



Family Law Settlement Conference Instructions

The mandatory family law settlement conference is scheduled for the date and time indicated on the **Order Setting Trial Date**.

Settlement Conferences are conducted in the Commissioner's Conference Room on the second floor of the courthouse at 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham, Washington 98225.

In order to adequately develop the issues for the conference, each party shall, no later than 4:30 PM on the Friday before the scheduled settlement conference, provide the Commissioner and opposing party or counsel with:

1. A statement of issues, not to exceed two pages in length, setting out each of the issues being contested and a brief summary of the evidence expected to support each contention. Specific positions must be set out in the statement, along with any legal authority that is relevant.
2. A copy of proposed parenting plans, child support worksheets, and the pretrial information form required by WCSPR 94.08 shall be provided to the court and opposing parties as well.
3. If a Guardian ad Litem (GAL) has been appointed, a copy of the GAL report shall be furnished to the court by the Petitioner.

The above documents for the Commissioner shall be delivered to the County Clerk's office, Suite 301. The copies shall indicate on the top-right corner of the first page of each document the **Date**, **Time** and **Commissioner** ordered for the settlement conference.

The statements of issues are for the purposes of preparation and for use at the settlement conference only. Two hours are allotted for the conference, but if substantial progress is made and further time is needed, an additional date may be scheduled.

Please be aware that the Commissioner will not communicate with either party prior to the conference. If counsel or a party has questions regarding procedural matters such as time, place, etc., please call the County Clerk's office. Sanctions, including loss of trial date, may be levied against parties or counsels who fail to appear or prepare for the conference.

[Effective 4.5.2010]