



# State of Kansas - Domestic Court Services

## Higher Ground 2021

### **READ THIS ENTIRE PAGE – YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE TO KNOW IT.**

Johnson County only accepts Higher Ground participants who have been Court ordered. It is up to YOU to ask your attorney to send us a copy of that order. If you have not been Court ordered or you cannot take the class in Johnson County, please contact your judge's office for further direction and options.

Higher Ground is a skill-based educational program designed for separated or divorced parents who are experiencing a high level of conflict. This level of conflict is dangerous for children as well as expensive, exhausting, and unnecessary for each of you.

In the **mandatory 5 sessions**, Higher Ground teaches how conflict impacts your children, offers skills for a more effective co-parenting relationship, and teaches how to have a more child-focused mindset, positive communication strategies, and models for creating a co-parenting business style relationship. There will be speakers who are experts in their fields, including a judge, an attorney, a child psychologist, and a parent who has been through the Higher Ground program in the past.

Higher Ground classes are held Tuesdays. (The class dates/times will be provided once an established number of parents enroll.) There is a \$150.00 fee per parent which covers your workbook and other materials. **ONLY A JUDGE CAN ADJUST YOUR FEE. This fee must be paid in full before attending class. Attendance at all 5 classes in your series is mandatory. Tardiness of even 5 minutes may require you to repeat the class session.**

**\*\*A decision will be made for each series whether the entire series will occur in person or via Zoom\*\***

Please fill out all enclosed forms and return. ***Upon Payment and receipt of attached forms, you will receive a letter confirming class registration and your start date.***

You will need to call in or mail your payment to the Clerk of the District Court. Questions regarding this issue should be answered by your attorney, your judge's administrative assistant, or the Clerk's office @ 913-715-3390. If your case is from a county other than Johnson County, you will need to pay at the Court Services office.

*Jenna Esquibel*

Domestic Court Services

[jenna.esquibel@jocogov.org](mailto:jenna.esquibel@jocogov.org)

(913) 715-7437

## **Higher Ground is a Confidential Parent Education Program**

1. Higher Ground is a parent education program. Facilitators may provide feedback and information to parents on an informal basis.
2. No admission, representation, or statement made while participating in parent education shall be admissible as evidence or subject to discovery by participants. Facilitators are not subject to process requiring disclosure of any matter discussed during the class unless all parties consent to a waiver or directed to do so by the Court. Any parent or staff participating in the program has a privilege in any action to refuse to disclose, and to prevent a witness from disclosing, any communication made in the course of Higher Ground. The privilege may be claimed by any parent or facilitator.
3. Facilitators only report to the courts whether parents complete the program once ordered to do so and if there are unusual circumstances where the staff member or Court deems it appropriate.
4. Higher Ground is a classroom experience requiring completion of homework, personal reflection, active participation in small groups, and positive group discussion. Parents may be screened from the class if they are unable or unwilling to interact positively in a classroom or small group setting.
5. Facilitator has the right to deny a completion certificate to a participant if they have not completed the course in entirety or under class rules.
6. Court Services staff facilitates Higher Ground. It is possible that your mediator, conciliator and/or child custody evaluator may be involved in facilitating your class.
7. We will focus on what part YOU play in the conflict and not the part your child's co-parent is playing- whether it is significant or not.

---

Parent's Name (Please Print Clearly)

---

Parent Signature

---

Date

# Higher Ground Parent Information

| <b>CASE NO:</b>         |            |            |                           |
|-------------------------|------------|------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Children's Names</b> | <b>Age</b> | <b>DOB</b> | <b>Schools/Activities</b> |
| 1.                      |            |            |                           |
| 2.                      |            |            |                           |
| 3.                      |            |            |                           |
| 4.                      |            |            |                           |

| <b>CONTACT INFORMATION</b> |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Name:</b>               | <b>AKA:</b>              |
| <b>Address:</b>            |                          |
| <b>Phone:</b>              | <b>E-mail:</b>           |
| <b>Attorney:</b>           | <b>Attorney's Phone:</b> |

# Group Rules for Higher Ground

1. Members of the group are to arrive on time so the group can start on time. Do NOT communicate with your co-parent in any way, shape, or form while entering or leaving the building.
2. Members of the group will speak respectfully and in conversational tones at all times.
3. Each member will listen carefully to others and not interrupt. Members will help maintain a productive group setting or will be asked to leave. Only facilitators can interrupt.
4. Each member will talk only about themselves and not the co-parent.
5. Members of the group will not speak poorly of the co-parent, their significant other, any other family member, class participants, or friends.
6. Members will respect the privacy and confidentiality of co-parents in the group.
7. Members agree to the attached confidentiality statement.
8. Parents agree to conduct themselves appropriately in a group setting, being mindful of other members' learning experiences and productivity of the class.
9. If extraordinary circumstances require a parent to miss a class, the parent must make arrangements prior to the missed meeting to make up the material.
10. If a class member misses more than two classes, that parent may be required to repeat the entire course. This will be determined by class facilitators.
11. If a parent is more than 5 minutes late, they will need to make-up the class during the next available session.

By signing below, I agree to abide by these rules:

---

Parent's Name (Please Print Clearly)

---

Parent Signature

---

Date

# Family Information for Higher Ground Johnson County Domestic Court Services

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Case No: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Describe the conflict between you and your co-parent: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

2. What are you hoping to learn from Higher Ground? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

3. What issues are in dispute between you as parents now and what have you done to try to resolve these differences? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

4. What is YOUR role in this conflict? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

5. Please include any other information you would like for us to know: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

6. Has there ever been domestic violence or protection orders between you and your co-parent? If so, please explain and include case numbers associated if applicable.

---

---

---

**Please return to:** Court Services,  
Attention Jenna Esquibel, 588 E Santa Fe, Suite 4000, Olathe, Kansas 66061 or  
Jenna.esquibel@jocogov.org