



The Court Book

Introduction

When preparing for child custody court, staying organized is incredibly important. This resource was designed to give you some peace of mind as you navigate child custody and the court process.

Note:

This resource was not prepared by a legal professional and is intended to help organize your thoughts and important documents. This of course, does not serve as or replace legal counsel.

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HOLIDAYS AT A GLANCE

YEAR _____

HOLIDAY	PARENT IN CUSTODY
CHILD'S BIRTHDAY	
ODD YEARS	
EVEN YEARS	

MISSED VISITATION/MAKEUP TIME

DATE	NOTES
DATE	NOTES
DATE	NOTES
DATE	NOTES
DATE	NOTES
DATE	NOTES
DATE	NOTES
DATE	NOTES
DATE	NOTES

DOCUMENTATION

Category:

Entry Date:	Key Event
Title:	

Corresponding Evidence	Date <small>*Add time if video/photos</small>	Location <small>*Where do you store it</small>
Email		
Text Message		
Family App		
Receipt		
Photo		
Video		
Other		
None		

Witness(s)	
Notes:	
What can the witness(s) attest to (if applicable)?	

PATTERN TRACKER

Category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	14	15
Category	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Category	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43

WITNESS LIST

Witness Name	Relationship OR Title	Phone Number	Address	Association Category & Entry Date

Questions to Ask During Your Family Law Consultation

Getting to know your attorney:

- ◇ How long have you practiced law?
- ◇ What other type of training do you have in addition to your law degree?
- ◇ What type of cases do you generally handle?
- ◇ Who is your typical client?
- ◇ What are your qualifications for handling my particular case?
- ◇ What is your approach to winning or representing a case?
(are you more aggressive or settlement minded)
- ◇ What is your approach to child custody cases?

Specific to your case (ask these questions after you have shared why you are there and details of your situations):

- ◇ Have you handled a case similar to mine?
- ◇ What do you feel are my options?
- ◇ Are there other approaches to solving my legal problem?
- ◇ What strategy do you propose?
- ◇ What do you think this will look like for me (what am I getting myself into?)
- ◇ What is the likely outcome of my case?
- ◇ How long will the case take?
- ◇ What do you know about my judge? Have you had a case with my judge?
- ◇ Are there any upcoming deadlines specific to my case right now?

The team:

- ◇ Who will work on my case? (paralegals, associate attorneys, consultants), how much work will each person be doing?
- ◇ Who will be my primary attorney?
- ◇ How will you provide updates on my case?
- ◇ Will I get copies of all correspondence ? (between opposing counsel, etc.)

30 Questions to Ask During Your Family Law Consultation

Financial questions:

- ◇ What are your fees?
- ◇ What are the fees for the others that will be working on my case?
- ◇ Will I need to pay a retainer or will you send me a monthly invoice?
- ◇ **Ask yourself: Can I afford this?**

Final questions:

- ◇ Are there any factors that can influence the outcome of my case?
- ◇ More specifically, is there anything I should not be doing right now that would impact my case?
- ◇ As your client, what will you expect of me?
- ◇ Is there a certain way you would like to receive my documentation.

Space for additional questions:

- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____
- ◇ _____

MEDIATION PREPERATION

Prepare three offers for each topic:

Offer 1) Your ideal scenario with everything you want plus more

Offer 2) Where you can scale down from your ideal scenario

Offer 3) Your absolute lowest offer for that topic

Note: Doing this exercise as a couple can be really helpful, especially when stepparents are not often involved/present in the mediation process.

Topics to consider prior to mediation:

Who will have primary possession?

Option 1)

Option 2)

Option 3)

Will there be geographic restrictions for either party?

Option 1)

Option 2)

Option 3)

What will the custody schedule be like? When is transition day?

Option 1)

Option 2)

Option 3)

What will summer schedule be like?

Option 1)

Option 2)

Option 3)

Will you alternate holidays? Are there specific holidays you care more about? (i.e., Mother's Day/ Father's Day, birthdays, Halloween) What will be the schedule? Weekend? Few hours?

Option 1)

Option 2)

Option 3)