

Penny L. Sprecher, Ph.D.
Clinical Psychologist

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**Financial Policy & Agreement
For Psychological Evaluation and Child Custody/Parenting Evaluations**

**FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY FEE SCHEDULE
AND RETAINER AGREEMENT**

Introduction.

This document confirms that you are retaining Dr. Sprecher as an expert in Clinical Psychology and have agreed to the terms of payment. As her Curriculum Vitae reveals, she has extensive experience serving as an expert witness in a variety of legal proceedings, including in the areas of family law, child custody, and parenting assessments. The terms of her engagement are set forth in writing in order to avoid misunderstandings. Our office asks that you indicate your agreement by returning copy of this letter to me, along with your check for the initial retainer fee.

Services.

A forensic psychological evaluation consists of utilizing a variety of techniques for determining and then documenting an individual's psychological status. These techniques include clinical interviews, mental status examinations, psycho-diagnostic testing, review of relevant records, interviews with collateral sources, research, conferences with attorneys or others, and preparation of a written report if requested. Once the evaluation is complete, Dr. Sprecher may be asked to provide testimony in a deposition or a court.

Since Dr. Sprecher does not have access to the court system except through Counsel, who retains her, please note that she depends on you to obtain various records related to your case. You will be provided with a list of records that are needed for you to personally produce, as well as obtained from third parties via subpoena. Dr. Sprecher's effectiveness as an expert witness will depend to a great degree on her having access to these records.

Location of Provision of Services.

Except where special arrangements have been made, all forensic psychology services will be provided at 12801 Iron Bridge Road, Suite 400, Chester, VA 23831.

Fees.

The fee for court-related *psychological and parenting/custody evaluations* are not covered by insurance carriers. Fees for a court-related *psychological/mental health evaluation* **begin** at \$1,500.00. The rate for a *parenting/custody assessment* **begins** at \$2,500.00 per person; the fees may be more in complex cases.

This rate for the *parenting/custody assessments* includes time spent for scheduling, up to one hour of record review, interviewing up to three collaterals by phone, parenting assessment scales, and surveys, scoring interpretation of parenting measures, report preparation, and brief phone consultations up to 30 minutes with attorneys, probation officers, previous therapists, and physicians, etc. Sometimes the examiner may choose to meet with minor children if she feels it is appropriate. If necessary, fees beyond the base charge will be negotiated as the evaluation progresses. Hourly fees are billed at \$250.00 per hour. The parenting evaluation typically involves three or more meetings with the client. Payment in full is required prior to or on the first date of service. Cancellations must be made 7 days in advance, or the fee will not be refunded.

A *psychological/mental health evaluation* is typically completed in a three-hour or more block and a 90-minute follow-up visit. Additional meetings with the client and family may be required but will incur an additional hourly charge. Additional fees will also be assessed for record review, depositions, and phone consultations that go beyond the terms stated above. Hourly fees are billed at \$250.00 per hour. Payment in full is required prior to or on the first date of service. Cancellations must be made 7 days in advance or the fee will not be refunded. The balance is due at the time of the first appointment. Refunds are not granted in the event that the party decides not to complete the assessment process.

Court appearances will be billed at the rate of \$1,000.00 per half-day or \$2,000.00 daily for expert witness testimony. It will be important for you to know how long you will require her services (e.g. half day or whole day) 10 days prior to your court date.

It will be necessary for Dr. Sprecher to be subpoenaed to court. The client who issues the subpoena will be responsible for court fees unless agreed upon by both parties in advance. In the event that Dr. Sprecher is retained for only a half-day, a valid credit card number will be required to be on file so that the additional half-day fee may be charged, if necessary. Fees will not be refunded for partial days (e.g., 6 hours). Court appearance fees include time in court, as well as wait and travel times. Thus, the full-day fee for an out-of-town case may include 4 hours of travel time and 4 hours in the courtroom, either testifying or waiting. The additional time that goes beyond 8 hours will incur an additional \$250.00 per hour fee.

Cancellation Policy.

Because Dr. Sprecher's practice consists of outpatient psychotherapy services and routine psychological evaluations, please provide as much time as possible in advance to schedule appointments for providing forensic psychology services, including depositions and/or courtroom testimony.

Late cancellations are highly disruptive to the schedule and other patients. If an appointment for a court-related evaluation is canceled within 7 calendar days for any reason, including settlement, there is a \$30,000 cancellation fee. Because of the greater time commitment involved in being available for deposition or courtroom testimony, the full half-day charge will be assessed if such service is canceled or continued with less than 72-hour notice.

Payment Policy.

After Dr. Sprecher is retained, payment is due in full at the time of the initial appointment for the psychological evaluation/parental assessment. Any additional fees that have been incurred in excess of the basic \$2,500.00 evaluation fee are due prior to the report being released. The fee for a court appearance is due 10 days prior to the scheduled court date.

The fee may be put on a credit card but will incur an additional 3% credit card charge. In the event that a refund is requested, the 3% processing fee will be forfeited. Again, cancellation for psychological evaluations and parenting/custody assessments must be made within 7 days of the scheduled appointment to avoid the \$300.00 cancellation fee. Canceled or rescheduled court appearances must be made 72 hours in advance of the offering of such testimony, or else it is entirely non-refundable. I reserve the right to add an interest charge of 10% per year, compounded monthly, to all overdue amounts.

Because of the potential for cross-examination on the grounds of bias, Dr. Sprecher requires that all of my invoices be paid in full prior to giving testimony at any hearing, trial, or arbitration. In the event of nonpayment of invoices, you agree that she may withdraw her services regardless of whether or not she has been formally designated as an expert.

Acknowledging Signatures.

If these terms are acceptable to you, please sign where indicated below and return the letter to me with the estimated retainer listed below.

By signing below, you agree that these terms are acceptable to you, and you agree to be bound by them. I look forward to working with you on this matter.

Charge for Psychological Evaluation or Custody/Parenting Assessment: -----

Charge for Child Custody/Parental Assessment: -----

Charge for Court Testimony (half day/full day):-----

Estimated Charge for Court Preparation: -----

Credit Card Processing Fee:-----

Estimated Total Charges:-----

Please note that additional charges may apply, including additional time required for psychological assessment and court appearance, which are billable at \$250.00 per hour.

Patient Signature

Witness

Date

Date