Your name:
Street Address:
City, State and Zip Code:
Tel. No.:

In Pro Per

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

FOR THE COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

	CASE NO.:
_____, Plaintiff/Petitioner,	NOTICE OF MEDIATION WITH FAMILY CUSTODY SERVICES
v.	Mediation date: Mediation time:
_____, Defendant/Respondent,	Location: 1100Anacapa St., First Floor, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
_____, Other Parent.	Assigned to: _____
_____/	

TO:_____:

This matter has been set for mediation with Family Custody Services before a court-appointed mediator on _____ (date) at _____ a.m./p.m. (time) at the Family Custody Services office located at the Santa Barbara County Superior Court, 1100 Anacapa Street, First Floor, Santa Barbara, California 93101.

The purpose of family custody mediation is to provide a forum for separated parents to meet and discuss custody and visitation issues in a secure environment, with a trained, professional mediator. The goal is to develop a parenting plan structured around the best interests of the children. Mediation is designed to reduce anger and polarization by encouraging a cooperative parenting relationship.

The process is private and confidential. A mediator may not testify unless both parents

waive the confidentiality of the mediation, and a judge finds the testimony admissible.

The mediator's role is to help parents resolve contested issues. The mediator does not judge or give legal advice. Mediation is not psychotherapy. The mediator's role is strictly one of a facilitator of communication, a guide for defining issues, exploring the alternatives, and achieving a parenting plan through communication and negotiation. Parents are encouraged, but not required, to reach an agreement.

Children five years of age and older will be interviewed by the mediator. The interview with the children will not be used to elicit a preference between parents. Parents are **strongly discouraged** from asking children to express a preference, as this can be extremely divisive and emotionally harmful.

Any child five years of age and older shall be brought to mediation by the parent having the child with him/her on the date of the mediation. If any of the children are twelve years of age or younger, the parent having the child with him/her on the date of the mediation shall also arrange to bring to mediation a person to watch the child during the mediation process, and/or to remove the child after the interview with the mediator, so that both parents may jointly participate in mediation without the children present.

Unless good cause is shown, the Court may issue fines against attorneys or parties who: cancel mediation with less than three days' notice, fail to appear to be at a scheduled mediation, or fail to produce a child at mediation as required by these rules.

For further information about mediation, you should contact your attorney or contact Family Custody Services at (805) 568-3133.

If there is a history of domestic violence, the Family Custody Services office should be advised immediately.

DATED: _____ _____
(Signature)

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