



**JUDICIAL COUNCIL  
OF CALIFORNIA**

455 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, CA  
94102-3688  
Tel. 415-865-4200  
Fax 415-865-4205  
www.courts.ca.gov

## **FACT SHEET**

---

**September 2023**

# **Family Court Services**

In accordance with California Family Code 1850, the Judicial Council's Family Court Services (FCS) staff at the Center for Families, Children & the Courts (CFCC) assists the trial courts' approximately 450 Family Court Services directors, managers, supervisors, court administrators and professional staff.

### **Services Provided:**

1. Program management training and consultation; site visits and program review; information pertaining to proposed policy changes affecting family court services, mediation, child custody, and related topics; current rules and forms for:
  - Child custody mediation and child custody recommending counseling.
  - Specialized domestic violence and child safety procedures.
  - Child custody evaluation and investigations.
  - Parent orientation programs.
  - Emerging investigations and safety assessments.
  - Other related services assigned by the local court (e.g., guardianship mediation and investigations, minor marriage assessments, interviewing children, and other services).
2. Statewide statistical reporting child custody dispute resolution and custody dispositions.
3. A program of small grants to learn about, develop, and test new dispute resolution techniques; obtain technical assistance or consultation; share ideas through court exchange visits.
4. Provide quantitative information on the effectiveness of current practices for the purpose of shaping future procedures.

## ***Family Court Services***

*Page 2 of 3*

---

5. Administer a program to deliver mandated training for court personnel. The FCS program staff collaborates with trial court staff to plan and provide mandated training and continuing education as required by the Family Code and California Rules of Court in the following subject matter areas:
  - Child custody mediation and child custody recommending counseling.
  - Child custody evaluation.
  - Domestic violence.
  - Behavioral health matters that impact children and families.
  - Family law legal updates.
  - Practice and research.
  - Program and personnel administration.

### **Major Training Events:**

The FCS team produces and coordinates the following in-person and/or remote trainings: FCS Statewide Educational Institute, held in conjunction with the Judicial Family Law Institute during Child and Family Focused Education (CAFFE).

- Regional trainings and/or a series of statewide virtual trainings for FCS Mediators, Child Custody Recommending Counselors, and their leadership.
- Family Court Services Directors, Managers, Supervisors, and Court Administrators' (FCS Directors) Training Symposia.
- New FCS Directors' Training Symposia.
- Institute for New Court Professionals (NCP), providing a combination of virtual and self-study pre-requisites to comply with 40 hours mandated initial training for new FCS staff.

The frequency of in-person and virtual programs is dependent upon trial court program needs and budgetary factors, taking into consideration the most cost-effective methods. Currently, most programs take place every other year, with the statewide program one year and regional programs or statewide virtual webinar series in the alternate year. FCS Directors' training symposia generally take place twice per year, while NCP and New FCS Directors training programs are dependent upon staffing changes.

**Distance and On Demand/Self-Study Education and Training Programs:**

The FCS program staff supplements in-person trainings with the following FCS education modalities to make content readily accessible year-round and reduce expenses both to the local courts and the Judicial Council:

- Live webinar courses.
- Calcourts Moodle online virtual learning platform of recorded trainings and resources.
- Monthly FCS Directors video conference trainings.
- Monthly Mentoring Meetings for Mediators/CCRCs.
- Toolkits for Directors and New Court Professionals.

*Contact:*

FCS@jud.ca.gov

*Additional resources:*

General family law information, [www.courts.ca.gov/cfcc-familylaw.htm](http://www.courts.ca.gov/cfcc-familylaw.htm)  
[www.familieschange.ca.gov/](http://www.familieschange.ca.gov/)  
[selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/families-and-children](http://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/families-and-children)