

SUPERVISED PARENTING TIME OVERVIEW

At Slatin Family Services, our supervisors have earned a Master Degree in Counseling, with an emphasis in Marriage, Family, and Child Therapy, hold an Arizona Department of Public Safety Level One Fingerprint Clearance Card, have had professional supervision training, adhere to professional parenting time standards, have experience with court litigants and their families, and are bilingual in English and Spanish. We are experienced and familiar with good, economically appropriate locations and activities for visitation. *To aid in your familiarity with the services in this specialized area, this has been prepared to aid you with useful information.*

Supervised parenting time needs. The need for parenting time to be supervised can present in several ways; a parent who has had little time with the children in the recent past, one who has limited parenting skills, relationship conflict between parent and child/children, has had substance abuse challenges, domestic violence issues to which the children were exposed, etc. While the reasons can differ, the focus and goal is always the same; to provide an 'anchor' whose focus is the safety of the children being supervised during time with one or both of the parents.

Generally, there are two types of supervisors; unpaid and paid. Unpaid supervisors may be involved because the parents have little to no financial resources to pay for a supervisor, whose hourly rate can be in the area of \$65/hour.

Unpaid supervisor. An unpaid supervisor is often a family member, of which the most common is a grandparent. While the unpaid supervisor is often one who is relationship-vested in the children and someone with whom the children are comfortable, he or she has had no supervision training and can have difficulty establishing/maintaining the structure and boundaries necessary to facilitate the bonding and safety focus of the visitation. Consider the grandparent who may have difficulty recognizing/asserting their role in little transgressions, only to abruptly end a parenting time with a more egregious problem which then is often accompanied by 'drama.' A well-meaning, unpaid supervisor with no supervision training will have its own set of problems for which the supervisor is unprepared to handle.

Paid supervisor. There are two types of paid supervision, those being clinical and non-clinical, each of whom can submit regular reports of the supervision to the court, attorneys, and parties. Although therapeutic supervision can range from \$85-\$135/hour, this is typically performed by a licensed psychologist who can observe from a therapeutic perspective, adding observations that are useful for children or parents in therapy. More common is the use of a non-therapeutic supervisor as a 'safety anchor' for the children. The expense for this supervisor is typically \$65/hour.

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Comparison and resources. In considering the differences between unpaid and paid supervision, the unpaid supervisor generally has no training, whereas the paid supervisor is typically someone who has earned a master degree in a related area (often counseling or social work), has significant experience in working with family court litigants, and importantly, adheres to the training and guidelines for professional supervision. There are guidelines and training requirement resources that can be found through the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (afccnet.org), of which several are applicable in considering unpaid and paid supervision, as follows:

- a. A GUIDE FOR THE NON-PROFESSIONAL PROVIDER OF SUPERVISED VISITATION, Superior Court of Orange County, California.
- b. GUIDELINES FOR NON-CLINICAL MONITORED PARENTING TIME, Arizona (2011-2012).
- c. GUIDELINES FOR COURT PRACTICES FOR SUPERVISED VISITATION, Massachusetts (2005).
- d. STANDARDS FOR SUPERVISED PARENTING TIME PRACTICE, Supervised Parenting time Network (2006).

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Please contact us with any questions or service needs you may have.

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