

Voice of the Child Report Guidelines

Information on Conducting a
Court-ordered Voice of the Child Report
in Private Family Law Proceedings
in Nova Scotia

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Court Services
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These guidelines were developed by an advisory committee comprised of mental health professionals (including representatives of the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology and of the Nova Scotia Association of Social Workers), members of the judiciary, senior legal counsel, and policy makers involved in family law matters. The Advisory Committee members were

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Foreword

Children and families matter. We can all agree it is important to determine parenting arrangements without exposing children to harmful conflict. What a child has to say matters. A child's voice needs to be heard in a safe and reliable manner. These guidelines provide a thoughtful and helpful framework for obtaining the views and preferences of children, when it is appropriate to do so in the court process. As a judge and formerly as a lawyer, I have been keenly interested in finding better ways to help families solve their problems. When asked to participate in this important undertaking, I welcomed the opportunity. I had the privilege of working collaboratively with a committee of like-minded professionals. These guidelines are the result of the timely and thorough work of our committee. On behalf of our committee, we trust these guidelines will assist families, professionals who prepare Voice of the Child reports, and judges who have to decide cases involving parental disputes.

*Justice Elizabeth Van den Eynden
Nova Scotia Court of Appeal*

It is with pleasure that I write this Foreword to introduce and reflect on the content of the Voice of the Child Report Guidelines and the process by which they were created.

I first wish to acknowledge the efforts and expertise of Advisory Committee members in developing these guidelines. Committee members have come together from across Nova Scotia and from a variety of professional disciplines with the common goal of creating a document to serve the best interests of children in this province. These guidelines represent the good work that can be accomplished through collaboration.

I also wish to acknowledge the significance of these guidelines. They reflect and underscore the importance of hearing from children in appropriate cases when courts are called on to make parenting decisions. Improving processes for ordering and preparing Voice of the Child Reports in Nova Scotia will be instructive and valuable to everyone involved. These improvements are also likely to strengthen family relationships, lessen conflict, and lead to greater settlement of parenting disputes. These guidelines will also provide a further means for litigants and children in Nova Scotia to gain greater access to justice. Simply put, this is wonderful work. Thanks to all who contributed.

*Tilly Pillay, Q.C.
A/Deputy Minister of Justice*

Introduction

Decisions about the best interests of a child in a parenting dispute often involve the court taking the child's voice into account.¹ Determining whether and how the court hears a child's voice is dependent on many factors. Obtaining the views and preferences of a child must be done in an appropriate manner. One method is a court-ordered Voice of the Child Report.

Generally, children have better relationships within their families when they believe their voices have been heard.² Adult litigants who hear the views and preferences of the children involved may develop a more child-focused perspective. As a result, there can be less conflict and more agreement.

These guidelines were developed to assist participants, courts, and assessors with the process of ordering and preparing Voice of the Child reports in private family law disputes in Nova Scotia. These guidelines operate in addition to codes of conduct and ethics and to standards of practice for lawyers and assessors.

Objectives and Scope of the Guidelines

The objectives of these guidelines are to

- increase understanding of the purpose and scope of a Voice of the Child Report
- promote consistent, reliable, ethical, and sound practice in preparing a Voice of the Child Report
- assist assessors in providing reports that meet the expectations of the court
- ensure a Voice of the Child Report assists in the court's determination of the child's best interests
- increase the level of confidence the court, parties, counsel, and child have in the process and in the report

A Voice of the Child Report presents information directly from the child, which may include information about the child's

- views and preferences
- worries or concerns
- perceptions and experiences

A Voice of the Child Report may be prepared on its own or as part of a larger assessment. On its own, a Voice of the Child Report will not provide a thorough mental health assessment or a complete analysis of the child's needs or best interests.

¹ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12, *Maintenance and Custody Act*, R.S.N.S. 1989, c. 160, s. 18(6)(f), *Judicature Act*, R.S., c. 240, s. 32F.

² See, for example, Birnbaum, R. (2009). *The Voice of the Child in Separation/Divorce Mediation and Other Alternative Dispute Resolution Processes: A Literature Review*. Report prepared for Department of Justice, Canada, pp. 10-13, 61 and Birnbaum, R. and Saini, M. (2012). *A Qualitative Synthesis of Children's Participation in Custody Disputes*. *Research on Social Work Practice* 22(4), p. 406.

Requesting and Ordering a Voice of the Child Report

In many cases, parties agree on parenting terms that incorporate their child's voice, making a separate determination of the child's voice unnecessary. When such an agreement cannot be reached, a decision regarding how to ascertain a child's voice should generally be made early in the proceeding. There are many ways in which a child's views and preferences may be determined. The court will decide which option is most appropriate in each case. Factors that may influence the decision include

- the stage of the proceedings (timing)
- the nature of the contentious issues
- the age and stage of development of the child
- whether the child's views and preferences can reasonably be ascertained
- how best to obtain reliable information regarding the child's views and preferences
- the importance of minimizing emotional stress to the child
- preserving the child's relationship with each parent
- cost effectiveness and efficiency
- encouraging settlement and reducing conflict

When the child's views and preferences may be reasonably ascertained, possible options for obtaining them include

- ordering a Voice of the Child Report
- hearing evidence from lay witnesses
- appointing a litigation guardian
- hearing evidence directly from the child in appropriate cases
- conducting a judicial interview
- hearing expert evidence (either from a court-appointed or privately retained expert)

A Voice of the Child Report may be ordered when there is a contentious matter involving parenting. A party to a proceeding may request that the court order a Voice of the Child Report, or the court may do so on its own motion. The court may order a Voice of the Child Report when it is necessary and appropriate to the determination of the best interests of the child.

The court will give directions on the scope and nature of the report. To assist the assessor to best obtain reliable information regarding the child's views and preferences, it will be helpful if the order of the court is as specific as possible. In addition to posing specific questions to be answered, the court may choose to provide additional directions in the court order. Sample orders regarding the referral for assessment and payment of assessment are available (see *Appendix A*). Although draft orders are available, only the court has the authority to determine the form and content of the orders.

Referrals to Assessors

Court Services' *Policy and Procedure for the Preparation of Court-ordered Assessments* is applicable to Voice of the Child reports and will guide the selection of assessors and collection of fees accordingly. Under this policy, the parties will be made aware of the assessor chosen and the qualifications held. If the parties make private arrangements for a Voice of the Child Report, this policy does not apply.

In most cases, the Voice of the Child Report process will not involve the assessor's reviewing the court file or other materials. Assessors will benefit from having a brief description of the competing parenting proposals. The judge may direct that filed Parenting Statements be provided to the assessor. In situations where more current or detailed parenting proposal information is required, the judge may direct parties to file and exchange a Parenting Proposal Form and that the form be provided to the assessor. However, the judge may direct otherwise.

Adult litigants may be contacted, and in certain cases interviewed, unless otherwise ordered by the court. Contact with adult litigants may assist the assessor to make introductions, set an interview time with the child, explain the process, set expectations, and gather information. Contact or interview with adult litigants is not intended to be an assessment of their parenting plans or parenting abilities. A Voice of the Child Report will not usually contain information about the adult litigants' perceptions of the child's views and preferences, unless determined by the assessor to be necessary (for example, to describe evidence of coaching or influence).

If the assessor requires clarity respecting the order and scope of the referral, the assessor may pose written requests for directions through the court officer.

Unless privately retained, the assessor is considered to be the court's expert witness.

Planning and Conducting the Process

The assessor shall consider whether factors exist that may affect the validity of the process, including whether

- the child is willing and able to play a meaningful role in the process
- the child's views and preferences can be reliably ascertained
- the child has been coached or inappropriately influenced

In order to facilitate the child's meaningful participation, the assessor shall consider

- the age and stage of development of the child
- the culture and language of the child
- the optimal place for the interview
- the steps needed to ensure privacy during the interview
- what time will be sufficient to conduct the interview
- whether a joint interview is required in cases where there is more than one child
- when appropriate, who will bring the child to the interview

When conducting interviews and evaluating interactions with the child, the assessor shall consider the following:

- when the child has views and preferences:
 - how clear they are
 - how strongly held they are
 - how long they have been expressed
 - whether they have been unduly influenced
- the child's maturity level
- the practicalities of the child's preferences
- whether further interviews of the child will be conducted

If an issue arises that requires clarification during the process, the assessor may contact the court officer. This includes whether, in the assessor's view, contact with collaterals should occur before finalizing the report. In responding to the assessor's queries, the court officer may request that the assessor pose questions in writing so that the parties may be made aware of the matter. The court officer may seek further direction from the court in resolving the issue.

Preparing the Report

In the report, the assessor should comment on or include the following:

- a list of materials provided
- the details of the interview process (for example, who was interviewed, where, how many times, and for how long)
- behavioural observations, including any observations that may be indicative of influence
- the child's ability to participate
- any noteworthy interactions with the parents or caregivers
- the child's comments about how and when they formulated their view
- the basis for the assessor's opinions, conclusions, or statements
- a direct response to questions posed in the order, or the reasons why they could not be answered or not answered in full
- any limitations regarding their report
- if, in the assessor's opinion, other services or an expert assessment is warranted, the report should state the specific service or type of assessment and why it is recommended

Reports should be written in plain language, avoiding technical jargon. If clinical terms are used, they should be defined.

The assessor must attach a *curriculum vitae* to the report. An abbreviated *curriculum vitae* may be submitted but must provide information on the assessor's academic and professional qualifications, and include

- the type and number of assessments previously completed
- a statement as to whether the assessor has been previously qualified to give expert evidence in court, and, if so, what the nature of the qualification was
- a list of any academic publications and presentations

Appendix B: *Voice of the Child Report Framework* will help assessors to capture and organize the key elements of the Voice of the Child Report. Use of the framework is strongly recommended.

Presenting the Report and Giving Evidence

When the report has been court-ordered, the assessor shall provide the report directly to the court. Upon filing the report, the assessor should address any concerns about the report being made available to the parties or the child. Subject to any distribution directions from the court, the court officer will provide copies of the report to the parties or their counsel.

When the court has determined it appropriate for the parties to make a financial contribution to the cost of the report, and the report is ordered in accordance with the *Court Services' Policy and Procedure for the Preparation of Court-ordered Assessments*, the court officer will confirm the outstanding amounts owed by either party under the court order.

The report will not be provided to the child unless authorized by the court. The court may direct whether, how, or what information may be supplied to the child about the contents of the report.

At the time of a pre-hearing conference, the court may address the admissibility of the report, and whether the assessor will be required to give evidence. The court will determine whether, how, or when an assessor may be called to give evidence and be examined or cross examined.

Appendix A: Draft Orders

For downloadable versions for the Family Court, Supreme Court, and Supreme Court Family Division, see <http://nsfamilylaw.ca/other/assessments-VCR/VCR/VCRGuidelines#Appendix%20A:%20Draft%20Orders>

A.1: Voice of the Child Report Order

20**

No.

[Insert Name of Court]

Between:

	[NAME]	-and -	[Applicant]
	[NAME]		[Respondent]

Voice of the Child Report Order

Before **[insert Her/His Honour Judge/the Honourable Justice]**:

This proceeding is before this honourable court for determination of **[insert description of circumstances]**;

The parties have the following **[child/children]**:

[Insert name and date of birth];

Proof of service of the **[notice/application]** has been established and the evidence presented by **[affidavit/testimony/affidavit and testimony]** has been considered;

[On the judge's own motion] or [On motion of name of moving party, parties, or counsel], a Voice of the Child Report has been requested in order to obtain the views and preferences of **[insert child or children]**;

The court has determined that in these circumstances it is appropriate and in the best interest of **[insert name of child/children]** to obtain a Voice of the Child Report **[and the party/parties also consent to this order]**;

Accordingly, pursuant to **[section 19 of the Maintenance and Custody Act, or section 32F of the Judicature Act or under the court's inherent parens patriae jurisdiction]** a Voice of the Child Report shall be obtained pursuant to the terms and conditions set out herein:

The appropriate contribution of each party pursuant to the Regulations made under the Costs and Fees Act, **[or other finding as to payment as the judge directs]** shall be dealt with under a separate order of this court.

Now upon Motion it is ordered:

1. A Voice of the Child Report is hereby ordered. The report shall be completed and filed with the court on or before [insert date.] The purpose of the report is to obtain the views and preferences of [the child/children] respecting [the insert particulars parenting arrangements/ custody/access/];
2. The report shall be prepared in accordance with the Voice of the Child Report Guidelines. These guidelines are available at; <http://www.nsfamilylaw.ca/other/assessments-VCR/VCR/VCRGuidelines>; or the assessor may request a copy from [insert contact person at court];
3. The assessor shall not have access to or be provided any materials maintained by the court unless the court approves otherwise.
4. **[Optional]** The assessor is to be provided with a copy of the filed Parenting Statements of each party **[B]** each party must complete and exchange the Parenting Proposal Form attached hereto as Appendix 1. The purpose of this form is to provide the assessor a brief description of the competing proposals in advance of conducting any interviews. The forms are to be filed with the court and exchanged by the parties within [7] days from the date this order is issued.
5. **[Optional]** The assessor is authorized to contact the following collaterals [insert] for the purpose of completing the assessment.
6. The assessor shall provide the report directly to the court. Upon filing the report, the assessor should address any concerns with the report being made available to the parties or the child. Subject to any distribution directions from the court, the court officer will provide copies of the report to the parties or their counsel and confirm any outstanding costs owed by either party.
7. The report will not be provided to the child unless authorized by the court. The court may direct whether, how, or what information may be supplied to the child about the contents of the report.
8. The parties must cooperate in a timely way with all reasonable requests made by the assessor and court officer in relation to the preparation of this report.
9. The appointment of the assessor and collection of fees falls under the Nova Scotia Court Services' *Policy and Procedure for the Preparation of Court-ordered Assessments*.
10. [When no contribution is required by the parties] The report shall be prepared at the expense of the Department of Justice **[specify either that the determination was made in accordance with s. 20 e of the Regulations due to serious financial hardship, or as a result of the parties' incomes being below the threshold for payment set out in the Regulations.]**

OR

10. [When contribution is required by the parties] The manner in which the parties must contribute to the cost of this report shall be addressed by separate order of this court. **[Note: The court may choose to include the deposit and costs contribution provisions in this order. See sample Order A.3]**

Issued at [place] on [date]

Court Officer

A.2: Order Attachment – Parenting Proposal Form for Voice of the Child Report

This form will be sent to the assessor with the order for the Voice of the Child Report to help the assessor understand the parenting plan you are asking the court to order. Fill out this form to say how you want the parenting arrangements to be finalized. If you have more than one child and have different plans for them, then prepare separate forms for each plan.

Your Name: _____ Court File Number: _____

Date: _____

This plan is for the following child or children:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

The parenting arrangements that *we have now* are (check all that apply and fill in the spaces that apply with the name of the person):

- Most of the time, the child or children live with _____
- The child or children live about the same amount of time with _____ and _____
- _____ has the child or children ___ days every ___ week(s) per month
- _____ has no contact with the child or children
- _____ has supervised contact with the child or children

Major decisions (such as health, education) are made together: Yes No
If no, _____ has decision-making power

The parenting arrangements that *I would like* the court to order are (check all that apply and fill in the spaces that apply with the name of the person):

- Most of the time, the child or children would live with _____
- The child or children would live about the same amount of time with _____ and _____
- _____ will have the child or children ___ days every ___ week(s) per month
- _____ will have no contact with the child or children
- _____ will have supervised contact with the child or children

Major decisions (such as health, education) are made together: Yes No
If no, _____ has decision-making power

The care arrangements I would like the court to order are as follows:

- Reasonable access that the parties agree to
- Specific access (check off and give details on any that apply):

- Weeks, days, times of day

- Where will the child or children be picked up and delivered?

- Who will transport the child or children to and from contact?

- How will Christmas Break be shared?

- How will March Break be shared?

- How will the Easter Break be shared?

- How will care of the child or children be shared over summer vacation?

- How will special occasions be shared (including other school holidays and noteworthy days, such as birthdays, Halloween, Mother's Day, Father's Day, as well as religious or spiritually significant days)?

- How will contact by telephone/letters/e-mail/Skype/text/social media, etc. take place?

- Are there any other details that need to be considered?

A.3: Order for Costs and Fees of Voice of the Child Report

20**

No.

[Insert Name of Court]

Between:

[NAME]

[Applicant]

-and -

[NAME]

[Respondent]

Order for Costs and Fees of Voice of the Child Report

Before [insert His/Her Honour Judge/the Honourable Justice]:

Pursuant to an order issued [insert date] this court ordered a Voice of the Child Report; The parties are required to provide any financial disclosure and to contribute to the costs of the Voice of the Child Report in accordance with the terms of this order:

Now upon motion it is ordered:

1. For the purpose of determining the contribution of each party to the costs of the report pursuant to the Regulations respecting fees and allowances made under the Costs and Fees Act (the "Regulations"), [insert party name] is found to have an annual income of \$[insert amount], and [insert party name] is found to have an annual income of \$[insert amount].
2. In accordance with the Regulations, the parties shall contribute to the costs of the report as follows:

[Name of Party]:

- i. Deposit of \$ [insert amount] due upon issuance of this order; and
- ii. The percentage of _____ [specify final %, after prorating, if required] of the cost of the report, payable forthwith upon the completion of the report, less any deposit or other monies paid towards these fees.

[Name of Party]:

- i. Deposit of \$[insert amount] due upon issuance of this order; and
- ii. The percentage of _____ [specify final %, after prorating, if required] of the cost of the report, payable forthwith upon the completion of the report, less any deposit or other monies paid towards these fees.

1. For the purpose of determining the contribution of each party to the costs of the report pursuant to the Regulations made under the Costs and Fees Act, the incomes of the parties will be determined by the Court Officer in accordance with s. 16 of the Child Support Guidelines made under the Divorce Act (Canada).
 - a. The parties must file their respective Income Tax Return, Notice of Assessment or Reassessment for _____ [state tax year] with the court within _____ days' of the date of this order being issued.
 - b. The court officer shall calculate each party's income according to the Regulations respecting fees and allowances made under the Costs and Fees Act (the "Regulations") and based upon the tax information required to be filed by this order, and the court officer shall advise the parties and the court of the determination of income.
 - c. The parties will be deemed to have an income as determined by the court officer pursuant to this order for the purpose of the Regulations.
 - d. A party who does not file the income tax information required under clause (a) of this order within 30 days of the date of this order will be deemed to have an annual income for the purpose of the Regulations of \$ [insert deemed amount].
 - e. The parties will pay a deposit and a percentage of the cost of the report based on the Regulations and as directed, in writing, by the court officer. The court officer's direction respecting payment of the report will form part of this order.
2. or 3. The fees payable in this order are a debt recoverable with full costs as a debt due to Her Majesty in right of the Province pursuant to the Costs and Fees Act, s. 9.

Issued at [place] on [date].

Court Officer

Appendix B: Voice of the Child Report Framework

Introduction

A systematic approach to the preparation of a Voice of the Child Report is intended to assist assessors in meeting the objectives of the guidelines and in presenting the specialized and particular information required in the report.

This framework captures standard elements that should be included in most reports. There may be special circumstances that also need to be addressed and incorporated into the report when directed by the court or identified by the assessor during the assessment process. The report should speak in detail only to those aspects considered relevant to the case by the assessor. Brief reasons should be given in cases where elements of the framework are absent. In cases where judicial direction has been given to address specific issues or concerns, the report should repeat the direction given and clearly identify where the relevant information addressing the matter may be found in the report, or address why it is absent.

A simplified version of the framework for use by assessors may be found at http://nsfamilylaw.ca/sites/default/files/video/simplified_voice_of_the_child_report_framework.pdf

Report Framework

A. Introductory Information

1. Covering Page

Include a covering page that contains the following information:

- court file number
- name of referring court
- name of referring judge
- full names of parties
- full names, dates of birth, and chronological age of the child or children being assessed
- assessor's name
- assessor's professional qualification designation(s)
- assessor's professional address

2. Purpose

Provide a brief summary of the scope of the report. Specify why the report is being prepared, and include

- directions received from the judge by way of the court order or other direction (specify)
- directions received from any other source (e.g., court staff, engagement document)

3. Limitations of Process or Report

Provide information on the limitations of the report. There are limitations associated with all Voice of the Child reports. These reports are contextual and narrow in scope. The report captures the Voice of the Child at a specific period of time. Without specific direction of the court, the assessor will not be given access to the court history or file materials. The report will be limited to the information reviewed by the assessor at the time of writing the report. Any subsequent interventions or events in the child's life may affect the continuing validity of the report.

In every report, specify

- the limitations
- the implications of the limitation on the process, report preparation, findings, opinions, conclusions, etc.

4. Summary of Sources of Information

In every report, specify the following (state whether sources were interviewed or contacted):

a. Names of child (or children) interviewed or contacted

- dates on which they were interviewed or contacted
- time spent with child (or children)

b. Summary of parenting proposals of each adult litigant upon referral (specify source of information)

- confirm documents received from the court
- confirm other materials received and the source of each

c. Summary of contact with adult litigant, if applicable

- names, dates, and context of contact

Include the following information only in special circumstances, when a judge has directed it as necessary to the completion of the report. Contact the court officer in writing to pose requests for direction, if required. When directed, provide

d. Details of any court file or other materials provided and/or reviewed

e. Names of collaterals interviewed or contacted

- dates on which they were interviewed or contacted
- time spent with collateral

f. Details of the use of informal or formal instruments

- instrument(s) administered
- when administered

B. Body of the Report

5. Child Contact or Interview Details

a. Preliminary information

Address limits of confidentiality and identify

- steps undertaken to ensure privacy during the interview(s)
- whether anyone was present during the interview(s) and, if a joint interview was held, why
- discussion of the consent process taken with the child
- place(s) interview(s) conducted
- who brought the child (or children) to the interview(s)

b. Detailed observations and information gathered

Provide details of information gathered and observations made in relation to each child. Specify whether the child was able to provide the information, whether the information was accurate, and whether it came from some other source.

Provide emotional and behavioural observations pertaining to the child's

- stage of development
- general appearance
- observable behaviour
- observable motor activity
- emotions, feelings, affect
- culture, speech, language
- relevant interaction with parent or caregiver

c. Ascertaining the child's views and preferences

Provide detailed information about the child's views and preferences and the context in which these have been given. This section describes information obtained from the child. Indicate wherever the child does not wish to express a view or preference, has not expressed a view or preference, or appears not to have formulated a view or preference. If available, the child's information could include his or her

- present living circumstances
- school, daycare, etc.
- view of relationships with and between adult litigants
- thoughts and feelings about transitions between homes
- feelings toward significant others, including other relatives, step-parents, siblings, etc.
- preferred parenting plan
- thoughts and feelings regarding their preferred parenting plan
- expressed anxieties and worries

d. Summary and impressions of child's views and preferences

Discuss any information pertaining to the child's expressed views and preferences. Such information could include

- how strongly held they are
- for how long they appear to have been expressed
- to whom they have been expressed and the child's perceptions of the reactions received
- the clarity and consistency of the view(s) throughout the process
- how the child developed their views and preferences
- their expressed reason for holding a view and preference
- the child's emotional and behavioural response when expressing and discussing their views and preferences

6. Details of Adult Litigant Contact

Excluding incidental contact, if an adult litigant is contacted, specify whether the contact was directed and by whom. In the absence of a direction, indicate why the contact was necessary, providing

- contact date and method (e.g., phone, in-person, where)
- relevant information gathered
- pertinent questions asked and the answers given
- observations concerning relevant interactions or behaviour

7. Summaries, conclusions, and, when appropriate, recommendations

a. General impressions regarding validity of the process

The assessor's general impressions regarding the validity of the process, and any limitations on these impressions, should be set out here. The assessor is relying heavily on the child's view in this specialized process, and assessing validity within this context is difficult. In some cases, a broader assessment may be required to determine validity. In all cases, address the following and state the basis for your conclusion, taking into account whether

- the child or children were able and willing to play a meaningful role in the process
- the child or children's views and preferences be reliably ascertained
- there existed obvious evidence or concerns relating to or indicative of coaching and inappropriate influence

b. Recommendations for further intervention, if any

When the court requests a recommendation, the recommendation should be made or an explanation given as to why it cannot be made. When the court does not request a recommendation, the assessor may choose to make a recommendation but an explanation should be given as to why the recommendation was made.

c. Summary of compliance with codes of conduct, ethical or statutory duties

Record any noteworthy action taken that was required to comply with professional codes of conduct and ethics, standards of practice, or statutory duties, and why it was necessary.

d. Access to and distribution of the report

The assessor shall provide the report directly to the court. Upon filing the report, the assessor should address any concerns about the report being made available to the parties or the child.

8. Attachments

Certain information helps establish foundation and credibility, such as

a. Assessor's curriculum vitae

The assessor must attach a curriculum vitae to the report. An abbreviated curriculum vitae may be submitted but must provide information about the assessor's academic and professional qualifications, and include

- the type and number of assessments previously completed
- whether the assessor has been previously qualified to give expert evidence in court, and, if so, the nature of the qualification
- a list of any academic publications and presentations

b. Published research reference

In the unusual situation where reference to published research is used in the formulation of a particular conclusion, the report should cite the publication.



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