



King County

Department of Judicial Administration
Barbara Miner
Director and Superior Court Clerk
(206) 296-9300 (206) 296-0100 TTY/TDD

December 28, 2010

Andrew Prazuch, Executive Director
King County Bar Association
1200 Fifth Avenue, Suite 600
Seattle, WA 98101

RE: King County Family Law Rule Adopted on Emergency Basis and Published for Comment

Dear Mr. Prazuch:

Enclosed please find a copy of King County Superior Court Local Family Law Rule 20, Orientation Program in Family Law Matters, adopted on an emergency basis by the Court effective January 1, 2011 and published for comment pursuant to King County Local Rule 83. The Court will consider all comments, criticisms and objections to this rule that are received by February 25, 2011.

Comments to the newly adopted rule should be in writing and directed to:

lrcomments@kingcounty.gov
or
Barbara Miner
Clerk of the Superior Court
ATTN: Local Rules
516 Third Avenue, Rm E609
Seattle, WA 98104

A copy of this rule will also be available in the Copy Center of the Clerk's Offices, the King County Law Library in Seattle and at the Law Library in the Regional Justice Center in Kent and on the Clerk's web page at: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/Clerk/Rules.aspx>.

We request that you send an e-mail to your members regarding this rule comment period. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

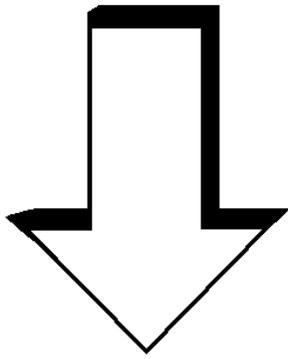
Barbara Miner
Director and Superior Court Clerk

enclosure

Seattle:
516 Third Avenue Room E609
Seattle, WA 98104-2386

Regional Justice Center:
401 Fourth Avenue North Room 2C
Kent, WA 98032-4429

Juvenile Section:
1211 East Alder #307
Seattle, WA 98122-5598



CLERK'S OFFICE

ALERT

FAMILY LAW ORIENTATION PROGRAM RULE ADOPTED ON EMERGENCY BASIS AND PUBLISHED FOR COMMENT

The King County Superior Court has adopted Local Family Law Rule 20, Orientation Program in Family Law Matters, on an emergency basis, effective January 1, 2011.

King County Superior Court is hereby publishing for comment this change to the King County Superior Court Local Rules. The court will consider all comments received by February 25, 2011.

Copies of the emergency rule are available on the Clerk's website at: www.kingcounty.gov/courts/Clerk/Rules.aspx and are also available to view at the copy center in the Clerk's Office in Seattle and in Kent.

Comments to the emergency rule should be in writing and directed to:

lrcomments@kingcounty.gov

or

Barbara Miner

Clerk of the Superior Court

ATTN: Local Rules

516 Third Avenue, Rm E609

Seattle, WA 98104

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS TOPIC CONTACT:

Kathei McCoy at 206-205-8451 or kathei.mccoy@kingcounty.gov

ISSUED BY: Barbara Miner, Director and Superior Court Clerk

ISSUE DATE: December 21, 2010

ISSUE NO: 10-010

LFLR 20. ORIENTATION PROGRAM IN FAMILY LAW MATTERS
Adopted on an Emergency Basis; effective January 1, 2011

(a) Description and Applicability. To assist self-represented parties involved in family law matters and improve the efficiency of the court, King County Superior Court Family Court shall conduct an Orientation Program for parties in all cases filed under Chapter 26.09 RCW, including dissolutions of marriage, legal separations and major parenting plan modifications.

(b) Mandatory Attendance. In all cases referred to in Section (a) above, all self-represented parties shall successfully complete the Orientation Program within thirty (30) days of filing or service of the summons and petition. Successful completion shall be evidenced by a certificate of attendance filed with the court by Family Court Operations staff. Any party attending the Orientation Program prior to obtaining a King County Superior Court cause number shall be responsible for filing his or her certificate of attendance in the court file when the cause number is obtained.

(1) *Out of County Resident.* A party residing outside of King County shall be excused from attending the Orientation Program if attendance would be a hardship. Such parties are required to review the Orientation Program materials and file a sworn declaration that they have done so.

(2) *Represented Parties.* Attendance at the Orientation Program shall be excused for a party represented by counsel, provided that if the party becomes self-represented before entry of final orders, such party shall attend the orientation seminar, unless waived for good cause.

(3) *Good Cause.* The court may excuse a party from attending the Orientation Program or permit a party to review the materials and file a sworn declaration that he or she has done so as an alternative to in-person attendance, for good cause shown.

(4) *Service.* The petitioner shall serve the Notice of Mandatory Orientation Program on all respondents at the time the Summons and Petition is served. If a joinder to the petition is filed, the petitioner shall provide the Notice of Mandatory Orientation Program to any joining party within seven (7) days of filing of the joinder.

(5) *Special Considerations.* Opposing parties shall not be required to attend the Orientation Program together.

(6) *Renewal.* The court may reinstitute the requirement to attend the Orientation Program at any time in cases where attendance was previously excused.

(c) Failure to Comply. Delay, refusal or default by one party does not excuse timely compliance by any other party. The Orientation Registration Form shall be submitted to Family Court Services. *See section (a) above.* Unless attendance at the seminar is excused, any party requesting a hearing, including those parties seeking to enter final orders in the action, and any party responding to a request for hearing, shall attend the Orientation Program prior to obtaining affirmative relief. Attendance at the Orientation Program shall not be required prior to emergency hearings or the issuance of restraining orders. Willful refusal or delay by any party may constitute contempt of court and result in sanctions imposed by the court, including the imposition of monetary terms, default or striking of pleadings.

(d) Fee. Each party attending the Orientation Program, or who has been approved to review the materials in lieu of attendance, shall pay a fee charged by Family Court Operations and approved by the court. The court shall provide the service at no expense for indigent parties.