

# BENCH CARD: CHILD WELFARE / JUVENILE JUSTICE CONFERENCING



**Neb. Rev. Stat. §43-247.03** provides that funding and management of all court-connected facilitated conferencing and mediation is a function of the State Court Administrator. As of **July 1, 2014** all Child Welfare Conferencing is paid for through Office of Dispute Resolution (ODR). Juvenile Justice Conferencing is paid for through either ODR or probation. The mediation centers will invoice ODR or Probation for payment of these services.

Please use this tool as a reference when referring child welfare and juvenile justice facilitated conferencing.

## PROCEDURE

- » When the court determines, upon its own motion, or upon motion of a party, that mediation or facilitation is warranted, it will include such language in its written order.
- » The order directs the parties to contact the ODR-approved mediation center to provide either a child welfare conference or a juvenile justice conference.

## Sample Court Order Language

*The Court finds that the above referenced case shall be referred for a **Child Welfare** or **Juvenile Justice Conference** (circle one). The mediation center will conduct an assessment to determine the optimum mediation or facilitation to use to address the issues presented specified. At the conclusion of the*

*conference, the mediation center will issue a Mediation Center Court Transmittal Report along with a copy of any Resolution Agreement to the Court.*

*The issue(s) to be addressed at the conference are:*

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*IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that a **child welfare** or **juvenile justice** conference is ordered and the parties shall contact and cooperate fully with*

*(ODR-approved mediation center).*

Following the issuance of the order, the judge's bailiff sends/faxes/scans a copy of that order to the regional mediation center.

- » When coding that order into JUSTICE, court staff uses either the "CWC" or "JJC" code
- » Following the performance of the conference, the mediation center transmits a "Mediation Center Court Transmittal Report" along with a copy of the conference summary/mediated agreement to the court.
- » Court staff then enters into JUSTICE the specific type of conference conducted.

## TERMINOLOGY

- » The term "child welfare conference - CWC" is a generic term that allows the mediation center to conduct an assessment to determine the optimum mediation or facilitation to use to address the permanency issues confronting the child and family in 3a cases.
  - These include: family group conferences; 12-month permanency review; termination of parental rights; mediations; facilitations.
- » The term "juvenile justice conference - JJC" also is a generic term to allow the same kind of assessment process to determine whether youth would be better served by victim offender mediation or some other type of conference in subtype 1, 2, 3b and 4 cases.
  - These include: victim offender mediation; juvenile mediation; expedited family group conferencing

**PLEASE NOTE:** PHC: Prehearing Conferencing is one type of a pre-existing child welfare conference that has been coded in JUSTICE as "PREHRGC." PHCs are initial removal hearing facilitated conferences in 3a cases that many juvenile courts have been conducting for several years. Please continue to code in JUSTICE accordingly.

### Central Mediation Center

**Location:** Kearney  
**Phone:** (308) 237-4692 or (800) 203-3452  
**Fax:** (308) 237-5027  
**Email:** info@centralmediationcenter.com

### Concord Mediation Center

**Location:** Omaha  
**Phone:** (402) 345-1131  
**Fax:** (402) 884-7057  
**Email:** contact@concord-center.com

### The Mediation Center

**Location:** Lincoln  
**Phone:** (402) 441-5740  
**Email:** info@themediationcenter.org