



**EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND FOR THE CHILD(REN)**

4. For each child involved in this case, please list the current grade level and current school. Please include the school's address and telephone number. Please also include the name and telephone number of each of the child's teachers.

5. For each child involved in this case, please list all prior schools and/or daycare centers, and the years of the child's attendance for each.

6. For each child involved in this case, please describe any special educational needs that the child has.

7. For each child involved in this case, please list the name, address, and telephone number for each daycare center, babysitter, or other person or entity that currently provides childcare for the child.

8. For each child involved in this case, please list specific talents and/or interests of that child.

9. For each child involved in this case, please name two (2) of his or her closest friends.

10. For each child involved in this case, if you are concerned with the child's academic performance, please provide complete school records for that child. Please also specify your concerns with as much detail as possible. For each such concern, please identify the barrier(s) that you believe are preventing the child from achieving more success, and how you would be in a better position to remove those barriers if you were granted custody and/or increased visitation. **(PLEASE NOTE: I will typically NOT review educational records for the child(ren) unless they are provided by one or more of the parties along with a list of each party's concerns or unless the Court specifically requests that I do so. HOWEVER, I do reserve the right to retrieve and review these records if I independently determine that there is a good reason for me to do so.)**

11. Do you have any concerns for how a change of custody and/or increased visitation would affect the child(ren) if the Court were to order it? If so, please specify your concerns with as much detail as possible, and provide any documents that you believe support your concerns (e.g. past school records showing poor performance while the child was in another party's care, etc.)

### **MEDICAL BACKGROUND FOR THE CHILD(REN)**

1. For each child involved in this case, please list any medical conditions that apply to the child. For each such condition, please specify the medications and/or other treatments that are necessary and/or that have been prescribed to treat the condition.

2. For each child involved in this case, and for each medical condition identified in the preceding paragraph, please state how this medical condition affects the child's physical safety, emotional well-being, academic performance, overall quality of life, etc. Please identify any dangers and/or complications that may result if the medications and/or other treatments identified in the above paragraph are not administered appropriately.

3. For each child involved in this case, if you are concerned with any medical conditions affecting the child or the treatment thereof, please provide complete medical records for that child. Please also specify your concerns with as much detail as possible. For each such concern, please identify the deficiencies in how the condition is currently being addressed, and how you would be in a better position to address those deficiencies if you were granted custody and/or increased visitation. **(PLEASE NOTE: I will typically NOT review medical records for the child(ren) unless they are provided by one or more of the parties along with a list of each party's concerns or unless the Court specifically requests that I do so. HOWEVER, I do reserve the right to retrieve and review these records if I independently determine that there is a good reason for me to do so.)**

### **PARTY'S FAMILY BACKGROUND**

1. Please provide the following information:

Your Birthdate:

Your Social Security Number:

Your Current Home Address:

Your Current Phone Number:

Your Current Vehicle (Year, Make, Model, and License Tag Number):

2. Please specify whether you own your home, rent your home, or live with someone else who owns or rents the home in which you currently live.

3. If someone else owns or rents the home in which you currently live, please identify that person's name and telephone number and how this person is related to you. Please also identify the names and telephone numbers of all other persons living in this same residence, and how each such other person is related to you.

4. Please specify whether you own your current vehicle, lease your current vehicle, or are using another person's vehicle as your current vehicle.

5. If you are using another person's vehicle as your current vehicle, please identify that person's name and telephone number and how this person is related to you.

6. For each party to this case, please state whether you think that it is necessary that I perform a home visit to inspect that party's residence. **(PLEASE NOTE: home visits are very time consuming, and thus are very expensive in terms of fees to all parties. Further, they often add very little value to my investigation or to my recommendation. You should carefully consider whether to request that I perform a home visit of another party's residence, keeping in mind the costs associated with performing the visit. I will typically not perform a home visit unless one is requested along with a list of each party's concerns with that home or unless the Court specifically requests that I do so. HOWEVER, I do reserve the right to perform a home visit if I independently determine that there is a good reason for me to do so.)**

7. Please tell me about the members of your family (i.e. your mother, your father, and your brothers/sisters).

8. Please describe what your parents' relationship was like. If your parents were divorced, please describe how you felt about their separation.

9. Please tell me what your relationship was like with each of your family members (i.e. your mother, your father, and your brothers/sisters).

10. Please tell me what major problems you experienced growing up in your family.

**PARTY'S EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND**

1. Are you currently employed? If so, please provide the following information:

Name of Employer:

Address:

Phone Number:

Your Title/Position:

Direct Supervisor's Name:

Your Gross Monthly Income: **(PLEASE NOTE: Your Gross Income is your income before taxes or any other deductions are taken out of your paycheck)**

2. Are you partially or totally disabled? If so, please state the exact nature of your disability and provide your complete medical records. Please state what effects, if any your disability has or might have on your ability to have custody of or increased visitation with the child(ren).

3. If one of the other parties in this case is partially or totally disabled, do you have any concerns regarding how this disability affects or might affect that party's ability to have custody of or increased visitation with the child(ren)? If so, please specify those concerns with as much detail as possible, and provide any documents supporting those concerns (e.g. medical records, etc.).

4. Are you currently receiving disability benefits? If so, please specify whether these benefits are being provided through Social Security or through SSI.

5. If you are partially or totally disabled but are not currently receiving disability benefits, please state whether you have applied for such benefits. If you have applied, please detail the current status of your application (i.e. when and how many times you have been denied, who your attorney is, etc.)

6. If you are not currently employed or disabled, please state why you are not currently employed. Please detail all of the efforts you have made, are making, and plan to make to find gainful employment.

7. Please list the name, address, phone number, the dates of employment, and your position held with each employer you have had since the age of 18. If you have a resume with this same information, you may provide this resume instead of reproducing this information here.

**PARTY'S EDUCATIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND**

1. For each of the following, please provide the name of the school you attended, your dates of attendance, and the type of degree you earned, if any.

High School:

College/University:

Vocational/Technical:

Post-Graduate:

2. Please list any organizations, excluding professional or work-related organizations, in which you have participated during the last ten (10) years (e.g. Boys & Girls Club, coaching, Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.).

3. Please state how your education level and/or involvement with these organizations provides a unique benefit to the child(ren) that the other parties to this case cannot provide.

### **PARTY'S FINANCIAL BACKGROUND**

1. Please state whether you have ever filed for bankruptcy. If you have, for each bankruptcy filing please state the year in which you filed and the court in which you filed (e.g. Middle District of Georgia, Northern District of Florida, etc.). Please also provide all court-filed documents associated with each such bankruptcy filing.

2. Please state whether, to your knowledge, any other party to this case has ever filed for bankruptcy. If so, please provide any documentation you have associated with each such bankruptcy filing.

3. Please state whether you plan to file for bankruptcy at any point in the future. Please also state whether any other party to this case has indicated to you that he or she plans to file bankruptcy in the future.

4. Please state whether you are currently under court order to pay child support for any child, including but not limited to the child(ren) associated with this case. If so, please state the amount of the monthly obligation for each such court order and whether you are currently behind on such payments. If you are currently behind on such payments, please state the current amount of the arrearage for each such court order. Please also detail the financial barriers that are currently preventing you from meeting your financial obligations. Please also state what effects, if any, the lack of payment has had on the child(ren) associated with this case.

5. Please state whether, to your knowledge, any other party to this case is currently behind on child support payments owed to any child, including but not limited to the child(ren) associated with this case. If so, please provide any documentation you have associated with each such delinquent payment situation. Please also state what effects, if any, the lack of payment has had on the child(ren) associated with this case.

6. Please state whether you were you able to pay the initial guardian ad litem fees ordered by the Court within the time period specified by the Court. If not, please detail the financial barriers that are currently preventing you from meeting your financial obligations in this case.

**PARTY'S MARRIAGE/RELATIONSHIP BACKGROUND**

1. If you are now or ever were married to another party to this case, please provide the following information:

Name of Party you married:

Place of Marriage (City & State):

Date of Marriage:

Places of residence during marriage:

Date of divorce:

2. If you are a parent of the child(ren) in this case, please answer the following: **(PLEASE NOTE: If you are not the parent of the child(ren) in this case (e.g. you are a grandparent), you may skip to the next section).**

a. How did you and the child(ren)'s other parent meet?





## **PARTY'S RELATIONSHIPS TO OTHER PARTIES**

1. For each party to this case, please state how you have dealt with any problems in your relationship with that party.

2. For each party to this case, please state how that party has dealt with any problems in his or her relationship with you.

3. For each child involved in this case, please describe the child's relationship with each of the other parties to the case.

4. For each child involved in this case, please state whether there has ever been any form of abuse toward the child. If so, please specify the perpetrator of the abuse, the nature of the abuse, and the dates of the abuse. Please provide complete law enforcement records (e.g. incident reports, etc.), complete medical records, and any and all other records associated with such acts of abuse. If the abuse was not reported to appropriate authorities, please state in detail why it was not reported.

5. For each party involved in this case (including yourself), please state whether there has ever been any form of drug, alcohol, or other substance abuse in that party's past. If so, please specify the substance abused, the nature of the abuse, and the dates of the substance abuse. Please provide complete law enforcement records (e.g. incident reports), complete medical records, and any and all other records associated with such substance abuse. If the substance abuse was not reported to appropriate authorities, or if treatment was not sought for the substance abuse, please state in detail why it was not reported or why treatment was not sought.

6. For each child involved in this case, please detail what you have told the child about your relationship with any other party, about the child's relationship with any other party, or about the current litigation in general. Please also state how the child reacted during this conversation.

7. For each child involved in this case, please state your understanding of how the child feels about each other party to this case.

8. For each child involved in this case, if you are seeking primary physical custody of the child, please state why you want primary physical custody of that particular child.

9. For each child involved in this case, if you are seeking increased visitation with the child, please state why you believe that increased visitation will be good for the child.

10. For each child involved in this case, if you are seeking to prevent another party from having increased visitation with the child, please state why you believe that increased visitation would not be good for the child.

11. For each child involved in this case, if you are seeking primary physical custody of the child, please state how you are the Court's best option for primary physical custody of that child.

12. For each party to this case, please state your overall opinion of that party's current performance in parenting and/or caring for the child(ren).

13. For each party to this case, please state what things that party does right when parenting and/or caring for the child(ren).

14. For each party to this case, please state what areas that party needs to improve upon when parenting and/or caring for the child(ren).

15. For each party to this case, please state the major areas of disagreement that you have with that party concerning the parenting and/or care of the child(ren). For each such area of disagreement, please state the reasons that you believe your position is correct and/or is in the best interests of the child(ren).

16. For each child in this case that is **age eleven or older**, has the child recently stated to you a preference as to with whom the child wishes to live? If so, how did this conversation come to take place? What did the child say?

17. For each child in this case that is **age fourteen or older**, if the child states that he or she wishes to live with another party, do you plan to go along with the child's wishes? If not, how do you feel that the child's wishes would not be in the child's best interests?

## **WITNESSES**

1. Please identify **three or fewer** primary witnesses with whom I should speak during the course of my investigation. For each such witness, please specify the witness's address, telephone number, relationship to you, relationship to the children, and the nature of the information that the witness will have that will be useful to my recommendation.

2. If you feel that I cannot make a proper recommendation in this case without speaking to more than three primary witnesses, please detail the reason that additional witness interviews are required in this case.

## **OTHER ISSUES**

1. If there are any other issues not covered in the foregoing (e.g. there are problems with visitation exchanges, etc.), please specify those problems in as much detail as possible and how you feel I as guardian ad litem may be able to help solve those problems.

## **ITEMS OF UNDERSTANDING AND AGREEMENT**

1. Please initial each one of the following and sign at the end of this document to indicate your understanding of and/or agreement with each item:

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the guardian ad litem represents the **best interests of the child(ren)** in this case to the exclusion of all other interests. The guardian ad litem does not represent me, any other party, or the child(ren)'s expressed wishes, though the guardian ad litem will communicate the child(ren)'s expressed wishes to the Court for those children aged eleven and older.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the guardian ad litem's **investigation and recommendation to the Court are not at all binding on the Court**. The Court will ultimately make all decisions concerning custody and visitation. The Court may accept or reject all or any part of the guardian ad litem's investigation and recommendation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the guardian ad litem has **no duty of confidentiality** to me, to any other party, or to the child(ren). The guardian ad litem will likely be called as an expert witness in this case, and may be compelled to tell the Court anything that anyone else has told the guardian ad litem during the course of the investigation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that it is **inappropriate** for me or for my attorney to **discuss this litigation with the child(ren)** involved in this case from this point forward. If I have specific concerns involving the children's understanding of this litigation, I should address those concerns through the guardian ad litem.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to **avoid discussing this litigation with the child(ren)** involved in this case, and I agree to instruct my attorney not to do so, from this point forward. If I have specific concerns involving the children's understanding of this litigation, I will address those concerns through the guardian ad litem.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to **allow the child(ren) to voice their desires** exclusively through the guardian ad litem in this case. I will not interfere with this process.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that my obligation to pay the guardian ad litem's fees is in the **nature of support for the child(ren)** involved in this case. Without a guardian ad litem's services, the child(ren)'s best interests cannot and will not be exclusively represented.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the initial fee the Court has ordered me to pay will **NOT cover the full costs of the guardian ad litem's services in this case**. The Court will determine the proportion of the guardian ad litem's fees for which I am responsible at the conclusion of this case, and I will be required to satisfy that obligation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the guardian ad litem **will not begin work** in this case until the initial fee ordered by the Court has been paid by all parties, subject to the handling of any emergency situations as determined solely by the guardian ad litem, and subject to any specific instructions from the Court.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the guardian ad litem **will not initiate contempt proceedings** against a party who fails or refuses to pay the initial fee ordered by the

Court. Absent extraordinary circumstances, the guardian ad litem will not initiate any contempt proceedings concerning nonpayment prior to the conclusion of the case. If I am frustrated that the guardian ad litem has not begun work because of another party's failure to pay as ordered, I and my attorney must decide whether to initiate contempt proceedings against that party.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the guardian ad litem alone will determine **the scope of the investigation** after considering the input from the parties and subject to any specific instructions from the Court.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that if I fail to pay invoices from the guardian ad litem as they are received during the case, the guardian ad litem may immediately **suspend or conclude the investigation**, subject to any specific instructions from the Court.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that my obligation to pay the guardian ad litem's fees is **NOT dischargeable in bankruptcy**.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I may be held in **contempt of court**, and possibly incarcerated, if I fail to pay the guardian ad litem's fees as ordered by the Court.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree that I will keep the guardian ad litem informed of **any address and/or telephone number changes** that I have at all times prior to the time that I have completely paid my portion of the guardian ad litem's fees.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree that I will affirmatively seek to **establish a payment plan in good faith** with the guardian ad litem if I am unable to immediately pay as ordered by the Court the amounts due to the guardian ad litem.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree that I will not in any way, shape, form, or fashion **seek to avoid paying the guardian ad litem the amounts due** to the guardian ad litem as determined by the Court at the conclusion of this case. I will instead consistently keep the guardian ad litem apprised at all times of my good-faith efforts and progress in paying the amounts due.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF PARTY

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINTED NAME OF PARTY

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE