



Divorce, Separation, Foster Care, & Custody Agreements Policy

At Burlington/Mebane Pediatrics we understand the challenges that can occur when parenting children in multiple households, blended families or displaced children. We also understand that separated or divorced parents may have difficulty communicating or getting along for a variety of reasons. Ultimately, we all have the same goal: *taking excellent care of your children so they can enjoy good health.*

We will:

- Keep your children's best health interests at the center of what we do;
- Treat each parent respectfully;
- Make clinical notes available in our patient portal;
- Send reminders of upcoming appointments by text, phone, or email to the primary guardian listed in the clinical record (typically the parent who completes and signs the demographics form)

To preserve our provider and staff time to serve children and families of our practice we will not communicate completed visit information to the custodial parent who did not attend the appointment outside of the published medical record available in the patient portal.

We request that you:

- Make decisions regarding appointments, vaccinations, and/or any office procedures prior to visiting our practice;
- Communicate with one another about upcoming office visits;
- Consider having the parent not physically attending the visit participate by speakerphone;
- Communicate with one another about the visit itself and any other pertinent information relevant to the health of your children;
- Inform us of any restrictions or requirements about medical decision making and provide us with supporting court documentation.

Each parent has equal access to the child's medical record unless a court order has been presented to our office stating otherwise. Without a court order, we will not stop either parent from obtaining their child's medical records, except for information protected under NC General Statute 90-21.5 for Minor's Rights.

Who can consent for treatment when a child has been removed from the custody of his/her parents?

Only parents (or legal guardians) may consent to treatment for their children, **unless** they have given advance written parental authorization to another person. Custodial parents of minors may authorize another adult to consent to treatment for their children (per NC Law).

- *A local agency (such as DSS):* without termination of parental rights, the agency will need to provide documentation for consent to treat.

Chart # _____

Staff Initials _____

- *Foster parents*: either the court or the Director of Social Services of the county that has custody of the child has the right to consent to health care treatment needed by the foster. Foster parent(s) must produce either written authorization from the DSS, an Order from the court, or the written consent of the child’s biological parent before providing treatment or medical information.
- *A guardian ad litem or in loco parentis* (someone acting on behalf of the parents because no court proceedings have occurred yet): may only have access to the health information of the child as it relates to the treatment he/she has authorized.

If a step-parent, or other adult, should bring your child in, we must have a Parental Authorization on file.

All payments are due when services are rendered. If a court order requires the other parent to pay all or part of the treatment costs, **it is the authorizing parent’s responsibility to collect from the other parent.** Any disputes about reimbursement for medical expenses need to be resolved between the parents.

Just as parents sometimes find that it is best to part ways, we reserve the right to discharge a family whose inability to cooperate in the care of their children is disruptive to our clinic and interfering with our ability to care for the child(ren).

I have read the Divorce, Separation, Foster Care, & Custody Agreements policy of Burlington/ Mebane Pediatrics and I understand and agree to this policy.

Signature of Patient/Parent/Guardian

Print Name

Date

Relationship to patient

Patient’s Name

Chart #