

Center for Collaborative Family Law Aims to Reduce Trauma of Divorce

In her most recent State of the Judiciary address, New York State's Chief Judge Judith Kaye announced a number of reforms aimed at reducing the delay, expense, and trauma of divorce. As part of that reform package, Judge Kaye revealed plans to open the first court-based Collaborative Family Law Center in the nation. The Center, which is currently under construction, will be situated in lower Manhattan, and will serve New York City's five counties. The Center will train professionals, connect families to collaboratively-trained lawyers, child specialists, divorce coaches, and financial neutrals, and will provide space for participants to engage in Collaborative Practice.

What is Collaborative Practice?

Collaborative Practice is a problem-solving, interdisciplinary process that gives divorcing parties and their lawyers a way to end a marriage and restructure families without the stress, delay, and expense of litigation. Collaborative Practice is founded on three principles:

- a pledge not to litigate disputes in court
- an honest, voluntary, prompt, and good-faith exchange of relevant information without formal discovery
- a commitment to strive for solutions that take into account the highest priorities of both parties and their children

How Can Social Workers Get Involved?

Depending on their training and experience working with divorcing families or their children, licensed clinical social workers and licensed master social worker can play an invaluable role on an Interdisciplinary Team as divorce coaches or child specialists. The Office of Court Administration ("OCA") is hosting a number of free events to train prospective divorce coaches and child specialists. If you are a NYS-licensed clinical social worker or licensed master social worker in good standing with experience working with divorcing families, OCA invites you to register for these free programs.

Mediation Training for Collaborative Divorce Professionals

This excellent, dynamic, and interactive three-day free* course is geared to professionals who work with divorcing families. The program will be held on February 28, 29, and March 3, 2008, from 8:15 A.M.-5:00 P.M. at the Judicial Institute on the campus of Pace Law School in White Plains, NY.

Mediation training is a prerequisite for inclusion on a Center for Collaborative Family Law roster. Attendance is required on all three days.

To register, interested professionals should complete the PDF-fillable application and send it to collablaw@courts.state.ny.us. Please indicate in the email's subject heading the name of the training ("Mediation Training for Collaborative Professionals").

Interdisciplinary Training for Collaborative Divorce Professionals

This two-day, free* course is geared to NYC-area mental health and other professionals with experience working with divorcing families. The program will be held on March 13-14, 2008, from 8:15 A.M.-5:00 P.M. at the Judicial Institute on the campus of Pace Law School in White Plains, NY.

Interdisciplinary Training is a prerequisite for inclusion on a Center for Collaborative Family Law roster. Attendance is required on both days.

To register, interested professionals should complete the PDF-fillable application and submit it to collablaw@courts.state.ny.us. Please indicate in the email's subject heading the name of the training ("Interdisciplinary Training for Collaborative Professionals").

How do I get an Application to Register for this Training?

You may obtain the Application on one of several ways.

- 1) You may access the pdf-fillable application by clicking on **Newsletters and Documents** under the Quick Menu on the left side of the Society website's home page. A list of documents will then appear. Go down the list to the document named **OCA Application**, dated **02/06/2008**, and click the **click for document** link and the document will appear in pdf-fillable format.
- 2) A pdf-fillable version of the application form is available online on the Office of Court Administration website at: www.nycourts.gov/ip/collablaw/. When the website comes up click on **Training Application** on the left hand column. **A link to this website immediately follows the news story about this project on the Society website.**
- 3) The registration application is appended to this notice in a version which can be completed by hand or by typewriter.

What is the cost* for these two programs:

These OCA-sponsored programs are offered free* of charge to qualifying professionals.

Please note that attendees of OCA-sponsored, free training programs in Collaborative Practice may be asked to perform a certain minimum numbers of hours of pro-bono service in exchange for attending these free programs.

Placement on the OCA Roster

Before inviting a professional to join a Center for Collaborative Family Law roster, OCA may ask for references and/or additional information relating to matrimonial law and/or other relevant experience. In addition, **please note that final placement on a prospective Center for Collaborative Family Law's roster will be subject to the approval of the Administrative Judge in consultation with the Office of Alternative Dispute Resolution and Court Improvement Programs.**

For more information, feel free to send an email to:
collablaw@courts.state.ny.us

New York State Office of Court Administration
Office of ADR and Court Improvement Programs
25 Beaver Street, Room 850
New York, NY 10004
T: (212) 428-5519
Fax: (212) 428-2696
collablaw@courts.state.ny.us

COLLABORATIVE LAW TRAINING APPLICATION

Date: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

FAX: _____

I. ATTORNEYS*

(1) Are you an attorney in good standing admitted to practice in New York (Y or N) _____ Yr Admitted _____

(2) Do you practice in New York City (Y or N)? _____

(3) Do you have at least 5 years of substantive experience practicing matrimonial law (Y or N)? _____

(4) If you do not, state how many years you have practiced matrimonial law and describe other relevant legal experience _____

(5) Do you have other relevant training or experience in areas such as mediation/professional coaching (Y or N)? _____ Please explain. _____

(6) Have you participated in any 2-day collaborative law training sessions? If so, state session(s) and date(s) attended. _____

(7) Have you participated in at least 30 hours of mediation training? If so, state session(s) and date(s) attended. _____

(8) Do you belong to an existing Collaborative Law practice group? (Y or N)? _____ Please state the name of the group: _____

(9) Are you willing to perform a certain minimum number of hours of pro bono/low bono service in exchange for free training? (Y or N)? _____

(10) How did you hear about the upcoming OCA-sponsored Collaborative Law training? (Check all that apply)

Bar Association Colleague Court House Flyer Court Web Site Other _____

II. MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS*

(1) Do you practice in New York City (Y or N)? _____

(2) Are you a Psychiatrist Psychologist Psychoanalyst Lic. Mental Health Counselor (LMHC)
 Lic. Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) Lic. Master Social Worker (LMSW) Lic. Marriage and Family
Therapist (LMFT) Other _____

(3) Describe your training and experience working with divorcing couples and/or children _____

(4) Have you participated in any 2-day collaborative law training sessions? If so, state session type and date(s) attended. _____

(5) Have you participated in at least 30 hours of mediation training? If so, state session(s) and date(s) attended. _____

(6) Do you belong to an existing Collaborative Law practice group? (Y or N)? _____ Please state the name of the group: _____

(7) Are you willing to perform a certain minimum number of hours of pro bono/low bono service in exchange for free training? (Y or N)? _____

(8) How did you hear about the upcoming OCA-sponsored training? (Check all that apply) Bar Association
 Other Professional Organization _____ Colleague Court House Flyer Court Web Site
 Other _____

III. FINANCIAL PROFESSIONALS*

(1) Do you practice in New York City (Y or N)? _____

(2) Are you a Certified Financial Planner Certified Public Accountant Certified Divorce Financial Analyst Other _____

(3) Describe training and experience working with divorcing couples _____

(4) Have you participated in any 2-day collaborative law training sessions? If so, state session(s) type and date(s) attended. _____

(5) Have you participated in at least 30 hours of mediation training? If so, state session(s) and date(s) attended. _____

(6) Do you belong to an existing Collaborative Law practice group? (Y or N)? _____ Please state the name of the group: _____

(7) Are you willing to perform a certain minimum number of hours of pro bono/low bono service in exchange for free training? (Y or N)? _____

(8) How did you hear about the upcoming OCA-sponsored training? (Check all that apply) Bar Association
 Other Professional Association _____ Colleague Court House Flyer Court Web Site
 Other _____

***Attendees of OCA-sponsored, free training programs in Collaborative Law may be asked to perform a certain minimum numbers of hours of pro bono service. In addition, please note that final placement on court rosters is subject to approval of the New York State Unified Court System.**