

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA  
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF MARICOPA**

IN THE MATTER OF FIT PROGRAM PILOT PROGRAM FOR FAMILY COURT CASES INVOLVING HIGH PARENTAL CONFLICT	}	ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2022-126
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Whereas, family court cases that have a higher degree of parental conflict negatively impact children and require extensive resources of the court; and

Whereas, early intervention by the court in a meaningful manner can help mitigate that potential harm and allow the court to focus resources where most needed; and

Whereas, the court and community are better served with an approach toward high conflict cases that is effective, scalable and affordable; and

Whereas, the Family Department, working in conjunction with the National Center for State Courts and funded by the State Justice Initiative, has developed the Families in Transition (“FIT”) computer-based program designed for early intervention for those cases that are at risk of becoming “high conflict;” and

Whereas, there is a need to measure the efficacy of the FIT program in comparison with the Parental Conflict Resolution (“PCR”) presently offered through Conciliation Services upon a referral order from the Court; and

Whereas, faculty from Arizona State University (“ASU”) have agreed to oversee the surveys from and evaluations of the existing PCR program versus the new FIT program; and

Whereas, participants who are ordered to complete a conflict resolution program will be asked to complete three surveys: one immediately before, one immediately after and one 30 days after the program; and

Whereas, those litigants who are ordered to participate in a conflict resolution program cannot be mandated to complete the surveys in order to preserve the efficacy of the scientific analysis of the surveys by ASU; and

Whereas, a token financial benefit for those who voluntarily agree to complete three surveys is permissible and appropriate; and

Whereas, a pilot program that compares the existing PCR class versus the FIT program will require a significant number of survey completions of those ordered to attend a conflict resolution program;

**IT IS ORDERED:**

1. The Family Department shall launch a pilot program (“The FIT Pilot Project”) to determine the effectiveness of the differing approaches in assisting families who are encountering or are at risk of engaging in high conflict parenting.
2. Commencing on the effective date of the pilot program (to be determined), parties who are ordered by the court to participate in a conflict resolution program arising under a family court case shall be randomly assigned by Family Court Administration either to the PCR class or the FIT Program. The FIT Pilot Project shall continue until there have been a sufficient number of attendees from each program option to have completed the surveys necessary to create a valid study for ASU academic purposes.
3. When a referred party registers for the program, that party shall be offered the opportunity to participate in the program evaluation surveys, conducted by Arizona State University, working in conjunction with the Maricopa County Superior Court. If the party agrees, the standard program fee of \$50 shall be deferred in its entirety.
4. Each registrant who volunteers to participate in the three required surveys shall be informed that if they agree to and actually complete the three surveys, the \$50 fee for the program shall be waived by order of the Family Court Presiding Judge.
5. The Clerk of Court will defer the \$50 program fee for those who the Maricopa County Superior Court identifies as a volunteer for the survey process. After the passage of approximately 120 days from the date in which the participant registers for the program and agrees to participate in the survey process, Family Court Administration shall work jointly with the Clerk of the Court to determine whether the \$50 deferred fee will be waived or whether efforts to secure the balance owed should be pursued.

6. Completed surveys shall be forwarded to ASU for analysis. Further, at the discretion of the Family Court Presiding Judge, additional non-identifying data or information regarding the participants may be provide, to the extent it assists in the proper assessment of the efficacy of the FIT and PCR programs.
7. For those who do not volunteer to participate in the surveys, the standard \$50 fee shall be assessed and paid at the time of registration, absent a financial basis for a fee deferral.
8. This \$50 fee deferral and potential waiver shall apply only during the FIT Pilot program and shall end upon completion of the pilot program.

Dated this 12<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2022.

*Judge Bruce R. Cohen*  
Hon. Bruce R. Cohen  
Presiding Family Court Judge

Original: Clerk of the Superior Court

Copies: Hon. Joseph Welty, Presiding Judge  
Hon. Pamela Gates, Associate Presiding Judge  
Jeff Fine, Clerk of the Court  
All Family Court Judges and Commissioners  
All Family Court Judicial Assistants  
Raymond Billotte, Judicial Branch Administrator  
Shawn Friend, Deputy Court Administrator  
Adis Bosnic, Family Court Administrator  
Julie Carlson, Judicial Assistant to Family Court Presiding Judge  
Angela Phillips, Conciliation Services for Maricopa County  
Alicia Davis, National Center for State Courts  
Dr. Karey O'Hara, Arizona State University