OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL JUDGE, FAMILY COURTS (H.Qs)
DWARKA, NEW DELHI

CIRCULAR

A meeting of the Sub-Committee was held on 01.10.2026 regarding formulation of child access and custody guidelines and in the said meeting, the Format/Draft Questionnaire (Annexure-I-A to Annexure-I-D) were approved for circulation amongst the concerned stakeholders.

All the Ld. Principal Judges/Judges, Family Courts, Delhi/New Delhi, are hereby requested to circulate enclosed Format Draft Questionnaire **(Annexure-I-A to Annexure-I-D)** amongst the following stakeholders seeking their views, suggestions and inputs for the formulation of guidelines on child access and custody.

(a) All the Mahila Courts in Delhi,

(b) Senior Lawyers and General Law Practitioners dedicated to Matrimonial jurisdiction (to be identified by the Ld. Principal Judges within their jurisdiction),

(c) Principal Counsellors and Counsellors engaged in the respective jurisdiction,

(d) Child Psychologists and Counsellors of reasonable standing, litigants/parents-in-conflict, preferably whose cases have been disposed of and,

(e) Such other persons or organizations as the Ld. Principal Judges, Family Courts may deem fit and proper.

The Branch Incharge, Judicial Branch, Family Courts (H.Qs.) and the Branch Incharges of all the Family Courts within the territory of Delhi are directed to immediately transmit the format in physical form/soft form to all the Stakeholders, as may be identified by the Ld. Principal Judges, Family Courts of the concerned district and to maintain the following records:-

(a) Circulation of notice/circular,

(b) Collection of data at the local point and,

(c) Coordination with the Office of the Nodal Officer - Sh. Naveen Kumar Kashyap and to provide the data so received by them,

It is impressed upon from all the stakeholders to kindly furnish the data latest by 30th of October, 2026, enabling the Ld. Nodal Officer to compile the same for the purpose of report.

Vineeta Goyal 23/10/26

(Vineeta Goyal)
Principal Judge,
Family Courts (H.Qs.),
Dwarka, New Delhi

No. 13638-13689 **/Cir./FC/DWK/2026** **Date :** 23 OCT 2026

Copy forwarded for information and necessary action to:-

1. Ld. Principal District & Sessions Judge (H.Qs.), Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi with the request to circulate the same amongst the concerned stakeholders/All the Ld. Mahila Courts.
2. All the Ld. Principal Judges/Judges, Family Courts, Delhi/New Delhi.
3. Sh. Naveen Kumar Kashyap, Ld. Nodal Officer.
4. The Branch Incharge, Judicial Branch, Family Courts (HQs), Dwarka Courts.
5. All the Branch Incharges, Family Courts, Delhi.
6. Office of Concerned Bar Associations, Delhi/New Delhi with request to bring the same to the knowledge of all Sr. Lawyers and General Law Practitioners dedicated to Matrimonial Jurisdiction.
7. Computer Branch, Family Courts (HQs), Dwarka, New Delhi (for uploading) on the website of District Courts.

Vineeta Goyal 23/10/26

(Vineeta Goyal)
Principal Judge,
Family Courts (H.Qs.),
Dwarka, New Delhi

Annexure-I.A

Master Questionnaire — Child Access, Custody and Parenting Plan

*(For obtaining suggestions and practical inputs from stakeholders for formulation of Child Access, Custody, Visitation and Parenting Plan Guidelines for Family Courts in Delhi Pursuant to the Minutes of Meeting dated 19.09.2026 of the Sub-Committee constituted pursuant to the directions of the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi in W.P. (C) No. 1565/2026, titled Ayushman Initiative for Child Rights and Anr. v. High Court of Delhi & Ors from **Judges**.)*

A. PURPOSE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

I. The Sub-Committee is in the process of examining and formulating appropriate **Child Access and Custody Guidelines** for the Family Courts in Delhi.

II. The object of this questionnaire is to obtain practical and experience-based suggestions from various stakeholders concerning:

1. child custody and visitation;
2. frequency and duration of access;
3. interim access during pendency of proceedings;
4. parenting plans;
5. arrangements for pick-up and drop;
6. weekends, holidays and vacations;
7. birthdays and special occasions;
8. virtual/online interaction;
9. interaction with grandparents and other close family members;
10. role of Child Counsellors/Child Psychologists/Child Psychiatrists, wherever required;
11. supervised access;
12. cases involving disputes, allegations of abuse or safety concerns between parents;
13. functioning and role of a Child Access Committee, if considered appropriate;
14. enforcement and modification of access arrangements; and
15. any other practical issue affecting the welfare and best interests of the child.

III.T he questionnaire is intended to obtain **practical suggestions and not to elicit views on the merits of any particular pending case**.

IV. Stakeholders are requested, wherever possible, to distinguish between:

- practices which are **generally workable**;
- practices which are **desirable but difficult to implement**;
- practices which frequently result in **further disputes/litigation**; and
- areas where **standardisation may be useful**, as against matters which should be left to judicial discretion according to the circumstances of each child and family.

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PART I — PARTICULARS AND JUDICIAL EXPERIENCE

1. Category of respondent

☐ Family Court Judge / Principal Judge

☐ Other Judge dealing with Guardianship/Custody/Access matters

☐ Other: _____

2. Judicial experience:

a. Total years of judicial service: _____

b. Years of experience in dealing with Guardianship/Custody/Access matters:

c. Approximate number of such matters dealt with:

☐ Below 25

☐ 25–50

☐ 51–100

☐ 101–250

☐ More than 250

☐ Difficult to estimate

d. Family Court(s)/Court(s) in which such experience has been gained:

PART II — OVERALL JUDICIAL EXPERIENCE

3. From your judicial experience, what should be the principal objectives of the proposed Guidelines?

Please identify the **five most important**:

☐ Welfare and best interests of the child

☐ Continuity and stability in the child's life

☐ Meaningful relationship with both parents, wherever consistent with the child's welfare

☐ Protection of the child from parental conflict

☐ Protection from abuse, violence, neglect or other harm

☐ Reduction of repetitive litigation

☐ Clear and executable access arrangements

☐ Flexibility according to the child's age and circumstances

☐ Age-appropriate participation of the child

☐ Preservation of important relationships with siblings/grandparents/extended family

☐ Other: _____

4. In your experience, what aspects of custody/access orders most frequently result in further applications, clarification applications or enforcement proceedings?

Please identify the principal recurring causes.:

5. Conversely, what arrangements or judicial practices have you found particularly effective in reducing disputes and repeated applications?

Please give examples of **general practices**, without referring to identifiable cases.:

6. Which aspects of custody/access arrangements should not be prescribed in excessive detail because excessive prescription itself may generate disputes or restrict judicial flexibility?:

PART III — JUDICIAL ASSESSMENT OF CUSTODY AND RESIDENTIAL ARRANGEMENTS

7. What factors do you consider most important while determining the child's primary/residential arrangement?

Please indicate the relative importance, where appropriate, of:

☐ Age and developmental needs

☐ Schooling and examination schedule

☐ Existing caregiving arrangement

☐ Relationship with each parent

☐ Sibling relationships

☐ Child's wishes, having regard to age and maturity

☐ Special educational/medical needs

☐ Distance between residences

☐ Working hours and availability of parents

☐ Availability of family/support system

☐ History and level of parental conflict

☐ Safety/welfare concerns

☐ Ability and willingness of each parent to facilitate the child's relationship with the other parent

☐ Other: _____

8. Should the proposed Guidelines contain any presumption in favour of equal/shared physical custody?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Shared parenting may be considered where circumstances permit, but there should be no automatic presumption

Please give reasons:

9. In your experience, what are the principal practical difficulties in implementing equal/shared physical custody?:

10. Are there circumstances in which a substantially shared arrangement is generally unsuitable or requires particular caution?:

If yes, please identify them without suggesting that any one factor should automatically determine the outcome.:

PART IV — INTERIM ACCESS

11. Should interim access ordinarily be considered at an early stage of custody/access proceedings?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Depending upon the circumstances

Please give reasons.:

12. Where there is no apparent immediate safety concern, what should ordinarily be the judicial approach towards maintaining or establishing parent-child contact during pendency of proceedings?:

13. Which forms of interim access have, in your experience, proved most workable?

☐ Weekday interaction

☐ Weekend access

☐ Day visits

☐ Overnight access

☐ Vacation access

☐ Telephone/video contact

☐ Graduated/step-up access

☐ Combination according to circumstances

☐ Other: _____

14. What are the principal obstacles which prevent effective interim access from being ordered or implemented at an early stage?:

15. Would an indicative model for interim access assist Family Courts?

☐ Yes, as a broad default framework

☐ Yes, but only for routine/non-contentious cases

☐ No

☐ Other: _____

If yes, what should the model broadly provide?:

PART V — AGE, DEVELOPMENT AND NATURE OF ACCESS

16. Should the child's age be a significant factor in determining the nature and frequency of access?

☐ Yes, as a principal factor

☐ Yes, but only as one factor among several

☐ No

Please explain.:

17. Based on your judicial experience, what broad principles should guide access arrangements for:

A. Infants/very young children:

B. Pre-school children:

C. School-going children:

D. Adolescents:

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18. Does highly detailed, time-based scheduling generally:

☐ Reduce disputes

☐ Generate additional disputes

☐ Depend upon the level of parental conflict

☐ Vary substantially from case to case

Please explain.:

19. Should the Guidelines prescribe fixed minimum/maximum periods of access for any age group?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Only as indicative guidance

If yes, please specify.:

PART VI — PARENTING PLANS AND ROUTINE ARRANGEMENTS

20. Should a Parenting Plan ordinarily be required in contested custody/access proceedings?

☐ Yes, routinely

☐ Yes, where directed by the Court

☐ Only in high-conflict or complex cases

☐ No

21. What matters should ordinarily be addressed in a Parenting Plan?

☐ Residential arrangement

☐ Weekday/weekend access

☐ Holidays/vacations

☐ Festivals and special occasions

☐ Birthdays

☐ Telephone/video communication

☐ Pick-up/drop and transportation

☐ School and extracurricular activities

☐ Medical care

☐ Sharing of school/medical information

☐ Travel

☐ Relocation

☐ Communication between parents

☐ Procedure for minor variations

☐ Procedure for resolving routine implementation difficulties

☐ Other: _____

22. In your experience, does a detailed Parenting Plan:

☐ Reduce disputes

☐ Increase disputes

☐ Generally assist if drafted properly

☐ Depend upon the circumstances

Please elaborate:

PART VII — CHILD'S VOICE, WISHES AND RESISTANCE

23. In what circumstances should the Court ordinarily ascertain the child's wishes?

Please comment upon the relevance of:

- age;
- maturity;
- consistency of the child's views;
- circumstances in which the views are expressed;
- duration of the child's relationship with each parent; and
- possibility of influence or pressure.

24. What method of ascertaining the child's wishes has, in your experience, been most appropriate?

☐ In-camera interaction by the Judge

☐ Assistance of Family Counsellor

☐ Child Psychologist/other appropriate professional

☐ Combination according to circumstances

☐ Other: _____

25. Where a child expresses reluctance or refusal to meet a parent, what factors should the Court ordinarily examine before deciding whether and how contact should proceed?:

26. What safeguards are necessary to ensure that the child:

a. does not feel compelled to choose between parents;

b. is not repeatedly questioned about the dispute;

c. is not used as a messenger between parents; and

d. is not exposed unnecessarily to litigation or parental conflict?

PART VIII — HIGH-CONFLICT CASES

27. What are the most common features of high-conflict custody/access cases encountered by you?

☐ Persistent communication breakdown

☐ Disputes concerning handover

☐ Repeated allegations against each other

☐ Repeated applications for modification

☐ Disputes concerning holidays/vacations

☐ Disputes concerning telephone/video contact

☐ Denigration of the other parent before the child

☐ Involving the child in parental disputes

☐ Alleged obstruction of access

☐ Disputes concerning school/medical information

☐ Child's reluctance/resistance

☐ Other: _____

28. Which judicial or practical measures have actually worked in reducing conflict in such cases?

☐ Neutral handover location

☐ Separate arrival/departure arrangements

☐ Third-party handover

☐ Access/visitation facility

☐ Written/electronic communication between parents

☐ Detailed Parenting Plan

☐ Advance holiday schedule

☐ Direct sharing of school/medical information

☐ Counselling/mediation/other professional intervention

☐ Graduated access

☐ Supervised access

☐ Other: _____

29. Are there measures which appear desirable in theory but, in your experience, tend to generate further disputes or judicial applications?

If yes, please specify.:

30. Should the proposed Guidelines provide an indicative framework for high-conflict cases?

☐ Yes, with judicial flexibility

☐ Yes, but only for limited procedural matters

☐ No; substantially case-specific approach is preferable

Please explain:

PART IX — SAFETY, ABUSE AND OTHER SERIOUS CONCERNS

31. Where allegations of abuse, violence, neglect, abduction or other safety concerns arise, what interim arrangements have proved practically useful pending appropriate assessment/verifications?

☐ Continuation of existing access where no immediate risk is apparent

☐ Modified/reduced access

☐ Supervised access

☐ Supervised handover

☐ Neutral venue

☐ Indirect/video contact

☐ Graduated/reintroduction access

☐ Temporary suspension where immediate and credible risk is apparent

☐ Other: _____

32. Should an allegation by itself ordinarily result in suspension of access?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Depends upon the nature, seriousness and material supporting the allegation

Please explain the approach which, in your experience, best protects the child while avoiding unnecessary disruption of a genuine parent-child relationship.:

33. What factors should the Court consider before substantially restricting or suspending contact on account of a safety-related allegation?:

PART X — SUPERVISED AND GRADUATED ACCESS

34. In what circumstances has supervised access proved appropriate in judicial practice?

☐ Specific safety/welfare concerns

☐ Reintroduction after prolonged absence of contact

☐ Serious conflict affecting handover

☐ Abduction/non-return concerns

☐ Child's significant fear/reluctance requiring gradual reintroduction

☐ Other: _____

35. What safeguards should ordinarily accompany an order for supervised access?

Please comment upon:

- venue;
- supervisor;
- duration;
- frequency;
- reporting;
- privacy of the child;
- review;
- transition to unsupervised access.

36. What factors should guide transition from supervised or restricted access to less restrictive access?:

PART XI — NON-COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

37. What forms of non-compliance with custody/access orders are most frequently encountered?

☐ Failure to produce the child

☐ Delay/refusal at handover

☐ Obstruction of scheduled access

☐ Failure to return the child

☐ Interference with telephone/video contact

☐ Failure to share school/medical information

☐ Non-compliance with supervised access

☐ Other: _____

38. Which responses have proved practically effective in cases of repeated non-compliance?

☐ Counselling/mediation

☐ Make-up/compensatory access

☐ Costs

☐ Modification of arrangements

☐ Change in access/residential arrangement

☐ Other appropriate judicial measures

Please identify what has worked in practice.:

39. Should the Guidelines contain a graduated framework for dealing with repeated non-compliance?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Only as an indicative framework

If yes, what stages or safeguards would you recommend?:

40. What safeguards are necessary to ensure that enforcement proceedings themselves do not become a continuing source of conflict for the child?:

PART XII — MODIFICATION, TRAVEL AND RELOCATION

41. What are the most common reasons for applications seeking modification of existing custody/access arrangements?

☐ Change in age/needs of child

☐ Schooling/examination schedule

☐ Change in residence

☐ Change in working circumstances

☐ Non-compliance

☐ Practical difficulties in implementation

☐ Child's changed wishes/preferences

☐ Safety/welfare concerns

☐ Travel/relocation

☐ Other: _____

42. Should minor and bona fide variations in an access schedule be capable of being

accommodated without approaching the Court?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, what safeguards should apply?:

43. Should there be a simplified mechanism for seeking limited modification/clarification of an existing access arrangement without reopening the entire custody dispute?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Only in specified circumstances

If yes, what circumstances and procedure would you recommend?:

44. What broad principles should guide judicial consideration of:

a. Domestic travel:

b. International travel:

c. Relocation to another city/state:

d. Permanent or long-term relocation outside India:

PART XIII — ORDERS, STANDARDISATION AND JUDICIAL DISCRETION

45. Which of the following would, in your view, most assist Judges?

☐ Judicial checklist before passing an access order

☐ Model interim access order

☐ Model final custody/access order

☐ Indicative Parenting Plan

☐ Standard handover clauses

☐ Standard virtual-contact clauses

☐ Standard supervised-access directions

☐ Standard directions for high-conflict cases

☐ Standard directions concerning non-compliance

☐ Standard review/modification clauses

☐ Digital/selectable model-order format

☐ Other: _____

46. For each of the following, please indicate whether it should preferably be:

(A) Uniform/standardised rule

(B) Indicative guideline with judicial flexibility

(C) Entirely case-specific

Matter	**A**	**B**	**C**
Interim access	☐	☐	☐
Weekend access	☐	☐	☐
Overnight access	☐	☐	☐
Vacation access	☐	☐	☐
Festivals/birthdays	☐	☐	☐
Virtual contact	☐	☐	☐
Transportation/handover	☐	☐	☐
School/medical information	☐	☐	☐
Parenting Plan	☐	☐	☐
Child's wishes	☐	☐	☐
Supervised access	☐	☐	☐
Enforcement	☐	☐	☐
Relocation	☐	☐	☐

47. What matters concerning custody/access should necessarily remain entirely within judicial discretion?:

48. What matters can safely be covered by standardised guidelines without unduly restricting judicial discretion?:

49. What minimum particulars should every final custody/access order specify to make it sufficiently clear and executable while avoiding excessive rigidity?:

50. What provisions or practices should specifically be avoided in the proposed Guidelines because they may themselves generate procedural, clarification or enforcement litigation?:

PART XIV — CHILD ACCESS FACILITY / INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM

51. Is there a need for a dedicated Child Access Facility/Child Access Centre in Delhi?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Only at selected Family Court complexes

☐ Existing infrastructure can be suitably utilised

Please give reasons.:

52. If such a facility is established, which functions should it perform?

☐ Facilitation of physical access

☐ Supervised parent-child contact

☐ Neutral exchange/handover of child

☐ Assistance during transition/reintroduction

☐ Basic administrative record of attendance

☐ Coordination with appropriate professionals

☐ Reporting logistical/non-compliance issues to the Court

☐ Other: _____

53. What should not be the role of such a facility or committee?

In particular, should it have any role in:

- adjudicating disputes;
- determining custody;
- assessing the merits of allegations;
- altering judicial orders; or
- making substantive decisions concerning the child's welfare?

Please specify:

54. Should a Child Access Facility/Committee have any authority to modify a judicial access order?

☐ No

☐ Only with specific judicial authorisation

☐ Limited administrative flexibility may be permitted within parameters fixed by the Court

Please give reasons.:

55. What infrastructure, manpower, training and administrative support would be necessary for such a facility to function effectively?:

PART XV — LITIGATION MANAGEMENT AND CHILD-CENTRED PROCEDURE

56. Which types of applications are most frequently filed after an interim/final custody or access order?

Please select all applicable:

☐ Modification/variation

☐ Increase/reduction of access

☐ Change of handover arrangements

☐ Supervised/unsupervised access

☐ Overnight/weekend/vacation access

☐ Travel outside Delhi/India

☐ Telephone/video contact

☐ Non-compliance/obstruction

☐ Restriction/suspension of access

☐ Change arising from age/schooling/needs of child

☐ Other: _____

57. In your experience, what are the three most common reasons for repeated custody/access litigation?

1.

2.

3.

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58. What provisions could reduce applications concerning:

- minor changes in timing;
- delayed pick-up/drop;
- school events;
- birthdays/festivals;
- illness;
- vacations;
- missed access;
- telephone/video calls; and
- routine travel?

59. What procedural or courtroom practices should be avoided because they unnecessarily expose the child to parental conflict or repeated questioning?:

60. What safeguards should be adopted to protect the child's privacy and dignity during custody/access proceedings?:

PART XVI — FINAL JUDICIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

61. What are the three most significant practical difficulties which, in your experience, require greater judicial or institutional support?

1.

2.

3.

62. What are the three practices or arrangements which have worked particularly well and should be incorporated or reflected in the proposed Guidelines?

1.

2.

3.

63. If only five changes could be introduced through the proposed Delhi Guidelines, what would you recommend?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

64. What single measure would, in your view, have the greatest impact on:

(a) protecting the welfare and best interests of the child;

(b) preserving meaningful parent-child relationships wherever appropriate; and

(c) reducing repetitive custody/access litigation?

65. Please identify any existing guideline, protocol, court practice, model order or institutional arrangement—within India or elsewhere—which you consider particularly useful for consideration by the Sub-Committee.:

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66. Please provide, if available, any model order, checklist, Parenting Plan, proforma or other practical material which may assist the Sub-Committee.:

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67. Any other suggestion which, from your judicial experience, would assist in making the proposed Guidelines which are child-centred; practically workable; litigation-reducing; capable of effective implementation; and sufficiently flexible to preserve judicial discretion?:

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The responses are intended solely to assist the Sub-Committee in formulating general Guidelines and are not intended to invite comments on the merits of any particular pending or decided case.

Name: _____

Designation: _____

Court/Family Court: _____

Years of relevant judicial experience: _____

Date: _____

Annexure-I.B

Child Access, Custody and Parenting Plan.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRACTISING ADVOCATES

(For obtaining suggestions and practical inputs from stakeholders for formulation of Child Access, Custody, Visitation and Parenting Plan Guidelines for Family Courts in Delhi Pursuant to the Minutes of Meeting dated 19.09.2026 of the Sub-Committee constituted pursuant to the directions of the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi in W.P. (C) No. 1565/2026, titled Ayushman Initiative for Child Rights and Anr. v. High Court of Delhi & Ors. From Particularly Advocates Regularly Practising in Family Courts / Guardianship, Custody, Access and Parenting Matters)

The object is to obtain the advocate's practical experience regarding matters which commonly arise in litigation, including the concerns of litigants, recurring applications, drafting of access orders, implementation difficulties, parental conflict, misuse of proceedings, settlement, enforcement and areas where uniformity may reduce unnecessary litigation.

*The questionnaire is **not intended to seek the merits of any particular pending case**.*

Respondents may answer on the basis of their general professional experience.

Where possible, please distinguish between:

- *arrangements which are generally workable in practice;*
- *arrangements which are desirable but difficult to implement;*
- *practices which frequently result in further litigation; and*
- *matters which may appropriately be standardised, as opposed to matters which should remain case-specific and within judicial discretion.*

PART I — PARTICULARS AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

1. Professional experience

a. Years of practice: _____

b. Years of practice in Family Courts: _____

c. Family Court(s)/District Courts in which you regularly practise: _____

d. Approximate number of custody/guardianship/access/visitation matters handled during the last five years:

☐ Less than 10

☐ 10–25

☐ 25–50

☐ 50–100

☐ More than 100

e. Nature of practice:

☐ Primarily matrimonial/family matters

☐ Regular custody/access/guardianship practice

☐ Predominantly child-related litigation

☐ General civil/family practice

☐ Other: _____

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2. In your professional experience, what are the principal concerns which parents/litigants raise with their advocates regarding custody and access to children?

Please identify the most common concerns and briefly explain them.:

PART II — GENERAL LITIGATION EXPERIENCE

3. What are the principal issues which most frequently lead parents to approach the Family Court regarding custody/access after separation?

☐ Denial or obstruction of access

☐ Disagreement regarding frequency of access

☐ Disagreement regarding overnight access

☐ Pick-up/drop difficulties

☐ School schedule

☐ Holidays/vacations

☐ Birthdays/festivals

☐ Telephone/video contact

☐ Relocation/travel

☐ Alleged parental alienation/interference

☐ Safety/abuse allegations

☐ Child's reluctance/refusal to meet a parent

☐ Non-compliance with an existing order

☐ Other: _____

4. Which types of custody/access applications are most frequently filed after an interim or final order?

☐ Modification/variation of access

☐ Increase in frequency/duration

☐ Reduction/restriction of access

☐ Supervised access

☐ Overnight/weekend access

☐ Vacation access

☐ Travel outside Delhi/India

☐ Change of handover arrangements

☐ Telephone/video access

☐ Enforcement/non-compliance

☐ Alleged interference by the other parent

☐ Other: _____

5. What, in your experience, are the most common reasons for repeated or fresh applications concerning the same child after an access arrangement has already been made?:

6. Which provisions in custody/access orders most frequently become the subject of disputes or applications for modification?:

7. Are there any matters which are presently dealt with through repeated applications but could reasonably be addressed through clearer initial orders or standard formats?

If yes, please identify them.:

PART III — INTERIM ACCESS AND ORDINARY ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

8. In the absence of an immediate safety concern, should interim access ordinarily be considered at an early stage of Family Court proceedings?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Depending upon the circumstances

Please give reasons based on practical experience.:

9. Which forms of interim access are generally most workable?

☐ Weekday interaction

☐ Weekend day access

☐ Overnight access

☐ Vacation access

☐ Telephone/video interaction

☐ Combination of physical and virtual access

☐ Other: _____

10. Should the Guidelines contain an indicative/default framework for interim access?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Yes, but only as a flexible starting point

If yes, what should the framework contain?:

11. From an advocate's practical experience, what factors most commonly justify departure

from an ordinary/default access arrangement?

Please comment particularly on:

- age of child;
- schooling;
- distance between residences;
- working hours of parents;
- existing relationship with the child;
- prolonged absence of a parent;
- special needs of the child;
- parental conflict;
- safety concerns; and
- child's wishes, where relevant.

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12. Should access arrangements ordinarily differentiate between infants/pre-school children, school-going children and adolescents?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Broadly, but without rigid age-based rules

If yes, what broad differences would be practically appropriate?:

PART IV — PARENTING PLANS AND CLARITY OF ORDERS

13. In your experience, what are the minimum matters which a well-drafted custody/access order should specify to avoid future disputes?

Please consider:

☐ Days and timings

☐ Place of handover

☐ Pick-up/drop responsibility

☐ Weekend access

☐ Overnight access

☐ Holidays/vacations

☐ Birthdays/festivals

☐ Telephone/video contact

☐ School information

☐ Medical information

☐ Travel

☐ Missed/compensatory access

☐ Other: _____

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14. Would a standard Parenting Plan format assist advocates and litigants in settling and implementing child-access arrangements?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Only in appropriate cases

If yes, what heads should the Parenting Plan contain?:

---

15. Which provisions in parenting plans are most likely to become a source of dispute if drafted excessively or rigidly?:

---

16. Should minor and bona fide variations in timings—for example, delay due to traffic, school functions, examinations, illness or family events—be capable of being mutually accommodated without approaching the Court?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, what safeguards should be provided against misuse?:

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17. Should the Guidelines provide a simple mechanism for modification of minor aspects of an access arrangement without requiring a fresh substantive custody proceeding?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, what would be a practical mechanism?:

PART V — HANDOVER, PICK-UP/DROP AND PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION

18. What are the most common disputes concerning pick-up and drop of the child?:

---

19. Which arrangements for handover are, in your experience, most workable?

☐ School

☐ Residence of custodial parent

☐ Residence of accessing parent

☐ Neutral/public place

☐ Family Court/child-access facility

☐ Through a mutually agreed third person

☐ Other: _____

20. In high-conflict matters, what arrangements have you found most effective for preventing confrontation between parents during handover?:

---

21. Would a designated child-friendly access/handover facility at or near Family Court complexes materially reduce disputes?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Only in high-conflict/supervised-access cases

Please explain.:

PART VI — HIGH-CONFLICT LITIGATION

22. What patterns of parental conduct most commonly escalate otherwise manageable access disputes into continuing litigation?:

---

23. In your experience, which measures actually help reduce parental conflict?

☐ Clear and detailed access orders

☐ Parenting Plans

☐ Counselling

☐ Mediation

☐ Child-focused communication protocols

☐ Neutral handover arrangements

☐ Restrictions on direct parent-to-parent interaction

☐ Virtual communication arrangements

☐ Compensatory access for genuinely missed visits

☐ Graduated response to deliberate non-compliance

☐ Other: _____

Please identify any measure which has proved particularly effective.:

---

24. Are there any measures which appear beneficial in principle but, in actual litigation, tend to generate more disputes?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please identify them and explain why.:

---

25. What parental conduct, in your experience, most frequently results in the child being drawn into the parental dispute?

Please consider:

☐ Asking the child to carry messages

☐ Asking the child about the other parent

☐ Speaking negatively about the other parent

☐ Making the child choose between parents

☐ Discussing court proceedings with the child

☐ Preventing or discouraging communication

☐ Using access as a means of negotiating other disputes

☐ Other: _____

PART VII — CHILD'S VIEWS AND CHILD-CENTRED LITIGATION

26. From the perspective of an advocate, what are the practical difficulties in obtaining or placing before the Court the genuine wishes and concerns of a child without making the child a participant in the parental litigation?:

---

27. What safeguards should be adopted when the child's views are required to be ascertained?

☐ Child should ordinarily not be brought into open court proceedings

☐ In-camera interaction with the Judge

☐ Assistance of a trained child professional

☐ Avoidance of repeated interviews

☐ No questioning by parents/advocates concerning the child's statement

☐ Other safeguards: _____

---

28. In your experience, are allegations that the child is unwilling or reluctant to meet the other parent frequently raised in access litigation?

☐ Frequently

☐ Sometimes

☐ Rarely

☐ Never

Where such allegations arise, what practical approach should the Court adopt?:

PART VIII — SUPERVISED ACCESS, SAFETY AND ALLEGATIONS

29. In your experience, in what circumstances is supervised access generally sought?

☐ Allegations of abuse

☐ Alleged threat to child's safety

☐ Long separation between parent and child

☐ Very young age of child

☐ High parental conflict

☐ Alleged abduction risk

☐ Child's fear/reluctance

☐ Alleged substance abuse/mental-health concerns

☐ Other: _____

---

30. Should the mere making of an allegation of abuse or safety concern ordinarily result in suspension of access?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ It should depend upon the nature, seriousness and supporting material

Please give reasons.:

---

31. In your experience, how can the Court balance precautionary protection of the child with the need to avoid unnecessary disruption of the child's relationship with a parent?:

---

32. Where supervised access is ordered, what practical problems are commonly encountered?

Please comment on:

- venue;
- duration;
- availability of trained personnel;
- cost;
- scheduling;
- reporting;
- transition from supervised to unsupervised access; and
- repeated litigation regarding continuation of supervision.

PART IX — NON-COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

33. What are the most common forms of non-compliance with access orders?:

---

34. Which responses are, in your experience, most effective in dealing with repeated non-compliance?

☐ Counselling

☐ Mediation

☐ Compensatory/make-up access

☐ Warning/direction for compliance

☐ Costs

☐ Modification of access arrangement

☐ Change in handover mechanism

☐ Graduated enforcement mechanism

☐ Other: _____

---

35. Should the Guidelines prescribe a graduated mechanism for dealing with repeated non-compliance?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Only as an indicative framework

If yes, what should the stages be?:

---

36. What safeguards are necessary to ensure that enforcement proceedings themselves do not become a continuing source of stress or conflict for the child?:

PART X — TRAVEL, RELOCATION AND VIRTUAL ACCESS

37. What recurring litigation issues arise concerning taking the child outside Delhi or outside India?:

---

38. Should ordinary domestic travel with a parent ordinarily require prior permission of the Court?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Only where an existing judicial restriction/order exists

Please give reasons.:

---

39. What safeguards should ordinarily be incorporated where international travel with the

child is permitted?:

---

40. In relocation cases, what factors should ordinarily be addressed in the initial order so as to reduce subsequent litigation?:

---

41. What form of telephone/video interaction with the child is generally workable in practice?
Please comment upon frequency, timing, duration and circumstances in which virtual access becomes impractical or counterproductive.:

PART XI — LITIGATION MANAGEMENT AND MISUSE

42. In your professional experience, what features of custody/access litigation most frequently increase hostility between parents rather than promote the child's welfare?:

---

43. What forms of applications or litigation practices should, in your view, be discouraged because they unnecessarily expose the child to parental conflict?:

---

44. What safeguards are necessary to prevent misuse of custody/access proceedings for purposes unrelated to the child's welfare?:

45. Are there situations where repeated applications concerning minor variations in access could be avoided through clearer initial orders, standard forms or administrative mechanisms?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please identify the situations and suggest the mechanism.:

PART XII — STANDARDISATION AND JUDICIAL DISCRETION

46. Which of the following should, in your opinion, be governed by a uniform framework, an indicative guideline, or remain substantially case-specific?

Matter	Uniform rule desirable	Indicative guideline	Case-specific
Interim access	☐	☐	☐
Weekend access	☐	☐	☐
Overnight access	☐	☐	☐
Vacation access	☐	☐	☐
Birthdays/festivals	☐	☐	☐
Virtual access	☐	☐	☐
Pick-up/drop	☐	☐	☐
School information	☐	☐	☐
Medical information	☐	☐	☐
Parenting Plan	☐	☐	☐
Supervised access	☐	☐	☐
Enforcement	☐	☐	☐
Relocation/travel	☐	☐	☐
Child's views	☐	☐	☐

47. Which matters should not be prescribed in excessive detail because rigid guidelines may

themselves generate disputes or unnecessarily restrict judicial discretion?:

---

48. What minimum level of detail should an access/custody order contain so that advocates and litigants can clearly understand and implement it without making the order unnecessarily rigid?:

PART XIII — FORMS, PROCEDURE AND INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

49. Which standard forms/proformas would be most useful to advocates and litigants?

☐ Parenting Plan

☐ Interim Access Plan

☐ Holiday/Vacation Schedule

☐ Child handover/exchange protocol

☐ Virtual access protocol

☐ School/medical information-sharing format

☐ Travel consent format

☐ Supervised-access protocol

☐ Make-up/compensatory access format

☐ Compliance/non-compliance reporting format

☐ Modification request for minor variations

☐ Other: _____

---

50. What institutional facilities would, in your experience, most effectively reduce custody/access litigation and improve implementation?

☐ Child-friendly access rooms

☐ Supervised access facility

☐ Neutral handover facility

☐ Trained counsellors

☐ Child psychologists/child professionals

☐ Parenting coordination/counselling support

☐ Digital communication/compliance system

☐ Standard forms and model orders

☐ Dedicated child-access personnel

☐ Other: _____

Please identify the **three most important**.:

PART XIV — FINAL PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT

51. If you could recommend only five changes to the present system of child custody/access proceedings in Family Courts in Delhi, what would they be?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

---

52. What is the single most important change which, in your professional experience, would reduce unnecessary custody/access litigation while better protecting the welfare and best interests of children?:

---

53. Please identify any existing Indian or foreign guideline, protocol, court practice, model parenting plan or institutional arrangement which you consider useful for consideration by the Sub-Committee.:

54. Please identify any particular model order, proforma, parenting plan, protocol or other practical document which you believe should be considered while formulating the Delhi Guidelines.:

---

55. Any other suggestion, based upon your experience as a practising advocate, which may assist the Sub-Committee in making child-access arrangements clear, workable, child-centred and less litigation-prone:

==========

Thank you for your valuable professional inputs.

Annexure-I.C

PROFESSIONAL STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONNAIRE:

Child Access, Custody and Parenting Plan.

(For obtaining suggestions and practical inputs from stakeholders for formulation of Child Access, Custody, Visitation and Parenting Plan Guidelines for Family Courts in Delhi Pursuant to the Minutes of Meeting dated 19.09.2026 of the Sub-Committee constituted pursuant to the directions of the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi in W.P. (C) No. 1565/2026, titled Ayushman Initiative for Child Rights and Anr. v. High Court of Delhi & Ors. From Family Counsellors, Child Counsellors/Psychologists/Psychiatrists, Social Workers/Child-Welfare Professionals and Representatives of Child-Rights Organisations)

Instructions

*The questionnaire seeks **professional and practical experience-based inputs** and is not intended to obtain opinions on the merits of any particular pending case.*

Where appropriate, respondents may distinguish between:

- *practices which are generally workable;*
- *practices which are desirable but difficult to implement;*
- *practices which tend to generate further conflict or litigation; and*
- *matters which should be standardised versus those which should remain case-specific.*

==========

PART I — PARTICULARS AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

1. Category of stakeholder

Please tick the applicable category:

☐ Family Counsellor attached/appointed to Family Court

☐ Child Counsellor

☐ Child Psychologist

☐ Child Psychiatrist

☐ Social Worker/Child Welfare Professional

☐ Representative of a recognised Child-Rights Organisation

☐ Other relevant child-welfare professional: _____

2. Professional experience

a. Years of professional experience: _____

b. Years of experience involving children/families in custody, access or parental-conflict matters: _____

c. Approximate number of custody/access/parental-conflict matters dealt with: _____

d. Family Court(s)/institution(s)/organisation(s) where experience has been gained: _____

e. Area of professional specialisation, if any: _____

PART II — CHILD WELFARE AND BEST INTERESTS

3. In your professional experience, what should be the five most important considerations in determining an appropriate custody/access arrangement?

☐ Emotional well-being of the child

☐ Physical safety

☐ Psychological safety

☐ Continuity and stability of the child's life

☐ Quality of relationship with each parent

☐ Child's age and developmental stage

☐ Child's wishes and preferences

☐ Schooling and educational needs

☐ Medical/mental-health needs

☐ Sibling relationships

☐ Relationship with grandparents/extended family

☐ Ability of each parent to respond to the child's needs

☐ Level of parental conflict

☐ Willingness of parents to facilitate the child's relationship with the other parent

☐ Other: _____

4. Which aspects of a child's welfare are most likely to be overlooked when parents are engaged in prolonged custody/access litigation?

Please provide practical examples, without identifying any particular case.

5. In your experience, which parental behaviours are most harmful to a child's emotional well-being during custody/access disputes?

☐ Exposing child to parental arguments

☐ Making negative remarks about the other parent

☐ Using the child as a messenger

☐ Questioning the child about the other parent

☐ Pressuring the child to choose sides

☐ Discussing court proceedings with the child

☐ Restricting communication with the other parent

☐ Repeatedly changing access arrangements

☐ Other: _____

PART III — AGE, DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

6. What factors should guide age-appropriate access arrangements?

Please comment separately, where relevant, for:

A. Infants/very young children

B. Pre-school children

C. School-going children

D. Adolescents

In particular, please address:

- frequency;
- duration;
- overnight stays;
- separation from the primary caregiver;
- school routine;
- holidays;
- telephone/video contact; and
- transition between parents.

7. Should age itself determine access?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Age should be one factor among several

Please explain.

8. What practical difficulties have you observed when equal/shared physical custody is attempted?

☐ Frequent movement between homes

☐ Disruption of schooling/routine

☐ Conflict between parents

☐ Different parenting styles

☐ Child being caught between parents

☐ Transportation difficulties

☐ Difficulty maintaining friendships/activities

☐ Emotional stress

☐ Generally workable where parents cooperate

☐ Other: _____

PART IV — CHILD'S VOICE AND PARTICIPATION

9. At what age/stage of development should the child's views ordinarily be considered in custody/access decisions?

Please explain whether age alone should determine this.

10. What is, in your professional experience, the most appropriate manner of obtaining the child's views?

☐ Direct interaction with the Judge

☐ Child Counsellor

☐ Child Psychologist

☐ Child Psychiatrist

☐ Trained child-welfare professional

☐ Combination of professional and judicial interaction

☐ Other: _____

11. What safeguards are necessary to ensure that the child's expressed wishes are voluntary and not the result of coaching, pressure, fear or influence?

12. What indicators may suggest that a child's stated preference is being influenced by:

a. parental coaching?

b. fear or anxiety?

c. loyalty conflict?

d. genuine preference?

e. previous negative experience with a parent?

13. How can the Court obtain the child's views without making the child feel that he/she is choosing between parents?

14. Should repeated questioning of the child by parents, relatives, professionals or the Court be avoided?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Depends upon circumstances

Please suggest safeguards.

PART V — PARENTAL CONFLICT AND HIGH-CONFLICT FAMILIES

15. What are the most common patterns of parental conflict observed by you in custody/access matters?

☐ Inability to communicate

☐ Persistent allegations against each other

☐ Disputes concerning handover

☐ Disputes concerning access frequency

☐ Denigration of the other parent

☐ Child being used as intermediary

☐ Questioning the child about the other parent

☐ Repeated litigation

☐ Allegations of interference

☐ Allegations of abuse/safety concerns

☐ Conflict involving grandparents/extended family

☐ Other: _____

16. Which parental behaviours are particularly likely to cause loyalty conflict or emotional distress in the child?

17. What indicators suggest that a child is being adversely affected by continuing parental conflict?

☐ Anxiety/fear

☐ Withdrawal

☐ Anger/aggression

☐ Sleep disturbance

☐ School difficulties

☐ Somatic complaints

☐ Decline in social functioning

☐ Change in behaviour after transitions

☐ Reluctance/refusal to meet a parent

☐ Other: _____

18. What interventions have you found to be actually effective in reducing parental conflict?

Please distinguish between:

- counselling;
- mediation;
- parenting education;
- parenting coordination;
- structured communication;
- supervised exchange;
- child counselling;
- other interventions:.....

19. Which interventions appear useful in theory but, in your experience, do not work or may aggravate conflict?

20. At what stage does counselling/parenting intervention generally become ineffective or counterproductive?

PART VI — CHILD COUNSELLING AND PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT

21. In what circumstances should a Child Counsellor/Psychologist/Psychiatrist be involved?

☐ Child showing emotional distress

☐ High parental conflict

☐ Child refusing/rejecting contact

☐ Reintroduction after prolonged separation

☐ Allegations of abuse

☐ Safety concerns

☐ Significant behavioural change

☐ Very young child requiring supported transition

☐ Special educational/developmental needs

☐ Court specifically directs assessment

☐ Other: _____

22. Should professional assistance be:

☐ Routinely available

☐ Available only when directed by the Court

☐ Mandatory in specified categories of cases

☐ Entirely case-specific

Please explain.:

23. What should be the precise role of a child professional?

☐ Understanding the child's emotional needs

☐ Facilitating communication

☐ Preparing the child for access

☐ Assisting transition between parents

☐ Observing parent-child interaction

☐ Identifying welfare concerns

☐ Assisting in development of Parenting Plan

☐ Recommending therapeutic intervention

☐ Assessing whether supported/reintroduction contact is appropriate

☐ Other: _____

24. What should not be the role of a Child Counsellor/Psychologist/Psychiatrist?

Please identify functions which should remain exclusively with the Court.:

25. What safeguards should govern preparation and submission of professional reports to the Court?

Please address:

- confidentiality;
- scope of assessment;
- methodology;
- access to collateral information;
- communication with parents;
- child's privacy;
- disclosure to parties;
- use of the report in further litigation.

26. Should counselling/therapeutic notes and reports be treated differently from a formal professional assessment/report?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Please explain:

PART VII — SUPERVISED AND REINTRODUCTION ACCESS

27. In which circumstances should supervised access be considered?

☐ Credible safety concern

☐ Alleged violence/abuse/neglect

☐ Long absence of contact

☐ Child's significant fear or reluctance

☐ Very young child requiring initial support

☐ High parental conflict affecting handover

☐ Risk of abduction/non-return

☐ Professional assessment recommends supported contact

☐ Need for observation of parent-child interaction

☐ Other: _____

28. Should an allegation by itself ordinarily result in suspension of access?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Depends upon seriousness and supporting material

Please explain from a child-welfare perspective.

29. What safeguards should be followed before ordering supervised access?

Please address:

- purpose;
- duration;
- frequency;
- venue;
- supervisor;
- privacy;
- child's comfort;
- reporting;
- periodic review; and
- transition to unsupervised access.

30. What qualifications/training should a person supervising parent-child contact possess?

31. What should be the role of the supervisor?

☐ Ensure physical safety

☐ Facilitate interaction

☐ Observe parent-child interaction

☐ Prevent inappropriate conduct

☐ Assist transitions

☐ Record factual observations

☐ Make recommendations

☐ Other: _____

32. What should be the limits of a supervisor's role?

33. What factors should guide transition from supervised to unsupervised access?

34. In cases of prolonged separation between a child and parent, what is the most appropriate method of gradual reintroduction of contact?

PART VIII — EXCHANGE, TRANSITIONS AND CHILD ACCESS FACILITIES

35. What are the principal difficulties experienced by children during pick-up/drop-off and

transition between parents?

36. Which arrangements are most effective in reducing the child's exposure to parental conflict?

☐ School exchange

☐ Neutral location

☐ Separate arrival/departure times

☐ Child Access Centre

☐ Third-person handover

☐ Supervised exchange

☐ Other: _____

37. What characteristics should a Child Access/Visitation Centre have to be genuinely child-friendly?

Please comment upon:

- privacy;
- safety;
- trained personnel;
- waiting areas;
- separate entry/exit;
- play/recreation facilities;
- age-appropriate facilities;
- accessibility;
- emergency arrangements.

38. Should every district have access to a designated child-friendly facility for supervised/reintroduction contact?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Selected Family Court complexes may be sufficient

Please explain.:

PART IX — PARENTING PLANS

39. Should Parenting Plans be required in custody/access proceedings?

☐ In every case

☐ Only where custody/access is disputed

☐ Only in high-conflict cases

☐ Only when directed by Court

☐ No

40. Which matters should necessarily be included in a Parenting Plan?

☐ Residential arrangement

☐ Weekday/weekend access

☐ Holidays/vacations

☐ Festivals/birthdays

☐ Telephone/video contact

☐ Transportation

☐ Schooling

☐ Medical care

☐ Extracurricular activities

☐ Travel/relocation

☐ Communication between parents

☐ Mechanism for minor disputes

☐ Child-specific emotional/developmental needs

☐ Other: _____

41. What features of a Parenting Plan are most likely to reduce future conflict?:

42. Should Parenting Plans contain a degree of flexibility for minor, bona fide variations without requiring repeated applications to the Court?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, what safeguards are required?:

PART X — SAFETY, ABUSE AND ALLEGATIONS

43. Where allegations concerning abuse, violence, neglect or safety are raised, what immediate child-centred measures should ordinarily be considered pending appropriate assessment?

☐ Continue existing access

☐ Modify access

☐ Supervised access

☐ Supervised handover

☐ Neutral venue

☐ Temporary indirect/virtual contact

☐ Professional assessment

☐ Information from school/doctor/other authority

☐ Temporary restriction/suspension where immediate credible risk exists

☐ Other: _____

44. What factors should distinguish a genuine safety concern from a disputed or unsubstantiated allegation?:

45. How should the child's psychological safety be protected while avoiding unnecessary disruption of a meaningful relationship with a parent?:

PART XI — GRANDPARENTS AND EXTENDED FAMILY

46. What importance should be given to the child's relationship with grandparents and other significant family members?:

47. In what circumstances can separate access to grandparents/extended family be beneficial to the child?:

48. How can such access be facilitated without creating additional conflict or multiplying litigation?:

PART XII — PROFESSIONAL ETHICS, CONFIDENTIALITY AND LIMITS

49. What safeguards are required to protect the child's privacy and dignity during counselling, assessment and court proceedings?:

50. What information should ordinarily remain confidential between the child and the professional, subject to applicable law and directions of the Court?:

51. In what circumstances should confidentiality be overridden because of concerns relating to the child's safety or welfare?:

52. How can professionals avoid becoming another source of evidence-gathering or adversarial litigation between parents?:

53. Should the same professional ordinarily be permitted to:

☐ Counsel the child;

☐ Assess the child;

☐ Supervise access;

☐ Prepare a report for the Court;

or should these functions be separated?

Please explain.:

PART XIII — IMPLEMENTATION AND INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

54. What institutional support is most urgently required for effective child-centred custody/access arrangements?

☐ Dedicated Child Counsellors

☐ Child Psychologists

☐ Child Psychiatrists

☐ Family Counsellors

☐ Social Workers

☐ Child-welfare/access coordinators

☐ Supervised access facilities

☐ Child-friendly waiting/meeting rooms

☐ Trained handover personnel

☐ Parenting education programmes

☐ High-conflict family interventions

☐ Training for Judges and court staff

☐ Standardised professional protocols

☐ Other: _____

55. What training should professionals attached to Family Courts receive regarding:

☐ Child development

☐ Child psychology

☐ Trauma

☐ High-conflict parenting

☐ Domestic violence/abuse indicators

☐ Interviewing children

☐ Child participation

☐ Supervised access

☐ Reintroduction of parent-child contact

☐ Cultural/social factors

☐ Other: _____

56. What are the principal practical limitations presently faced by professionals working with Family Courts?:

57. What one or two institutional changes would have the greatest practical impact on child welfare and reduction of parental conflict?:

PART XIV — STANDARDISATION VS CASE-SPECIFIC JUDICIAL DISCRETION

58. Which matters, in your professional opinion, can safely be covered by standard guidelines?

☐ Age-wise indicative access arrangements

☐ Interim access

☐ Weekend access

☐ Vacation access

☐ Virtual contact

☐ Exchange/handover

☐ Parenting Plans

☐ Supervised access

☐ Reintroduction contact

☐ Professional assessment

☐ Child participation

☐ High-conflict parenting

☐ Other: _____

59. Which matters should always remain case-specific and within judicial discretion?

☐ Assessment of best interests

☐ Safety/abuse concerns

☐ Child's wishes

☐ Supervised/restricted access

☐ Reintroduction of contact

☐ Relocation

☐ Mental-health concerns

☐ Exceptional departure from standard access

☐ Other: _____

60. Are there any proposed standard arrangements which appear desirable on paper but are likely to be unworkable or harmful in practice?

Please specify.:

PART XV — FINAL PROFESSIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

61. If you could recommend five changes to the present system of child custody/access in Family Courts in Delhi, what would they be?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

62. What is the single most important professional intervention that would promote the welfare and best interests of children involved in custody/access proceedings?:

63. What is the single most important change that would reduce the child's exposure to

parental conflict?:

64. What is the one practice presently followed in Family Courts which, in your experience, should be retained or strengthened?:

65. What is the one practice which should be changed, reduced or discontinued?:

66. Please identify any existing Indian or international guideline, protocol, model, institutional practice or child-access facility which you consider useful for consideration by the Sub-Committee.:

67. Any other suggestion which may assist the Sub-Committee in formulating practical, child-centred, developmentally appropriate and litigation-reducing Guidelines:

==========

From:

Name: _____

Professional Category: _____

Designation/Profession: _____

Family Court/Institution/Organisation: _____

Years of relevant experience: _____

Contact details (optional): _____

Email (optional): _____

Date: _____

Annexure-I.D

Child Access, Custody and Parenting Plan.

(For obtaining suggestions and practical inputs from stakeholders for formulation of Child Access, Custody, Visitation and Parenting Plan Guidelines for Family Courts in Delhi Pursuant to the Minutes of Meeting dated 19.09.2026 of the Sub-Committee constituted pursuant to the directions of the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi in W.P. (C) No. 1565/2026, titled Ayushman Initiative for Child Rights and Anr. v. High Court of Delhi & Ors. From ***Questionnaire For Parents / Litigants)***

This questionnaire seeks your personal experience and practical suggestions regarding arrangements for your child during and after separation/dispute between parents.

You are not required to give detailed allegations against the other parent or narrate the entire matrimonial dispute.

Please answer only insofar as it relates to the child, custody, access, visitation and parenting arrangements.

You may select more than one option.

==========

PART A — BASIC PARTICULARS

1. What is your present status in relation to the child?

☐ Child is presently living primarily with me.

☐ Child is presently living primarily with the other parent.

☐ Child spends substantial time with both parents.

☐ Custody/access arrangement is presently disputed or not being followed.

☐ Other: _____

2. What is the approximate age of the child/children concerned?

☐ Below 3 years

☐ 3–6 years

☐ 7–12 years

☐ 13–17 years

☐ 18 years or above

If more than one child is involved, please mention ages:

3. Is there presently any Court order or mutually agreed arrangement regarding custody/access?

☐ Yes, Court order

☐ Yes, mutual/agreed arrangement

☐ Both

☐ No

☐ Arrangement exists but is not being followed

If yes, briefly state what the present arrangement is:

PART B — PRESENT ACCESS ARRANGEMENT

4. How often does the child presently meet or spend time with the other parent?

☐ Daily/almost daily

☐ Several times a week

☐ Once a week

☐ Once in 2–3 weeks

☐ Once a month

☐ Only during holidays/vacations

☐ Rarely

☐ No physical contact presently

☐ Other: _____

5. In your experience, is the present frequency and duration of contact:

☐ Adequate and workable

☐ Generally adequate but requires some adjustment

☐ Insufficient

☐ Excessive/difficult to implement

☐ Not being implemented

Please briefly explain:

---

6. What arrangement do you consider most workable for regular contact between the child and the other parent?

☐ Weekday contact

☐ Weekend/day access

☐ Overnight access

☐ Alternate weekends

☐ Longer periods during vacations

☐ Combination of the above

☐ Other: _____

Please mention any arrangement which, from your experience, works particularly well:

---

7. Should the child's age, school routine, examination schedule and activities be taken into account while deciding access?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Depends upon the circumstances

Any practical suggestion:

PART C — WEEKENDS, HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS

8. How should school vacations, festivals and public holidays ideally be shared between parents?

☐ Equally, as far as practicable

☐ Alternately between parents

☐ Substantial periods with each parent

☐ According to the child's school/examination schedule

☐ Case-specific arrangement

☐ Other: _____

9. What arrangement would you consider appropriate for the child's birthday and other important occasions?

☐ Child spends the occasion with one parent alternately each year

☐ Both parents should be able to spend some time with the child

☐ Separate celebration with each parent

☐ Case-specific arrangement

☐ Other: _____

10. Should the child ordinarily be able to maintain contact with grandparents and other close family members of both sides?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Depending upon the circumstances

What arrangement would be practical?

PART D — PICK-UP, DROP AND TRANSPORTATION

11. What is the most practical arrangement for pick-up and drop of the child?

☐ Parent exercising access should collect and return the child

☐ Parent with whom the child resides should transport the child

☐ Both parents should share transportation

☐ School should be used as the point of exchange, where practicable

☐ Neutral/common location

☐ Third person/family member may assist

☐ Other: _____

12. What are the main difficulties, if any, which you have experienced during pick-up/drop or exchange of the child?

☐ Delay or uncertainty regarding timings

☐ Parents meeting and arguing

☐ Dispute regarding the place of exchange

☐ Transportation/distance

☐ Child's reluctance or difficulty in transition

☐ One parent not cooperating

☐ No significant difficulty

☐ Other: _____

Please briefly describe any practical difficulty:

PART E — TELEPHONE / VIDEO CONTACT

13. Does the child presently communicate with the other parent by telephone/video/online means?

☐ Regularly

☐ Occasionally

☐ Rarely

☐ Not at all

14. What arrangement for telephone/video contact would be most workable?

☐ Flexible/reasonable contact without fixed timings

☐ Fixed days/timings

☐ Contact according to the child's convenience

☐ Contact according to school/examination schedule

☐ Other: _____

What difficulties, if any, have you experienced regarding telephone/video contact?

PART F — SCHOOL, MEDICAL AND OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

15. Does each parent presently receive adequate information regarding the child's:

☐ School/education

☐ Report cards/examinations

☐ School functions/activities

☐ Medical treatment

☐ Extracurricular activities

☐ Other important matters

☐ Information is not adequately shared

16. In your view, should both parents ordinarily receive important school and medical information concerning the child?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Depending upon the circumstances

What practical method would help ensure that information is shared?

PART G — PARENTING PLAN

17. Would a simple written Parenting Plan specifying the basic arrangements for the child be useful?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

18. Which matters should, in your view, be included in such a Parenting Plan?

☐ Child's primary residence

☐ Weekday/weekend access

☐ Overnight stays

☐ Vacations and festivals

☐ Birthdays/special occasions

☐ Telephone/video contact

☐ Pick-up/drop arrangements

☐ School and medical information

☐ Travel arrangements

☐ Other: _____

19. Should parents be allowed reasonable flexibility to make minor changes by mutual agreement—for example, because of illness, school examination, family function or an unavoidable delay—without approaching the Court every time?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Only in limited circumstances

Please give any suggestion:

PART H — CONFLICT BETWEEN PARENTS

20. Which difficulties, if any, have affected the child's relationship with the other parent?

☐ Disagreement about timings or duration of access

☐ Disputes regarding pick-up/drop

☐ Difficulty in communicating with the other parent

☐ Disagreement concerning school/medical matters

☐ Child being exposed to arguments between parents

☐ Child being asked to carry messages between parents

☐ Child being questioned about the other parent

☐ One parent interfering with contact/access

☐ Disputes involving grandparents/other relatives

☐ No significant difficulty

☐ Other: _____

21. What arrangement would, in your experience, reduce conflict between parents while allowing the child to maintain a meaningful relationship with both?

☐ Neutral place for exchange

☐ School-based exchange, where practicable

☐ Separate timings/areas for exchange

☐ Communication limited to child-related matters

☐ Written/electronic communication between parents

☐ A clear Parenting Plan

☐ Mediation/counselling

☐ Assistance of a third person

☐ Child Access/Visitation Centre, where available

☐ Other: _____

Please mention any arrangement which you have personally found helpful:

PART I — COUNSELLING AND PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE

22. Have you or your child had assistance from a Family Counsellor/Child Counsellor/Psychologist in relation to the custody/access dispute?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not aware/Not applicable

If yes, was it:

☐ Helpful

☐ Partly helpful

☐ Not helpful

Please briefly explain:

---

23. In what circumstances, in your view, would professional assistance for the child be useful?

☐ Where the child is distressed by parental conflict

☐ Where the child is reluctant or fearful about meeting a parent

☐ Where the child has had little/no contact with a parent for a long period

☐ During transition from supervised to normal access

☐ Where parents are unable to agree on arrangements

☐ Only in exceptional/special circumstances

☐ Other: _____

PART J — SUPERVISED ACCESS AND SAFETY

24. In what circumstances, in your view, may supervised access be appropriate?

☐ Specific concern regarding the child's safety

☐ Allegation/concern of violence, abuse or neglect requiring protective consideration

☐ Child and parent have had little/no contact for a long period and contact needs gradual reintroduction

☐ Serious conflict during exchange or interaction

☐ Concern regarding removal/non-return of the child

☐ Where the Court/professional considers supported contact necessary

☐ Only in exceptional circumstances

☐ Other: _____

25. If supervised access is required, where would you consider it most appropriate?

☐ Child Access/Children Room in court complexes.

☐ Recognised child-welfare organisation/facility

☐ Neutral public/child-friendly place

☐ Case-specific arrangement

Any suggestion regarding supervision or venue:

PART K — COMPLIANCE AND REPEATED COURT PROCEEDINGS

26. Have you experienced difficulty in implementing a Court order or agreed access arrangement?

☐ Frequently

☐ Occasionally

☐ Rarely

☐ Never

If yes, what was the principal reason?:

☐ Timing/scheduling

☐ Transportation

☐ Non-cooperation of the other parent

☐ Child's school/examination/activity

☐ Illness or emergency

☐ Conflict between parents

☐ Disagreement regarding interpretation of the order

☐ Other: _____

27. In your experience, which matters most often require approaching the Court again?

☐ Alleged non-compliance/obstruction

☐ Change in access timings

☐ Increase/reduction of access

☐ Holidays/vacations

☐ Birthdays/festivals

☐ Pick-up/drop arrangements

☐ Telephone/video contact

☐ Missed access

☐ Travel

☐ Change in child's age, school or circumstances

☐ Safety/welfare concerns

☐ Other: _____

28. What could be done to reduce repeated applications to the Court concerning minor day-to-day issues?

☐ More flexible access orders

☐ Clearer Parenting Plans

☐ Provision for mutual adjustment by parents

☐ Mediation/counselling for minor disputes

☐ Neutral exchange/access facility

☐ Compensatory access for genuine missed access

☐ A simple procedure for modification of minor arrangements

☐ Other: _____

Please give your own suggestion:

PART L — CHILD'S WELFARE AND FINAL SUGGESTIONS

29. In your experience, what is the single most important measure that would best protect the child's welfare during a custody/access dispute?:

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30. If you could suggest three changes in the present system of child custody/access in Family Courts, what would they be?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

OPTIONAL FINAL COMMENT

Please mention any other practical difficulty, suggestion or arrangement which, from your personal experience, may help the Family Courts in making custody/access arrangements more **child-friendly, workable and less conflict-generating**:

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From:

Name (optional, if anonymity is preferred): _____

Parent/Mother/Father/Other: _____

Family Court name, if applicable: _____

Present stage of case:

☐ Pending

☐ Concluded

☐ No formal case presently pending

Date: _____