

Reunification Services Agreement

When do families use Reunification Services?

Reunification services are available for families in which there is a breakdown in the relationship between a parent and child(ren) such that a child is refusing or resisting contact with a parent. We use the word 'reunification' because it is the word that is used in the literature to represent the restoration of a relationship and some type of communication between parent and child. Breaks in parent-child contact occur within complex family systems, so it is rarely the case that one parent can solve this situation single-handedly. Therefore, all family members are asked to be active participants in the reunification process.

Description of services:

Reunification services blend the skills and methods from several different fields—psychotherapy, coaching, and dispute resolution. This is not a therapy service and is not covered by health insurance, because there is no presumption of an “illness” that is being treated.

Our model of Reunification Services utilizes two providers. One will work with the parents and one with the children. When parents and children are together in a session, both providers will be there. Having a provider designated to work with the children allows the children to have a space of their own in this process, and a provider who hears and understands their perspective on the family's struggles. That provider continues to present as 'the children's' in family sessions that include parents, as they do not need to become neutral facilitators of the sessions.

Evaluation phase:

1. Each parent meets with both providers, typically together, for an hour or two at the outset of the process. This allows each parent to meet the provider who will be working with the children, and to provide their perspective on the background of the struggles occurring in their family.
2. Once both parents have completed these meetings, the children meet with their provider for several sessions to get to know one another, and to consider the children's perspective on the family struggles and how they might benefit from addressing these with their parents.
3. The children's sessions are followed by a meeting between the children and the parent they are resisting contact with, which includes both providers.

Review and Recommendations:

Once the evaluation phase is complete, the providers discuss options for how the family might best address their difficulties. The providers will make a recommendation about which of two paths the family can most productively follow.

Path A is to have reunification sessions simply continue. We recommend this option when it seems that the children and parent will be able to work through their difficulties and that the sessions will improve the relationship.

Path B is to have both providers, both parents and their attorneys meet for a feedback and planning session. In this session, we give our feedback about the state of the family and a plan is created for how the parents will assist the children to manage the relationship difficulties they are encountering. We consider Option B ideal for families in which the children are saddled with the burden of resolving family patterns that are largely based on the dynamics between the parents or broader family patterns. The plan is utilized to shift the burden back to parents, and free the kids from this overwhelming responsibility.

Ongoing Reunification Sessions:

If ongoing sessions are recommended, these sessions are used to gradually and incrementally unravel the difficulties that have occurred in the family and resolve these to the point that communication can be restored. In most families, the parenting or co-parenting relationship is a significant contributing factor to the children's difficulties, so sessions that involve the two parents are typically included in this package of services.

Payment of Fees:

Fees for Reunification Services are billed at \$200/hour for each provider.

An initial deposit of \$2,400 is required to begin the process. This amount may be shared by the parties in accordance with their financial agreements or orders.

This initial deposit will be applied to the Evaluation Phase of the reunification work. Once this phase is complete, both parents will be informed of the recommended next step.

If a feedback and planning session is recommended, these are typically three hours in length plus preparation time and involve both providers. A deposit of \$1500 will be required before this meeting is scheduled.

Ongoing reunification sessions will be pre-paid. If the reunification plan requires a fixed number of sessions, a deposit may be required to cover the cost of those sessions.

All payments shall be made to Moxie Incorporated. Funds in deposit will be applied to all services rendered, including the following, at the rate above, in increments of .2 hours (12 minutes, \$40/increment):

1. All sessions and meetings
2. All phone calls related to this case.
3. Reading and reviewing files, correspondence and other documents.
4. Drafting memos, correspondence, and reports.
5. Consultations with other professionals, including attorneys.
6. Travel time

Each Parent's Responsibility for Fees:

Please initial the option below that accurately describes each parent's obligation for payment of fees.

Option A:

____ The parents will equally divide the costs of the children's sessions and any consultations between the therapists. Each parent will pay for his or her own individual sessions.

Option B:

____ The parent named here _____ will pay 100% of all reunification therapy costs, including all sessions with either parent and sessions with the children.

Option C:

____ The parent named here _____ will pay for their own individual sessions, plus all fees for sessions with the children and consultations between the therapists. The other parent (_____) will pay only for his or her own individual sessions.

Cancelled or Missed Appointments: Clients, or their deposit, will be billed for any appointment that is cancelled with less than 24 hours notice. There is no charge for appointments cancelled with more than 24 hours notice. Charges for missed appointments or late cancellations will be paid by the person missing/canceling the appointment. A session is considered missed if the parties have not arrived 20 minutes after the start time of the session.

Suspension of Services: The providers reserve the right to suspend all services, including provision of any written documentation, until payment of any unpaid balance. In the event one parent does not pay his or her share of the retainer, fees, and/or costs, the other parent may pay the full amount requested.

Release of Reports and Recommendations: Written reports and recommendations, if needed, will not be released until all fees have been paid in full, including the cost of preparing the written report or recommendations. Either parent may request a written summary or report at any time and that parent will be responsible for the cost of preparation. No report will be released to third parties without the proper releases.

Confidentiality

Reunification Services are confidential. Information about the family or any individual involved in the process will not be shared without the client's or their parent's consent. Records regarding any individual or the family will, by the nature of the family difficulties being addressed, contain information about all family members, and therefore all files will be treated as family files and therefore both parents' permission (or a court order) will be required for any records to be released to a third party. Verbal disclosures may be made with the consent of only one parent, but information disclosed will be limited to only that which pertains to the parent providing consent.

Because this is a family matter and a family file, information about the family members and their participation and progress in the reunification process may be shared, albeit discreetly, with any other family members at the providers' discretion. It is also understood that the providers will consult with one another about their teamwork with this family, and no release is required for them to do so.

Mandatory Reporting: Although the Reunification Services providers are not providing clinical services, they are licensed mental health professionals and are therefore considered by state law to be mandated reporters (Minn. Stat. §572.08). They are obligated to report to the proper authorities any evidence of physical or sexual abuse or neglect of minors, elders, or vulnerable adults; or any direct threat to harm oneself or another person.

ACCEPTANCE AND SIGNATURES

PARENT

I have received and read a copy of the Reunification Services Agreement, and I have discussed the provisions of this contract with my attorney. I agree to participate in Reunification Services with Moxie Incorporated under the above conditions.

I agree to pay Moxie Incorporated _____% of the \$2400 initial deposit.

I give consent for my minor children, listed here, to receive Reunification Services with our family under the terms of this agreement.

Children's Names: _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

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