



# *Saskatchewan College of Psychologists*

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## **Membership Advisory**

### **Parenting Capacity Assessments/Custody and Access Assessments**

Psychologists conducting *Parenting Capacity Assessments* or *Custody and Access Assessments* are reminded of the following expectations:

1. Work in this area of practice is to be conducted in a manner that is consistent with the direction provided by the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists and the Saskatchewan College of Psychologists Professional Practice Guidelines, and best practice/evidence-based research.
2. A psychologist conducting assessments of the parenting capacity of Saskatchewan residents, and/or custody and access assessments of minors who are residents of the province must have Full Practice licensure with the Saskatchewan College of Psychologists (SCP) or be under the direct supervision of a Full Practice licensee of the SCP.
3. The psychologist must have established competency in forensic assessment as well as other relevant areas such as developmental psychology, clinical psychology etc., and must have SCP acknowledgement of this area of practice competency;
4. Competency to conduct the assessments includes, but is not limited to knowledge of relevant Saskatchewan legislation in particular that pertaining to capacity to parent, and/or custody and access e.g. the Child & Family Services Act (CFSA) and the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), Health Information Protection Act (HIPA);
5. A psychologist undertaking an assessment relating to legal considerations of parenting capacity and/or parental custody and access is expected to conduct the assessment with full and informed consideration of, and respect for the legal rights of the adult(s) and child(ren) who are the subjects of the assessment, as established by relevant legislation including but not limited to HIPA, the CFSA, and the MHSA .
6. Notwithstanding establishment of practice competency in accordance with points 3 & 4, and full consideration of point 5, a psychologist conducting such an assessment shall ensure that:
  - (a) the subjects of such assessments are fully informed of the purpose and process of the assessment, the limits of confidentiality, the information to be included in the

- assessment report, how the information gathered will be used, who the assessment report will be given to, the potential that the psychologist may have to speak to their report in Court, and the right of subjects to refuse to participate in an assessment and the potential consequences should this be their choice (see 6, below);
- (b) discussion occurs with the subject(s) of the assessment, regarding the professional impartiality to be exercised by the psychologist in reporting the results of the assessment findings and the recommendations given in response to the findings and the referral questions;
  - (c) written, dated, consent to proceed with the assessment is obtained from the adult subject(s) and/or legal guardians of minor subjects after obtaining full informed consent [outlined in (a)] and before the process of assessment is begun;
  - (d) the consent obtained as described in (a) is witnessed by a responsible independent adult whose printed name and signature appear in the same document;
7. An assessment of capacity to parent, involving consideration of matters of custody and access shall be conducted, after consent as described in point 6 has been obtained. The assessment will be carried out by means of interviews, test administration and clinical observation and in keeping with relevant professional standards of practice (see 1,3,4, & 5, above);
  8. The psychologist shall produce a written, signed report of the assessment undertaken, which documents all participant(s), component assessment procedures, the dates on which those occurred, the results and any professional considerations including limitations to the assessment and recommendations arising from those procedures and results.
  9. Distribution of the assessment report will be the responsibility of the psychologist, in accordance with the processes (see point 6, above) communicated to the person(s) who is/are the subject(s) of the assessment.
  10. The psychologist has the responsibility to appear, as requested or subpoenaed by a court of law in any relevant legal hearing, to speak to her/his report as agreed to through the informed consent process.