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### Contested Child Custody

Parents generally want what is best for their children, but sometimes it seem impossible for co-parents to agree on child custody and visitation plans. These disputes can be very emotional, and it is important for parents to seek legal guidance to ensure the best possible outcome for everyone involved.

Contested child custody is an area of law in which Lilly A. Plummer, P.C., is highly experienced. We help parents in West Texas resolve their child custody disputes in the most effective and efficient manner possible, whether it's through mediation, negotiation or through court action. In any case, protecting the child's best interests is always the top priority.

#### **More Than Twenty Years Experience**

Lilly A. Plummer, P.C, Attorney at Law, has practiced family law in West Texas for more than 20 years. In addition to being a former prosecutor and defense attorney for Texas Child Protective Services cases, she has been certified as a family law mediator in Texas since 2010.

Lilly A. Plummer, P.C., has the knowledge, experience and compassion to advise you in child custody matters and help you resolve the dispute in or out of court.

For more on cost-effective, out-of-court solutions, please see our overview of Family Law and Divorce Mediation (\* need to ensure title and link sync)

#### **Providing Innovative Solutions in Complex Cases**

Lilly A. Plummer, P.C., helps parents explore and implement their legal options for a parenting plan that is appropriate for your family's unique situation. Depending on the individual case, there may be complex factors to consider, including busy work and travel schedules, unique family dynamics, the child's unique emotional needs, any special needs the child may have, the child's extracurricular activities, and the

child's preferred living arrangement.

We understand that these cases are difficult both to the parents and the children, and we make every effort to negotiation agreements that meet the needs of both of the parents, while at the same time prioritizing the best interests of the child. She also considers the emotional and financial effects court action can cause to parents, children, and families, and she advises parents as to whether litigation our and out-of-court solution is appropriate for their situation.

### **Types of Court-Ordered Child Custody**

In many cases, parents are able to agree on custody issues out-of-court through mediation or negotiation. When parents are unable to agree, however, it may be necessary for the court to make a decision.

Courts in Texas increasingly recognize the importance of having both parents play an active role in children's lives. Still, child custody orders can vary a great deal in terms of the amount of time each parent has with the child. For example, in a Standard Possession Order (SPO), a child lives primarily with one parent, while the other parent has possession/visitation on specific weekends, and some evenings and holidays.

In contrast, in a shared or split custody arrangement, a child can spend equal, or closer to equal, amount time with each parent.

Sole custody is less common and is typically granted only if there is evidence of abuse, neglect, or abandonment by one parent. In this instance, one parent is granted custody of a child and the other parent may have very little or even zero visitation with a child.

Contact Lilly A. Plummer, P.C., today for a consultation to discuss your specific situation and let her help you pursue a favorable outcome.