

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING OUT PARENTING PLAN
PARENT-CREATED
Joint Legal and Joint Physical Custody**

IMPORTANT: USE OF THE JOINT LEGAL AND JOINT PHYSICAL CUSTODY PARENTING PLAN IS INTENDED *ONLY* FOR THOSE CASES IN WHICH:

- **BOTH PARENTS VOLUNTARILY AND WILLINGLY AGREE TO SHARE JOINT LEGAL CUSTODY OF THE CHILDREN (DECISION-MAKING)**
- **BOTH PARENTS VOLUNTARILY AND WILLINGLY AGREE TO SHARE JOINT PHYSICAL CUSTODY OF THE CHILDREN (PLACE OF RESIDENCE AND PARENTING TIME)**

If you want items in your parenting plan besides those in this sample provided, you can add them to your plan. Likewise, if you do not want some items in your parenting plan that are in this sample, you can take them out of your plan. For example, you may want to add other holidays, take out particular holidays, change time periods, change the method of pick up and return times for parenting time, change the length of time for summer parenting time, etc. Also, if you observe holidays that are not included in this sample, you can add language to your plan about those holidays. Remember, this is your parenting plan and it should meet your individual needs.

- The parenting plan provides a legal “fall back” plan for parents to use if there is a need. Parents can alter this plan informally if all are in agreement. However, if there is a disagreement, the provisions in this plan control the parenting time.
- The mother and father can temporarily change the terms of this plan as long as they both agree to it.
- This plan may be changed by mutual, written agreement of the parents.
- The parents understand that any permanent changes must be approved by the court to be binding and enforceable.

Please remember, your parenting plan will be reviewed by the judge and will need to be court ordered before it takes legal effect.

BODY OF THE PARENTING PLAN

- In the first blank, enter the plaintiff’s full name.
- In the second blank, enter the defendant’s full name.
- In the third blank, enter the case number assigned by the clerk of the district court when the Complaint was filed.
- In the fourth blank, enter the name of the county where the Complaint was filed.

The numbers or letters below give instructions for completing the sections and paragraphs corresponding with the same numbers or letters in the Joint Legal and Joint Physical Custody Parenting Plan.

Paragraph 9.A.

Parenting Time - This section is in regard to **parenting time**. By selecting this Joint Legal and Joint Physical Custody Parenting Plan, you are indicating to the court that the children will live with each parent for continuous blocks of parenting time and for significant periods of time.

Step one: Read through the three sets of parenting time choices on page 2 and the first half of page 3.

Step two: After you have decided which of the three parenting time choices you want to propose, check that box, and fill out the details within the fillable blanks. Boxes 1 and 2 have standard parenting time examples. Box 3 is left blank for parents to write in their own parenting time schedule.

Step three: Following are instructions on how to fill out box 1, box 2, and box 3 of parenting time under Section 9.A.

Box 1: ALTERNATING BLOCK PARENTING TIME:

First paragraph, first sentence, check the box that applies: weekly; biweekly (2 weeks at a time); or monthly.

First paragraph, second sentence,

- First and second blanks: fill in the time and check the appropriate box for “a.m.” or “p.m.”. This is when the exchange of the child(ren) will occur.
- Third blank: fill in the day of the week when exchange will occur.

Box 2: PARTIAL WEEK ALTERNATING PARENTING TIME:

First sentence, fill in when the mother will begin and end her parenting time with the children, including the day of the week, and the beginning and ending time.

Second sentence, fill in when the father will begin and end his parenting time with the children, including the day of the week, and the beginning and ending time.

Third sentence, if the parents decide to alternate weekends with the children, use this sentence and indicate when each parent’s alternating weekends with the children will occur, including the day of the week, and the beginning and ending time. If the mother and father are not alternating weekends, “X” out this sentence.

Box 3: PARENT-CREATED PARENTING TIME:

First set of blanks: Box 3 provides parents with the flexibility to create their own shared joint physical custody parenting time. If this choice is selected, the schedule needs to be very specific and give details showing that one parent or the other has responsibility for the children at all times, seven (7) days a week, 24 hours a day.

On the lines provided, describe the details of the parent-created parenting time. If more space is needed, you may include additional page(s).

Paragraph 9.B. **Holidays and other Special Days-** This section provides details for the parents and children to designate how holidays and other special days are to be shared. The sample plan assumes that the parents will have alternating holidays with the children.

For example: In even numbered years the mother may have Easter, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, and the second half of the Christmas/Winter holiday and the father may have Memorial Day weekend, Labor Day weekend, part one of the Christmas/Winter holiday, and the child(ren)'s birthdays. In odd numbered years the mother may have Memorial Day weekend, Labor Day weekend, the first half of the Christmas/Winter holiday, and the child(ren)'s birthdays and the father may have Easter, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, and part two of the Christmas/Winter holiday.

Paragraph 9.B.1. In sentence 1, fill in which holidays that the mother will have the children during even numbered years and odd numbered years.

Paragraph 9.B.2. In sentence 2, fill in which holidays that the father will have the children during even numbered years and odd numbered years.

Paragraph 9.B.3. For each holiday, fill in the beginning and ending time of the holiday parenting time.

- (a) **Easter.** In the first blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that Easter parenting time will begin. In the second blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that Easter parenting time will end.
- (b) **Memorial Day weekend.** In the first blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that Memorial Day weekend parenting time will begin. In the second blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that Memorial Day weekend parenting time will end.
- (c) **Fourth of July.** In the first blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that Fourth of July parenting time will begin. In the second blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that Fourth of July parenting time will end.
- (d) **Labor Day weekend.** In the first blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that Labor Day weekend parenting time will begin. In the second blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that Labor Day weekend parenting time will end.
- (e) **Thanksgiving.** Parents can select one of two choices. Check the box that applies.

Box 1: **BLOCK THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY:** In the first blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that Thanksgiving parenting time will begin. In the second blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that Thanksgiving parenting time will end.

Box 2: **FLEXIBLE PARENT-CREATED**

THANKSGIVINGHOLIDAY: fill in the blank lines with the details of the parenting time for each parent.

- (f) **Christmas/Winter holiday.** Parents can select one of two choices. Check the box that applies.
 Box 1: SHARED WINTER HOLIDAY (two parts): Fill in the beginning time and the ending time for “Part one”. Fill in the beginning and the ending time for “Part two”.
 Box 2: FLEXIBLE PARENT-CREATED WINTER HOLIDAY: fill in the blank lines with the details of the parenting time for each parent.
- (g) **Child(ren)’s birthdays.** In the first blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that parenting time on the child(ren)’s birthday(s) will begin. In the second blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that parenting time on the child(ren)’s birthday(s) will end.
- (h) **Father’s/Mother’s Day.** In the first blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that the father’s and mother’s parenting time with the child(ren) on Father’s/Mother’s Day will begin. In the second blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that the father’s and mother’s parenting time with the child(ren) on Father’s/ Mother’s Day will end.
- (i) **Other Holidays/School Breaks.** Complete the blanks with details of other holiday or school break beginning and ending time and with which parent.

Paragraph 9.C.

Summer Parenting Schedule (Optional) – This is only filled out if the parents want to change the parenting time schedule during the summer from the school year schedule.

- If the parenting time stays the same during the summer as it is during the school year, “X” out the “Summer Parenting Schedule” section.
- If the parenting time changes during the summer, fill in the start and end dates in the two blanks of the first sentence.
- In the “Mother” section, fill in when the mother will have parenting time with the child(ren) during the summer schedule.
- In the “Father” section, fill in when the father will have parenting time with the child(ren) during the summer schedule.

Paragraph 10.

Priority of Holiday Parenting Time Schedules - Check the box that you choose for your plan. Remember that a holiday will take priority over a regularly scheduled visit. The sample plan gives you an example that may help you decide how to structure your plan. Check the first box if you are alternating weekends and want to continue that regular alternating schedule and not consider that holiday in that rotation. Check the second box if you are alternating weekends and wish the weekends to remain the same even though a holiday may mean that one parent may have the children three consecutive weekends.

Paragraph 11.

Telephone/Virtual Parenting Access - This paragraph can be modified to fit your particular situation. For example, you may want to specify that the visit be on FaceTime or Skype. In the first blank, enter the day of the week (Monday through Friday) when telephone parenting time will occur. In the second blank, enter the beginning time (including a.m. or p.m.) of the telephone parenting time. In the third blank, enter the time (including a.m. or p.m.) that the telephone parenting time will end. In the fourth blank, enter the number of minutes each week the noncustodial parent will have telephone parenting time with the minor child(ren).

Paragraph 12. **Children's Transition – Responsibility for Exchange** - Check the box that you choose for your plan. If you check the second box you must set forth the place and time of the exchange for both the beginning and ending of the parenting time.

FINAL SIGNATURE AND DATE

- If you are the mother, you will complete the first information block. If you are the father, you will complete the second information block.

MAKE CERTAIN TO STAPLE THIS PARENTING PLAN TO THE DECREE OF DISSOLUTION THAT YOU TAKE TO YOUR FINAL HEARING.

Remember: This sample plan is only a guide. You must consider your own situation and develop a parenting plan that works for you, the other parent, and your children. For example, the list of holidays is only a suggestion and you can add or delete holidays that reflect your traditions. You can add additional sheets to your plan if necessary.