

Superior Court of Washington, County of Island

In re:

Petitioner/s (*person/s who started this case*):

And Respondent/s (*other party/parties*):

No. _____

Informal Family Law Trial Selection

Choose One:

☐ Petitioner (**IFTP**)

☐ Respondent (**IFTR**)

Informal Family Law Trial Selection

I have reviewed the *Two Kinds of Family Law Trials* brochure.

1. **I want an Informal Trial.** I am the (*check one*) ☐ Petitioner ☐ Respondent

I understand that if the other party does not agree to an Informal Trial, we will have a Traditional Trial.

2. **I understand that an Informal Trial works like this:**

- Both parties will give a brief summary of the issues that need to be decided. Both parties will speak to the judge under oath about the issues in the case (*examples: how to divide property and debt, parenting plan, child support, spousal support*).
- Both parties will have an opportunity to respond to the other party's statement and explain how the law applies to their case.
- There is no cross examination. The judge may ask questions.
- Most of the time, the 2 people in the case are the only witnesses in an Informal Trial. Sometimes a party needs an expert witness (someone with special training and education) to give an opinion, which is allowed in informal trials. The parties or their lawyers may ask experts questions. The expert's report will be received as an exhibit.
- Non-expert witnesses are not allowed. Instead, each party may submit up to 5 declarations from other people with a maximum page count of 20 pages total. Also,

each party can submit any document or other evidence they want the judge to review.

- The judge will decide what credibility and weight to give documents, physical evidence, and testimony that is entered as evidence during the Informal Trial. The judge is not bound by the Rules of Evidence.
- The judge will follow the same law to decide the case, whether it is an Informal or Traditional Trial.

3. Expert witnesses (check one)

☐ I do **not** want an evaluator or other expert witness to testify at my trial.

☐ I want an evaluator (GAL) to be a witness at my trial.

☐ I want another type of expert to testify at my trial. (Name) _____
has expertise in _____
and has information relevant to my case.

☐ I have filed the report they prepared for my case.

4. I give up my right to a Traditional Trial

By agreeing to an Informal Trial, I agree to the following:

- **Voluntary.** My participation in an Informal Trial is strictly voluntary. No one can force me to agree to this process. I have not been threatened or promised anything for agreeing to an Informal Trial.
- **Format.** The normal question and answer format of trial will not be used. The judge may ask me questions about the case. The other party and I can both tell the judge anything we feel is relevant.
- **Rules.** The Rules of Evidence will not apply in this Informal Trial. I will follow the procedures of GR 40, the Superior Court Civil Rule on Informal Family Law Trials.
- **Evidence.** Neither party will call any witnesses except for experts.
- **No appeal of the process.** I give up my right to appeal the judge's use of the Informal Family Law Trial process. I still have a right to appeal the final decision.

Signed on (date) _____

Signature

Printed Name

Petitioner / Respondent (circle one)