

**FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**  
**COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF PHILADELPHIA COUNTY**

---

**No. 27 of 2025**

---

**President Judge General Court Regulation**

***In re: Adoption of Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas Domestic Relations Rules 1940.3 and 1940.4***

**ORDER**

AND NOW, this 16th day of December, 2025, the Board of Judges of Philadelphia County having voted at the Board of Judges' meeting held on November 20, 2025, to adopt Phila.DR.R. 1940.3 and 1040.4, as attached to this Order, and as required by Pa.R.J.A. 103, the Supreme Court Domestic Relations Procedural Rules Committee has reviewed the attached local rules, has determined that Phila. Dr.R. 1940.3 and 1940.4 are not inconsistent with applicable statewide rules and has authorized their promulgation.

NOW, therefore, it is hereby ORDERED and DECREED ***Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas Domestic Relations Rules 1940.3 and 1940.4*** are adopted, as attached, effective thirty days after publication in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

As required by Pa.R.J.A. 103(d), the local rule which follows this Order was submitted to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania Orphans' Court Procedural Rules Committee for review, and written notification has been received from the Rules Committee certifying that the local rule is not inconsistent with any general rule of the Supreme Court. This Order and the attached local rule shall be filed with the Office of Judicial Records (formerly the *Prothonotary, Clerk of Courts and Clerk of Quarter Sessions*) in a docket maintained for Administrative Orders issued by the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania. As required by Pa.R.J.A. 103(d)(5)(ii), two certified copies of this Administrative Order and the attached local rule, as well as one copy of the Administrative Order and local rule shall be distributed for publication in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*. As required by Pa.R.J.A. 103(d)(6) one certified copy of this Administrative Order and local rule shall be filed with the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts, shall be published on the website of the First Judicial District at <http://courts.phila.gov>, and shall be incorporated in the compiled set of local rules no later than 30 days following publication in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*. Copies of the Administrative Order and local rules shall also be published in *The Legal Intelligencer* and will be submitted to *American Lawyer Media*, *Jenkins Memorial Law Library*, and the Law Library for the First Judicial District.

BY THE COURT:

/s/ Nina Wright Padilla

---

**NINA WRIGHT PADILLA**  
**President Judge, Court of Common Pleas**  
**Philadelphia County**

### **Custody Mediation Orientation**

#### **Rule 1940.3**

#### ***Order for Orientation Session and Mediation. Selection of Mediator***

- (a) Except as provided in (c) below, in an action for modification of custody, the parties shall attend a custody mediation orientation session prior to the scheduled Custody Conciliation Conference.
- (b) An orientation session is an initial meeting between parties, and a mediator pursuant to Local Rule 1940.4 below, to educate the parties concerning the mediation process so that an informed choice can be made about continued participation in that process. The mediation is confidential at the point, if any, that mediation commences during, or after, the initial orientation session.
- (c) An orientation session shall not be mandated if a party or a party's child is or has been the subject of abuse either during the pendency of the action or within 24 months preceding the filing of the action.

**Rule 1940.4 Minimum Qualifications for Mediators**

(a) A mediator must meet, at a minimum, the following requirements:

1. hold a post-graduate level degree in law, or a mental health field such as a psychiatry, psychology, counseling or family therapy.

2. have successfully completed basic training in a divorce and custody mediation program approved by the Academy of Family Mediators or equivalent program, such as a program approved by the Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, or its substantial equivalent.

3. certify that Mediator Professional Liability Insurance is maintained.

4. continued compliance with the ethical standards and any continuing educational requirements of the Academy of Family Mediators, the Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, or their substantial equivalent.

(b) The Court shall have the authority, upon cause shown, to decertify any Philadelphia County custody mediator who has not complied with the foregoing local rule.