

# Child Custody Evaluation Roadmap

Sacramento and Placer Counties

## 1 Mandatory Mediation (CCRC)

California law requires parents to participate in custody mediation before the court will hear a contested custody dispute.



### Sacramento County

Recommending mediation through Family Court Services. Mediator may issue a written report with recommendations if no agreement is reached.



### Placer County

Confidential mediation through Family Court Services. No custody recommendations are provided to the court.

## 2 Did the parties reach agreement?

Mediation is the most effective first step and can save time, cost, and stress for your family.



Yes

Parenting plan finalized.



No

Court moves to the next step.

## 3 Type of custody evaluation ordered

If mediation does not resolve the issues, the court may order a custody evaluation based on the complexity and concerns in the case.



### 3111 evaluation

Standard custody evaluation. Includes interviews, document review, observations, and collateral contacts. Evaluator provides a written report with recommendations.



### 3118 evaluation

Triggered by allegations of abuse. Focused investigation of the concerns. Coordinates with agencies and may involve specialized professionals.



### 730 evaluation

Requires specialized psychological expertise. Includes psychological testing and in-depth analysis of mental health issues. Most intensive and most costly.

## 4 Court decision

The judge reviews the evaluation report and all other evidence.








### Not binding, but highly influential

Recommending mediation through Family Court Services. Mediator may issue a written report with recommendations if no agreement is reached.

# County Comparison

## Custody Mediation and Recommending Counseling

	Sacramento County	Placer County
 <p>Mediation Model</p>	Recommending mediation model through Family Court Services.	Confidential mediation model through Family Court Services.
 <p>Recommendations</p>	Mediator may issue a written report with recommendations if the parties do not reach agreement.	No custody recommendations are provided to the court.
 <p>Court use</p>	Recommendations may be provided to the court and introduced into evidence, subject to objection.	Court typically receives only an informational report. No recommendations.
 <p>Impact</p>	Provides early judicial insight. Often used for temporary orders or to narrow issues.	Limited early court input. Detailed analysis usually occurs later if privately requested.
 <p>Private CCR</p>	Private Child Custody Recommending Counseling is optional.	Private Child Custody Recommending Counseling is often necessary to obtain recommendations.

### Private child custody recommending counseling (both counties)



#### 1. File petition

File a Petition for Private Child Custody Recommending Counseling with the court.



#### 4. Costs

Requesting party typically advances the cost, subject to later allocation by the court.



#### 2. Required documents

Include proposed order, declarations regarding the counselor's qualifications, and proof of service.



#### 5. Effect

Once approved, private recommending counseling replaces the standard Family Court Services mediation.



#### 3. Objection Period

The opposing party has 10 days to file a response or objection.