



Custodial Evaluations

A custodial evaluation is an in-depth look at your family, usually by a psychologist, to help the court with custody decisions. The evaluator is appointed by the court or agreed on by the parties, and makes recommendations based on what is best for the children.

What the process involves

- 1 Parent Interviews.** The evaluator meets with each parent, often more than once, to learn about your history and parenting.
- 2 Psychological Testing.** Parents may complete standard questionnaires or tests. This is a routine part of the process.
- 3 Time With the Children.** Depending on their ages, the evaluator may meet the children and observe them with each parent.
- 4 Home Visits.** The evaluator may visit each home to see where the children live and spend their time. This is not common, but it is possible.
- 5 Collateral Contacts.** The evaluator may speak with teachers, doctors, or counselors and review records such as school reports.
- 6 Written Report.** The evaluator prepares a report with findings and custody recommendations.

Timing and cost

Length. Evaluations generally take several months from start to finish.

Fees. Evaluations can be costly. The court order or the parties' agreement usually says how fees are divided.

The Judge Decides. The report is a recommendation. The judge makes the final custody decision.

Settlement. Many parties use the report as a starting point for reaching an agreement.

What to keep in mind

The evaluator is neutral and does not work for either parent.

Be honest and be yourself. Evaluators are trained to notice exaggeration.

Never coach the children or discuss the case with them. Let them speak freely.

Focus on your children's needs rather than criticizing the other parent.

Be on time and respond promptly to the evaluator's requests.

This guide provides general information about custodial evaluations in Georgia family law matters and is not legal advice about your specific case. Your attorney will explain how a custodial evaluation applies to your situation.

YOUR ROLE

Schedule appointments promptly, provide any records the evaluator requests, stay honest and child-focused, and let us know right away if you have concerns.

QUESTIONS?

As always, all questions and requests should be directed to the team via email to team@pepitone.law.