



State of North Carolina

Tenth Judicial District

WAKE COUNTY FAMILY COURT

CHIEF DISTRICT COURT JUDGE
ROBERT B. RADER

FAMILY COURT JUDGES
DAVID K. BAKER
MONICA M. BOUSMAN
VARTAN A. DAVIDIAN
MARGARET P. EAGLES
BRIAN RATLEDGE
CHRISTINE M. WALCZYK
ANNA E. WORLEY

WAKE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
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YVETTE M. SMITH

CASE COORDINATORS
MELISSA R. BAWDEN
SHARON KONOPKA
CYNTHIA PEACOCK
NEAL 'TOM' ROBERTSON
VALERIE SANDERS

JUDICIAL ASSISTANT
FAITH FINLEY

Date: April 29, 2020

From: Judge Christian and Judge Hamadani

Re: **JUDICIAL SETTLEMENT CONFERENCES**

Dear members of the Wake County Family Bar:

We are writing to encourage you and your clients to take advantage of Judicial Settlement Conferences with us through WebEx. This pandemic has resulted in a lot of uncertainty for us all. That is why the Family Court Office decided to make available to the public this free alternative to hearings in family court cases as we patiently await a full opening of the court system.

For those of you who have never participated in a Judicial Settlement Conference, here are some reasons why a judicial settlement conference may be a good option for you and your client:

- Judicial settlement conferences are essentially mediation sessions with either Judge Christian or Judge Hamadani serving as the mediator.
- Judicial settlement conferences are permitted for ALL claims, including child custody.
- Judicial settlement conferences and WebEx are free of cost.
- WebEx is easy to use. The Family Court team will send you a link to attend the WebEx hearing at the date and time agreed upon by the parties. Participants only need a laptop or a smart phone, and internet access.

- Judicial settlement conferences are an effective way of resolving one or more claims (or issues) without expending the time and resources necessary for a full hearing. Particularly now, judicial settlement conferences can provide your clients the ability to resolve their claims (or issues) expeditiously since there will be a back log of cases once we return to “normal” business.
- The facts of the case set for judicial settlement conference will remain confidential and will not be discussed outside of the conference.
- The Judge presiding over a judicial settlement conference will not be the judge who decides the merits of the case should the parties fail to reach a resolution.
- Judicial settlement conferences are permitted for litigants with attorneys and for self-represented litigants.

We are here to help you and your clients during these uncertain times. As a general reminder, the rules governing judicial settlement conferences and WebEx hearings can be found [here](#). We hope that you and your families continue to stay safe and healthy during these unprecedented times.