

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS
DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION**

GENERAL ORDER: 2018 D 1
SUBJECT: Early Resolution Pilot Program
EFFECTIVE: October 1, 2018

*Presiding Judge
Grace G. Dickler*

SEP 06 2018

Circuit Court – 1521

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

I. Synopsis:

This order establishes the Early Resolution Pilot Program (ERP) in the Domestic Relations Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County that includes the Resolution Assistance Pilot Program (RAP).

II. Early Resolution Pilot Program:

Self-Represented litigants who file a Domestic Relations case may be evaluated to determine eligibility to be referred to RAP, a hearing officer, or to be returned to the calendar to which they were originally assigned at the time of filing.

III. Resolution Assistance Pilot Program:

The criteria for referral to RAP includes, but is not limited to:

- No current domestic violence or history of domestic violence, and
- A combined annual income of \$75,000 or less

Each party to a case referred to RAP will receive the advice and counsel of a *pro bono* attorney that has at least one year of family law experience for the limited purpose of negotiating and memorializing an agreement between the parties.

The *pro bono* attorney's assistance will be provided via a limited scope appearance filed pursuant to Illinois Rule of Professional Conduct Rule 1.2(c), with specific attention to Comments 6-8 thereto, and Supreme Court Rule 13(c)(6)-(7).

This General Order and the engagement agreement attached hereto as exhibit A define terms under which the RAP attorney's *pro bono* services are being made available. The RAP attorney will be deemed to have completed their limited representation and their appearance will be withdrawn at the conclusion of the RAP court date. The *pro bono* attorney will only represent RAP participants on the day specified in the engagement agreement and shall not engage in any fee-based representation of their RAP participant thereafter. The failure to reach and enter a settlement agreement between the parties shall

not be a valid objection to the RAP attorney's withdrawal following completion of this limited scope representation.

The RAP will only be available to litigants who are referred via the ERP and who provide informed consent to the RAP attorney's limited representation as required by Rule 1.2(c).

The RAP will be free of charge.

Dated this 6th day of September, 2018. This Order shall be spread upon the records of this Court and published.

ENTERED:



HON. GRACE G. DICKLER
Presiding Judge
Domestic Relations Division

ENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT
For Resolution Assistance Program

Re: _____
Case No. _____ D _____

You have agreed to participate in the Circuit Court of Cook County's Domestic Relations Resolution Assistance Pilot Program ("RAP") pursuant to General Order 2018 D 1, and I have been assigned to your case. This is an engagement agreement and it contains important information about our work together. I urge you to read it carefully and to ask me any questions you may have about it. It is vital that you fully understand the scope of my representation before we begin.

1. As part of my representation, I will file a limited-scope appearance. This means that our attorney-client relationship lasts only for today (date: _____), and it is valid only for the above captioned matter. Once we leave court, regardless of whether we were able to successfully settle your case, I will no longer be your attorney. Failure to settle your case and enter a judgment today will not constitute a failure to complete this limited scope representation. Therefore, at the end of the RAP court call, I will make an oral motion to withdraw my limited scope appearance, and by signing this agreement you waive your right to object to my withdrawal.
2. Due to the limited nature of my representation, I will not engage in discovery. I will review the documents you have provided, I will ask you questions, and I will point out missing information. I will tell you if we cannot move forward without certain information. It is important that you communicate with me openly and honestly, as I will only know what you tell me about your family and I cannot do my job without a complete, honest picture.
3. The limited scope appearance I file will be valid only as to me; the attorney-client relationship will not extend to any members of my law firm or legal organization.
4. While I will use my best efforts to obtain a favorable result for you, I cannot guarantee that your case will be successfully completed in RAP.
5. I am a private attorney who is providing these services to you *pro bono*, so there will be no fees charged to you for this engagement.
6. A detailed statement of your full rights and responsibilities can be found at 750 ILCS 5/508 and can be provided upon request.

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7. Please signify your agreement with these terms by signing, dating and this agreement, of which you will then be given a copy.

Attorney at Law

Accepted: _____

Dated: _____