consultation may be obtained by calling the Lawyer Referral Service of the Oregon State Bar at 1-800-452-7636.

9.035 VISITOR'S FEE

If the appointment of a visitor is required, the visitor's fee shall be paid at the time of filing the petition. The visitor's fee shall be \$200. The visitor will not undertake the investigation until the fee has been paid or unless the fee has been waived by order of the Court.

9.061 CONTENT OF AFFIDAVITS IN SUPPORT OF ATTORNEY FEES

In addition to any other information the attorney may desire to submit, an affidavit in support of a motion for an order allowing payment of attorney fees shall include the time spent on services in connection with the estate and shall be calculated in decimals rather than fractions.

9.081 PLACE FOR MAKING ORAL OBJECTIONS

Oral objections pursuant to ORS 125.075 may be made in Room 202 of the Lincoln County Courthouse during regular office hours.

9.185 VOUCHERS NOT REQUIRED

As allowed by ORS 125.475(3) and ORS 116.803(2)(d), vouchers are not required to accompany an accounting. In lieu of vouchers, for each depository account a list which sets out the date, amount, check number, recipient, and purpose of each disbursement shall be included in an accounting.

Chapter 11

11.051 JUVENILE PROCEEDINGS

The youth is required to attend all juvenile delinquency proceedings unless excused by the court. Juvenile delinquency matters, other than adjudications, are heard each Friday at 1:30 p.m. Juvenile dependency matters, other than adjudications, are heard each Friday at 8:30 a.m. If needed, the parties should request a call day. Absent such request, the matter will proceed directly to trial.

Chapter 12

12.005 MATTERS SUBJECT TO MEDIATION

Except for those cases excluded from mediation below, the Trial Court Administration shall refer to Mediation Orientation all domestic relations cases in which there are issues concerning child custody, and/or parenting time.

12.015 MEDIATION ORIENTATION

- (1) In cases in which there are issues concerning child custody, and/or parenting time, Mediation Orientation consists of a mediation orientation video, one meeting in person with a mediator, and a parenting education class designated by the Court.
- (2) In cases in which there are no issues concerning child custody, and/or parenting time, but in which the final decree or order will necessarily involve provisions concerning child custody, and/or parenting time, Mediation Orientation consists of a parenting education class designated by the Court.
- (3) In cases in which the only issues to be resolved are financial concerns, and the final decree or order will not involve provisions concerning child custody, and/or parenting time, Mediation Orientation consists of a mediation orientation video and one meeting in person with a mediator designated by the Court.
- (4) Upon a showing of good cause and/or the filing of a stipulated written waiver from both parties,

the Court may waive the requirement of Mediation Orientation or a portion thereof. The waiver granted may apply to either one party or to both.

- (5) The refusal by or failure of a party to attend mediation orientation as required by these rules and/or by the Court in a timely manner is a factor the Court may consider in decisions involving custody, and/or parenting time.
- (6) Persons in charge of administering Mediation Orientation sessions shall keep thorough records of attendance at all sessions and provide those records to the Court immediately upon completion of each component of Mediation Orientation.
- (7) There shall be no fee charged for a party to attend parenting education classes or the mediation orientation video, regardless of whether a party has filed an appearance in the case [*or not*].

12.025 CASES EXCLUDED FROM MEDIATION

Cases excluded from mediation include the following:

- (1) Stalking proceedings under ORS 30.866 or 163.738;
- (2) Family Abuse Prevention Act proceedings under ORS 107.700 to 107.732;
- (3) Elder Abuse Prevention Act proceedings under ORS 124.005 et seq.;
- (4) Proceedings in which a party has opted out of mediation after attending Mediation Orientation;
- (5) Proceedings that the Court determines are inappropriate for mediation, which decision may be made by the Court before or after referral to mediation;
- (6) Filiation proceedings under ORS 109.124 et seq., but only until paternity has been established;
- (7) Cases in which the mediator has determined that the case is not appropriate for mediation. In this event, the sole report by the mediator to the Court and to counsel for the parties, if any, shall be that the parties have not reached an agreement. The mediator may alert the Court to the reason no agreement was reached (e.g., domestic violence issues) only with the written permission of both parties and each party's attorney, if any; and
- (8) Cases involving expedited parenting time enforcement under ORS 107.434 unless either:
 - (a) The party who files the enforcement motion requests referral to mediation and the Court approves that motion; or

- (b) The judge refers the case to mediation. Because expedited parenting time enforcement exists to provide speedy relief to a party aggrieved by noncompliance with one or more provisions of an existing decree, the Court shall make such referrals with all due caution, as mediation may prolong the rendering of appropriate relief past the time period required by ORS 107.434.

If a case involving expedited parenting time enforcement is referred to mediation through a mediator who is on the list of court-approved mediators, the parties shall pay the mediation fee required of a petitioner and respondent within 14 days notice of referral to mediation or as otherwise ordered by the Presiding Judge.

12.035 RELATIONSHIP TO COURT JURISDICTION

- (1) A case filed in the Circuit Court remains under the jurisdiction of the Court in all phases of the proceedings, including mediation.
- (2) Any agreement of the parties reached as a result of mediation for which Court enforcement may be sought must be presented to the Court, and the Court shall retain final authority to accept, modify or reject the agreement. In order to preserve and promote the integrity of mediation as a dispute resolution technique, the Court will endeavor to include all reasonable agreements reached by the parties in formulating any decree or order in the case.
- (3) At any point during the mediation process, the Court may approve a temporary custody and parenting time order reflecting the parties' agreement as to those issues.

12.045 MEDIATION PANEL

- (1) In addition to meeting the requirements of OAR 718-030-0000 through 718-030-0100, to qualify as a Court-approved mediator, a person must, at the minimum:
 - (a) Sign and file an application with the Court;
 - (b) Receive approval of the Presiding Judge. The Presiding Judge may act upon the application or refer the request to a designee or committee for evaluation and recommendation to the Presiding Judge. Merely meeting the requirements of the administrative rules referenced above does not entitle a person to be appointed as a mediator. The selection may be made strictly according to the discretion of the Presiding Judge; and
 - (c) Comply with the requirements of the Domestic Violence Plan that is a component of the Lincoln County Domestic Relations Mediation Plan.

- (2) Pursuant to ORS 107.775(3), mediators and others providing mediation services are not officers, employees, or agents of the Oregon Judicial Department or of the State of Oregon.
- (3) The Presiding Judge may remove a mediator from the mediation panel at any time solely at the Presiding Judge's discretion.

12.055 AUTHORITY OF MEDIATORS

- (1) The mediator has authority and control over the mediation process, but the mediator has no control or authority over the parties or their decisions in the case.
- (2) The mediator has the authority to enforce all statutes, Oregon Administrative Rules, Uniform Trial Court Rules, Supplementary Local Rules and all other rules, orders or ordinances (e.g., formal acts of the County Commissioners) adopted by or within the Seventeenth Judicial District concerning the mediation process.
- (3) The mediator shall encourage disputing parties to obtain independent legal advice and review of any mediated agreement before signing any agreement.
- (4) The mediator shall not act as a lawyer for either party.

12.065 MEDIATION OF FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF DOMESTIC RELATIONS CASES

- (1) A mediator who has been approved by the Presiding Judge to mediate financial aspects in domestic relations cases may be allowed to mediate such issues whether or not there are also issues concerning child custody, parenting time and/or visitation.
- (2) Minimum qualifications of mediators for financial issues:
 - (a) In addition to the other qualifications for mediators, mediators for financial issues must be attorneys licensed to practice law in the State of Oregon and who have been actively involved in domestic relations litigation for at least two years' full time equivalent.
 - (b) Persons who meet the minimum qualifications must apply to the Presiding Judge, who shall have the sole discretion to approve or disapprove an application. Likewise, the Presiding Judge may discontinue a person's approval to mediate financial aspects of domestic relations cases at the Presiding Judge's sole discretion.

12.075 SUBSTITUTION AND WAIVER OF MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS OF MEDIATOR

As authorized by OAR 718-030-0080, the Presiding Judge may allow appropriate exceptions from, or

substitutions for, any of the minimum qualifications for a mediator. Under such circumstances, the Presiding Judge shall specify in writing a deadline for meeting the minimum qualifications when a mediator is designated as a mediator for any component of domestic relations cases.

12.085 REFERRAL TO MEDIATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF MEDIATOR

- (1) The use of the phrase “referral to mediation” means the act of notifying the parties that they must go through Mediation Orientation as scheduled.
- (2) By the Court
 - (a) In cases in which it appears from the pleadings that child custody, and/or parenting time is an issue, the Court shall refer the case to mediation. A mediator shall be assigned after a Response is filed with the Court. The exception to this procedure shall be when the Court decides that the case is not appropriate for mediation prior to such referral.
 - (b) Assignment of Mediator
 - (i) The Trial Court Administrator shall send a notice of referral to mediation to the parties. The notice shall include the names of court-approved mediators. Each party shall be entitled to object to a maximum of two mediators. To object, a party shall strike the names from the mediation notice and return the notice to the Court. A mediation notice containing such objections must be received by the Court within 10 days of the date of the notices.
 - (ii) The Trial Court Administrator shall assign a mediator whose name has not been stricken from the mediator list by the parties. If a party fails to submit the mediation notice to the Court within the time required in the preceding paragraph, the Trial Court Administrator shall assign a mediator.
 - (iii) Except when otherwise mandated by this Plan or when the Presiding Judge decides otherwise, the Trial Court Administrator shall assign a mediator upon whom the parties have stipulated when that mediator is on the list of mediators approved by the Court.
 - (iv) If no approved mediators are left on the Court’s list after considering the parties objections to mediators, to conflict cases when a mediator may not be able to ethically or legally participate in mediation in a given case, or to other appropriate concerns, the Trial Court Administrator shall refer the designation of a mediator to the Presiding Judge. The Presiding Judge shall have the authority to designate any person approved as a domestic relations mediator in another county or other individual who has met the qualifications for a mediator prescribed by this plan or

for whom the Presiding Judge waives strict compliance, as allowed by this plan.

(3) By stipulation

- (a) At any stage of the proceedings, the parties may sign and file with the Court a request for mediation. This applies even for cases in which a party or both parties had earlier opted out of mediation.
- (b) Upon receipt of a request for mediation from both parties in a case where the parties had previously opted out of mediation, the Trial Court Administrator shall notify the Judge assigned to hear the case or the Presiding Judge. The case shall be referred back to mediation only if the Court so directs.
- (c) The request for mediation may be denied by the Presiding Judge or by the judge assigned to hear the case in the sole discretion of such judge. The Court is not required to explain or justify a denial of a referral to mediation. Nonetheless, appropriate reasons to deny a referral to mediation would include, but not be limited to, situations in which the Court concludes that such referral is a delaying tactic in a case where it appears likely that mediation could not reasonably be expected to be concluded prior to the time set for a trial or other hearing, and/or when the Court determines that the request for mediation appears not to be made in good faith.
- (d) Except as set forth below in subparagraph (e), the Court shall honor a written stipulation by both parties to a particular mediator if that mediator is on the Court's list of approved mediators.
- (e) Parties may not stipulate to using a particular mediator from the Court-approved list under the circumstances outlined in this subparagraph. If the parties had previously met with a domestic relations mediator approved by the Court but mediation had not been successfully concluded, and thereafter the Court receives a request from the parties to return to mediation, the case shall be referred back to mediation with the same mediator. The Trial Court Administrator may assign a different mediator at the request of the parties only if, within fifteen days from the date of inquiry by the Trial Court Administrator as to the reason for the previous termination of mediation, the original mediator tenders written confirmation to the Court that the case was not sent back to the Court due to domestic violence concerns by the mediator. If such confirmation is not received, the parties shall be notified that the case will not be referred back to mediation and will be set on the trial docket.
 - (i) To preserve the confidentiality mandated by ORS 107.785, the Trial Court Administrator shall seal in the file a mediator's written report of domestic violence concerns, and send the file to the judge assigned to hear the case for docketing of all

future hearings in the case.

(4) Use of Independent Mediators

- (a) Parties shall not be required to use a mediator who has been approved by the Court for domestic relations mediation. Upon written stipulation by both parties, an independent mediator may be used, but only if the Presiding Judge approves the request. Under such circumstances, the following conditions apply
 - (i) The costs of the independent mediator shall be borne exclusively by the parties, and the parties shall not be entitled to any refund of the mediation fee paid by the parties to the Court.
 - (ii) Where custody and/or parenting time involving minor children will necessarily be a component of any decree of final order of the Court, the parties shall be required to attend the parenting education classes that are included in Mediation Orientation.
 - (iii) No independent mediator shall be approved unless that person meets the qualifications for a mediator prescribed by this plan or unless the Presiding Judge waives strict compliance with those qualifications as allowed by this plan.
 - (iv) The request for mediation may be denied by the Presiding Judge or by the judge assigned to hear the case, in the sole discretion of such judge. The Court is not required to explain or justify a denial of referral to mediation. Nonetheless, appropriate reasons to deny a referral to mediation would include, but not be limited to, situations in which the Court concludes that such referral is a delaying tactic in a case where it appears likely that mediation could not reasonably be expected to be concluded prior to the time set for trial or other hearing and/or when the Court determines that the request for mediation appears not to be made in good faith.
- (b) If an independent mediator is selected by the parties, the parties or their attorneys shall file with the Court a written stipulation indicating the name of the mediator and the date set for the first mediation session.

12.095 SCHEDULING OF MEDIATION SESSIONS

- (1) Upon receipt of a mediation assignment, the mediator shall notify the parties of that appointment. The mediator shall send a domestic violence screening questionnaire to each party, requiring that the parties fully complete and return those forms within seven days of that notice. Upon receipt of fully completed questionnaires, the mediator shall notify the parties of the date and time of the initial joint or individual meetings with the mediator. Mediation shall occur at locations within

Lincoln County designated by the mediator, unless an out of county location is approved by the Presiding Judge or upon stipulation of both parties and the mediator. The initial mediation session shall occur as soon as practicable.

- (2) Subsequent sessions with the mediator and the parties shall be conducted as scheduled by the mediator.

12.105 COMPENSATION OF MEDIATOR

Lincoln County shall compensate the mediator at the rate of \$75.00 per hour. Funds to compensate the mediator shall come from the Lincoln County Mediation Account which consists of fees collected pursuant to ORS 21.112 and 107.615. The mediator may be reimbursed for actual long distance phone calls associated with the case, and for fax and photocopy costs at the rate then in effect for the general public at the Trial Court Administrator's Office. There shall be no charges for paralegal time, secretarial time, or other law firm employee time.

12.115 LIMIT ON MEDIATOR'S TIME

- (1) Mediation shall consist of eight hours which includes sessions involving the mediator and the parties, scheduling, conferences with the Court or Trial Court Administrator, conferring with the parties or their attorneys, and drafting documents. Any additional time needed to complete mediation shall occur only if:
 - (a) The parties pay for additional mediation out of their own funds; or
 - (b) The parties apply for approval for additional time from the Presiding Judge and the Presiding Judge grants approval for additional funding to complete the mediation.
- (2) If a mediator refers the case back to the Court for any reason, but the case is later re-referred to mediation, the parties shall be allowed a new eight hours of sessions at no additional cost unless the Presiding Judge directs otherwise.
- (3) In every case in which a mediator is selected, the mediator shall be entitled to a minimum fee of one hour at the hourly rate then in effect for mediator compensation.

12.125 UNSUCCESSFUL MEDIATION

In the event the mediator determines that the parties have not been successful in mediating any issue

referred to mediation, the mediator shall notify the Court of that fact in writing. Upon written request by any party thereafter, a temporary custody and parenting time/visitation hearing shall be scheduled by the Court as soon as possible. Any request by a party for a hearing shall identify the issues to be determined and the length of time estimated for the hearing.

12.135 COUNSELORS NOT TO SERVE AS MEDIATORS

In cases in which a non-attorney is selected as a mediator, the mediator may not also be a counselor who conducts a custody or parenting time/visitation evaluation without the prior, express written consent of the parties.

12.145 COMPLETION OF MEDIATION

- (1) Mediation must be completed within 90 days after the notice to the mediator, unless otherwise ordered by the Court on application of the parties or the mediator, based upon good cause set forth by affidavit.
- (2) The mediator shall report to the Court and to counsel for the parties the outcome of the mediation as allowed by law. The mediator shall report in writing to the Court and to counsel for the parties any agreement reached by the parties as a result of mediation, and the agreement shall be incorporated into a proposed order or decree prepared for the Court.

Chapter 13

13.005 ARBITRATION

Lincoln County shall maintain an arbitration program in accordance with ORS 36.400 to 36.425, and UTCR Chapter 13. Arbitration shall be mandatory in matters involving less than \$50,000.