



**DISPUTE RESOLUTION COMMISSION  
PRE-CERTIFICATION ASSESSMENT PACKET  
FOR FAMILY FINANCIAL (FFS) CERTIFICATION**

**PREPARED BY  
N.C. DISPUTE RESOLUTION COMMISSION  
FEBRUARY 2025**





**Pre-certification Assessment Packet  
FAMILY FINANCIAL SETTLEMENT PROGRAM  
(FFS Program)**

Thank you for seeking a Pre-certification Assessment of eligibility to be certified as a family financial mediator prior to registering for a Commission approved mediator certification training program. Pre-certification Assessments are issued pursuant to the Dispute Resolution Commission Guidelines for Issuing Pre-certification Assessments FFS Rule 8(a)(2)(a). and 8(a)(2)b establish threshold education and work experience requirements for district court mediators in the family financial mediation program. By seeking a Pre-certification Assessment, you are asking this office to determine whether you meet the threshold criteria of FFS Rule 8(a)(2) or 8(a)(2)(b). As part of this review, staff will conduct a background check on you.

**Anyone interested in requesting a Pre-certification Assessment must submit pages 7 and 8, along with payment of \$50.00 made payable to the NCDRC. Include a recent resume, copies of your college transcripts and/or photo of your degree and cover letter briefly describing your professional background. Mail payment and documents to: NCDRC PO Box 2448, Raleigh, NC 27602. Assessments will not be processed without payment.**

Please feel free to contact the Commission's office if you have any questions. Thank you.

Telephone: (919) 890-1415 \* Facsimile: (919) 890-1935  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2448, Raleigh, NC 27602

**DISPUTE RESOLUTION COMMISSION**  
**Pre-certification Assessment Process**  
**FFS Program**

Commission staff may issue Pre-certification Assessments at the request of individuals who are seeking assurances that they meet **threshold** requirements for certification relating to education and work experience as set forth in FFS Rule 8(a)(1), prior to registering for a mediator training program. Commission staff may also issue Pre-certification Assessments at the request of individuals seeking assurances that some ethical or fitness to practice concern they have experienced does not appear to serve as a bar to certification under FFS Rule 8(a)(7).

Please be advised that the issuance of a Pre-Certification Assessment is not a guarantee of certification. The final determination on an application for certification rests with the Commission as it is the final authority in determining an applicant's eligibility for certification.

**I. FFS Program Threshold Requirements**

**[FFS Rule 8 is posted on the Commission's Family Financial Mediator Certification page.](#)**

**FFS Rule 8(a)(2)(a) and 8(a)(2)(b) establish the following threshold requirements for certification related to education and work experience:**

- A. FFS Rule 8(a)(2)(a).** **A Family Mediator Advanced Practitioner member** of the Association for Conflict Resolution (ACR) who holds an undergraduate degree from an accredited four-year college or university is eligible for certification.

If you are seeking a Pre-certification Assessment pursuant to FFS Rule 8(a)(2)a, you will be required to submit verification of your membership as a Family Mediator Advanced Practitioner member of ACR, your resume, and a photocopy of your diploma or transcript, the signed release, and the completed and signed Criminal and Sex Offender Record Search.

- B. Rule 8(a)(2)(b)(1).** **Attorneys.** An attorney is eligible for certification if s/he is a member in good standing of the NC State Bar, or bar of another state and a graduate from a school recognized as accredited by the North Carolina Board of Law Examiners, with at least five years of experience after the date of licensure as a judge, practicing attorney, law professor and/or mediator or a person with equivalent experience.

If you are seeking a Pre-certification Assessment pursuant to FFS Rule 8(a)(2)(b)(1), please provide your letter or resume describing your education and work experience. Please identify the law school from which you graduated and the date of your graduation, identify all states in which you are licensed to practice and dates of licensure, and describe your work experience since licensure, including employers and the dates employed. Pursuant to FFS Rule 8(a)(2)(b)(1), attorneys employed in non-traditional positions will need to provide sufficient detail regarding their employment for Commission staff to determine whether the experience is “equivalent” to the practice of law. Significant gaps in employment or frequent changes in employment should be explained. Please include the signed release and the completed and signed Criminal and Sex Offender Record Search.

**C. FFS Rule 8(a)(2)(b)(2-7) Non-Attorneys.** A non-attorney is eligible for certification if the non-attorney applicant is:

- (i) a NC licensed psychiatrist with at least five years of experience in the field after the date of licensure; or
- (ii) a NC licensed psychologist with at least five years of experience in the field after the date of licensure; or
- (iii) a NC licensed marriage and family therapist with at least five years of experience in the field after date of licensure; or
- (iv) a NC licensed clinical social worker with at least five years of experience in the field after date of licensure; or
- (v) a NC licensed professional counselor with at least five years of experience in the field after date of licensure; or
- (vi) an accountant certified in North Carolina with at least five years of experience in the field after the date of certification.

If you are seeking a Pre-certification Assessment pursuant to FFS Rule 8(a)(2)(b)(2-7), please provide a letter or resume describing your education and work experience. Please identify the professional license held and the date of licensure and describe your work experience since licensure, including employers and the dates employed. Significant gaps or frequent changes in employment should be explained. Please include the signed release and the completed and signed Criminal and Sex Offender Record Search.

## **II. Good Moral Character**

**FFS Rule 8(a)(7) requires that applicants be of good moral character.**

If you are specifically seeking a Pre- certification Assessment pursuant to FFS Rule 8(a)(7), please provide a summary of the ethics, conduct, or fitness to practice matter that you are concerned may

serve as an impediment to your certification. Please attach copies of any relevant documents, e.g., copies of any orders of discipline, copies of any tax liens, etc. You will also need to submit to a background check (see page 7). If you disclose serious ethical, conduct, or fitness concerns, or the background check reveals such, staff may be unable to issue a Pre- certification Assessment.

### **III. Additional requirements of the Pre-certification Assessment process**

Staff may contact colleges, universities, licensing/regulatory authorities, employers, and others with information about your education and work experience. **Please sign and return the Release of Information form**, see page 6.

Staff must establish the pre-certification assessment applicant is of good character and fit to practice as a mediator (See FFS Rule 8(a)(2)(7)). A routine background check will be conducted. **Please complete, sign, and return the Criminal and Sex Offender Record Search**, see page 7.

Commission staff may contact you for clarification of or additional documentation regarding your submitted materials. Commission staff will review your materials and respond to your request for a Pre- certification Assessment as soon as possible.

### **IV. Additional Considerations**

A Pre-certification Assessment pertains only to threshold education, work experience, and conduct requirements relating to FFS certification. To become certified, an applicant must not only comply with threshold requirements, but complete all additional requirements set forth in FFS Rule 8, including all training and observation requirements, and comply with all Commission policies interpreting those rules. The NC Dispute Resolution Commission is the final arbiter of certification, and a Pre-certification Assessment is not a guarantee of eventual FFS mediator certification.

If, after review, it is determined that the requester does not meet the threshold requirements for certification and/or a background check of the requester reveals concerns related to good moral character, conduct, or fitness to practice, staff shall deny the request for a Pre- certification Assessment. Staff may seek guidance from the chair of the Mediator Certification and Training Committee or the chair of the Grievance and Disciplinary Committee. The chair of either committee, once consulted by staff, may at the chair's discretion, present the matter to their full committee for review. Staff shall follow the recommendation made by the chair, or full committee, as to the issuance of a Pre- certification Assessment for any applicant.

The staff decision to deny issuing a Pre-certification Assessment is a final determination and shall not be appealable. An individual whose request for a Pre- certification Assessment has been denied may, however, elect to take a Commission approved training course, complete the requisite

requirements for certification, and file an application for certification in the program(s) in which the individual wishes to be certified.



### RELEASE OF INFORMATION AUTHORIZATION

By signing below, I authorize any individuals, courts, regulatory or other bodies, educational institutions, accreditation organizations, employers, or others identified in materials submitted by me or discovered through the Pre- certification Assessment process to release information about me to the NC Dispute Resolution Commission for purposes of determining whether I meet the threshold requirements for mediator certification:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

State of North Carolina  
County of \_\_\_\_\_

Before me personally appeared the said \_\_\_\_\_ and acknowledged the due execution of the foregoing statement.

This \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

My commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_

SEAL/STAMP

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Notary Public

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Notary Public

<b>STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DISPUTE RESOLUTION COMMISSION</b> P.O. Box 2448 Raleigh, NC 27602		<b>CRIMINAL AND SEX OFFENDER RECORD SEARCH</b>  <i>The DRC shall maintain the confidentiality of all information on this form. The last four digits of the SSN will be redacted from the form and all DRC records at the completion of the application or renewal process.</i>	
<b>NAME</b>			
Last Name	First Name		Middle Name
<b>DRIVER LICENSE</b>			
Driver License No.	State	Last 4 digits of SSN	Date of Birth
If you have moved within the last seven (7) years please complete the following information. Attach additional pages if necessary.			
Current Address		Dates of Residency from _____ To _____	
City	County	State	Zip
Previous Address		Dates of Residency from _____ To _____	
City	County	State	Zip
Previous Address		Dates of Residency from _____ To _____	
City	County	State	Zip
<b>PREVIOUS NAMES</b>			
List <b>ALL</b> previous names used and the effective dates of each (including married, maiden, and aliases). Attach additional page if necessary.			
Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Effective Dates From _____ To _____
Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Effective Dates From _____ To _____
Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Effective Dates From _____ To _____
I certify that the information given above is true and correct.			
Date	Signature		
<b>TO BE COMPLETED BY COMMISSION STAFF</b>			
<b>Results of Criminal Record Search (ACIS/CCIS)</b>		<b>Results of Sex Offender Search</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> No Record Found <input type="checkbox"/> Following Record(s) Found		<input type="checkbox"/> No Record Found <input type="checkbox"/> Following Record(s) found	
Date	Offense	Date	Offense
Date	Offense	Date	Offense
Date	Offense	Date	Offense
Completed by _____ Date _____		Completed by _____ Date _____	

