

## **PARENTING TIME GUIDELINES FOR THE NON-RESIDENTIAL PARENT**

The Domestic Relations Court has developed these parenting time schedules for the purpose of assisting divorcing parents in formulating schedules that work best for their family.

Children require continued and regular involvement of both parents despite the termination of their parents' marriage. Children who "do best" after divorce are those whose parents are able to maintain a low level of conflict. The absence of conflict is just as important for children's normal and healthy development as the amount of time they spend with each parent.

These parenting time schedules were developed to provide children with continuing contact with both parents while being sensitive to the children's ages and developmental needs. These schedules may not be appropriate for all families.

The best parenting time schedule for the children is one that the parents create together which fulfills the unique needs of the children and the parents.

*Parenting time for all children will take place according to the age of the oldest child when there are children in different age categories.*

*Specific parenting provisions in a journal entry take precedence over these provisions.*

*After implementation of a parenting schedule, a parent's move will not automatically modify the schedule.*

**This Order is effective beginning \_\_\_\_\_.**

### **A. Local (parents live within 45 miles of each other)**

#### **1. Birth until age 3**

The non-residential parent shall have parenting time three times a week throughout the year, twice for 3 to 6 hours, and once overnight. If the parents cannot agree, parenting time shall take place every Monday and Wednesday, from 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. and overnight according to the following rotating schedule:

Week 1 – Friday from 5:00 p.m. until Saturday 8:00 p.m.

Week 2 – Saturday from 5:00 p.m. until Sunday 8:00 p.m.

#### **2. Age 3 Years until age 6 years**

The non-residential parent shall have parenting time one midweek overnight and alternating weekends. If the parents cannot agree, the midweek overnight parenting time shall take place every Wednesday from 5:00 p.m. until Thursday morning. The non-residential parent shall drop the children off at preschool, daycare, or school at the

designated time. If there is no preschool, daycare or school, the non-residential parent shall drop the children off at the residential parent's residence no later than 9:00 a.m.

The weekend parenting time will take place on alternating weekends, Friday from 5:00 p.m. until Monday morning. The non-residential parent shall drop the children off at preschool, daycare, or school at the designated time. If there is no preschool, daycare or school, the non-residential parent shall drop the children off at the residential parent's residence no later than 9:00 a.m.

### **3. Age 6 Years until age 14 Years**

The non-residential parent shall have parenting time one midweek overnight and alternating weekends. If the parents cannot agree, the midweek overnight parenting time shall take place every Wednesday from 5:00 p.m. until Thursday morning. The non-residential parent shall drop the children off at preschool, daycare, or school at the designated time. If there is no daycare or school, the non-residential parent shall drop the children off at the residential parent's residence no later than 9:00 a.m.

The weekend parenting time shall take place on alternating weekends, Friday from 5:00 p.m. until Monday morning. The non-residential parent shall drop the children off at preschool, daycare, or school at the designated time. If there is no daycare or school, the non-residential parent shall drop the children off at the residential parent's residence no later than 9:00 a.m.

### **4. Age 14 Years until age 18 Years**

At this stage of development the teenager's world revolves around peers and activities. Parents should be flexible and liberal with parenting time to allow the teenager to spend time with each parent, while allowing the child to participate in academic and social activities important to the teenager.

The non-residential parent shall have parenting time for one midweek overnight and alternating weekends. If the parents cannot agree, the midweek overnight parenting time shall take place every Wednesday from 5:00 p.m. until Thursday morning. The non-residential parent shall drop the children off at school at the designated time. If there is no school, the non-residential parent shall drop the children off at the residential parent's residence no later than 9:00 a.m. The weekend parenting time shall take place on alternating weekends, Friday from 5:00 p.m. until Monday morning. The non-residential parent shall drop the children off at school at the designated time. If there is no school, the non-residential parent shall drop the children off at the residential parent's residence no later than 9:00 a.m.

### **B. Regional (parents live more than 45 miles apart but less than 200 miles)**

Parents shall follow the local schedule based on the age of the child except that any midweek parenting time shall be exercised in the county of the children's residence and the non-residential parent shall be responsible for all midweek transportation. Midweek parenting time shall be Wednesday from 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. The weekend parenting

time shall also end at 8:00 p.m. on Sunday instead of extending through Monday morning once the children begin attending school.

**C. Summers/Vacations, Holidays, School Breaks and Days of Special Meaning**

*The order of priority for parenting time is as follows: 1) holidays; 2) days of special meaning; 3) summer/vacation time; and 4) regularly scheduled parenting time.*

**1. Summers/Vacations**

Both parents shall have parenting time for four weeks each summer. If the parents cannot agree, these four weeks may not be scheduled in more than two-week blocks if the children are under age six.

If none of the children are school age (i.e. in kindergarten or beyond), the four weeks may be scheduled at any time during the year.

By May 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, each parent shall give the other parent written notice of the selected weeks. If the weeks chosen by the parents conflict, the non-residential parent’s schedule shall control in even numbered years and the residential parent’s schedule shall control in odd numbered years.

If a parent is exercising parenting time for four consecutive weeks and the children are staying the community in which the vacationing parent resides, the non-vacationing parent may exercise two midweek days during the four week period. If the parents cannot agree on the midweek, the non-vacationing parent shall exercise the first and third Wednesday from 5:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

**2. Holidays**

Parents are encouraged to agree to a holiday schedule based upon legal and religious holidays they observe. If the parents cannot agree, holiday parenting time shall take place according to the following schedule.

Holiday	Even Numbered Years	Odd Numbered Years	Times
Easter	Father	Mother	10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Memorial Day	Mother	Father	Sun 7:00 p.m. to Mon 8:00 p.m.
July 4	Father	Mother	7/4 9:00 a.m. to 7/5 9:00 a.m.
Labor Day	Mother	Father	Sun 7:00 p.m. to Mon 8:00 p.m.
Halloween	Father	Mother	5:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Thanksgiving	Mother	Father	Thurs 9:00 a.m. to Fri 9:00 a.m.
Christmas Eve	Father	Mother	12/24 noon- 12/25 noon
Christmas Day	Mother	Father	12/25 noon 12/26 noon
New Years Eve/Day	Father	Mother	12/31 5:00 p.m. to 1/1 8:00 p.m.

This holiday schedule may not include all holidays, including religious holidays that families may observe. Parents are encouraged to add holidays that they observe below:

Holiday	Even Numbered Years	Odd Numbered Years	Times

Holidays and days of special meaning shall be spent with the parent who is designated to have the children for those holidays or days of special meaning. If the holiday or day of special meaning falls on a weekend, the other parent shall have the children for the rest of the weekend if regularly scheduled to do so.

**3. School Breaks**

Unless the parties agree otherwise, all breaks from school (summer, winter, spring,) commence on the last day of school, and end the day before school resumes.

**a. Winter Break**

The parents will equally divide the children's winter break. This paragraph should be read in conjunction with the holiday schedule below. The parents will discuss and agree upon the allocation of the break at least thirty (30) days prior to the commencement of the break. If the parents cannot agree on the schedule for the break, the break will be divided equally.

If there is no agreement, the parent who is scheduled to celebrate Christmas Eve shall have the children from the day school is adjourned for the winter break through the scheduled Christmas Eve holiday, and the parent who is scheduled to have Christmas day will have the children for an equal number of days. The remaining days of the break shall also be equally divided with the parent scheduled to have the children for the New Year's holiday including that time in their half of the remaining days.

**b. Spring Break**

The parents shall annually alternate Spring break with Mother having the break in odd numbered years and Father having the break in even numbered years.

**4. Days of Special Meaning**

The children shall spend Mother's Day with the mother and Father's Day with the father. If the parents cannot agree, parenting time shall take place from 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. on Sunday and the children shall spend the rest of the weekend with the parent who

normally has that weekend.

The children shall spend Mother's birthday with the mother and Father's birthday with the father. If the parents cannot agree, parenting time shall take place from 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. for a child not in school on the birthday, and 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. for a child in school on the birthday.

The child shall spend his or her birthday with the mother in even-numbered years and the father in odd-numbered years. If the parents cannot agree, parenting time shall take place from 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. for a child not in school on the birthday, and 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. for a child in school on the birthday. The child's birthday is to be spent with the designated parent, even if the other parent is entitled to weekend, midweek, holiday or vacation with the child. Brothers and sisters of the parties shall attend the birthday event.

#### **D. Long Distance (parents live more than 200 miles apart)**

##### **1. Birth until Kindergarten**

The non-residential parent shall have parenting time eight weeks per year in four separate blocks of time lasting two weeks. If the parents cannot agree, these two-week blocks shall take place from February 1<sup>st</sup> until February 14<sup>th</sup>, May 1<sup>st</sup> until May 14<sup>th</sup>, and August 1<sup>st</sup> until August 14<sup>th</sup>. The final block of parenting time shall take place in odd-numbered years from December 1<sup>st</sup> until December 14<sup>th</sup> and in even-numbered years from December 14<sup>th</sup> until December 28<sup>th</sup>. The non-residential parent shall give the residential parent 30 days advance notice of his or her intention to exercise these weeks.

The non-residential parent may exercise additional parenting time in the community where the children reside according to the local schedule if he or she provides written notice to the residential parent 30 days in advance.

##### **2. Kindergarten to Age 18**

The non-residential parent shall have parenting time eight weeks during the summer break. If the parents cannot agree, parenting time shall commence no sooner than one week after the last day of school and end no later than one week before school resumes.

The non-residential parent may exercise parenting time every spring break from 5:00 p.m. on the last day of school before the break until 8:00 p.m. the day before school resumes.

The non-residential parent may exercise parenting time one-half of every winter break. If the parents cannot agree on the one-half portion of winter break, the non-residential parent shall exercise parenting time the first half of winter break in even numbered years and the second half of winter break in odd numbered years.

## **GENERAL RULES**

### **A. Transportation (for local and regional only)**

Unless otherwise provided in these schedules or as the parents agree, transportation shall be shared equally by the parents. The parent beginning to exercise parenting time shall provide the transportation. For example, the non-residential parent picks up children on Friday evening and residential parent picks up the children on Sunday evening. For regional midweek times, the non-residential parent shall pick the children up and drop them off.

If a parent is unavailable to transport the children, an adult well known to the children shall do so. Only licensed drivers may transport the children. The driver shall comply with all child restraint laws. No person transporting the children may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

### **B. Children's Response to Parenting Times**

For healthy development, children of divorce need both parents to continue regular contact with them. Both parents should strive to communicate well and avoid angry interactions in the presence of their children.

It is normal when parents first separate that a child may have a strong emotional reaction when saying good-bye to one parent during transfer times. Parents need to know that the emotional response is typical, and that both parents need to act calmly and reassure the child that he or she will enjoy spending time with the other parent. This response by the child does not mean that the child does not love the other parent, or does not wish to spend time with the other parent. The length of a child's adjustment will vary and can depend on how well the parents handle the situation.

If a child indicates strong opposition to being with the other parent, it is the responsibility of both parents to deal with the situation appropriately. Depending on the child's developmental level, this may involve talking calmly and reassuringly to the child, exploring the child's concerns, and working with the other parent to help with the transition. When possible, it may be appropriate to arrange indirect transfers, such as drop-offs and pickups around school or child care, so that only one parent is present at the transition.

### **C. Keeping Children Together**

These schedules presume that if the parents have more than one child, the parenting time will be exercised with all children together.

### **D. Promptness**

Both residential and non-residential parents have the right to rely on the other parent to arrive on time to pick up the children.

The children and/or residential parent need not wait more than 30 minutes for the non-

residential parent to arrive. A non-residential parent who is more than 30 minutes late to pick up the children without prior notification to the residential parent forfeits that time unless the residential parent agrees otherwise.

#### **E. Cancellation**

The non-residential parent shall give at least 24 hours advance notice of his or her intent not to exercise parenting time, unless a last minute emergency occurs. A parent who does not exercise parenting time forfeits the time.

#### **F. Illness of a Child**

Parenting time with the non-residential parent shall take place even if the child is ill unless the child is hospitalized or a physician has recommended that the child not be removed from the residential parent's home, in which case immediate notice shall be given to the non-residential parent. All parenting time that is missed under this provision shall be made up as soon as the child recovers.

If a child becomes ill or injured during parenting time warranting emergency medical or dental care, the parent with the child shall secure appropriate treatment and notify the other parent as soon as possible.

#### **G. Clothing**

The residential parent shall provide sufficient, appropriate, clean clothing for every parenting time consistent with the lifestyle of the residential parent and the children. If the planned parenting time activities require special or unusual clothing needs, the non-residential parent shall notify and request such clothing from the residential parent at least two days in advance of the parenting time. The residential parent is under no obligation to comply with the request if the children do not have the type of clothing requested. All clothing sent by either parent shall be returned immediately after the parenting time.

The non-residential parent shall return the clothing washed and cleaned if his or her parenting time exceeds four days.

#### **H. Travel notification**

If either parent intends to travel with the children, he or she shall give the non-traveling parent at least 21 days advance written notice of the travel dates; written detailed information as to the destination, accommodations, method of travel (including name of airline and flight number or other such detailed information depending on the mode of travel); and a telephone number where the traveling parent or the children may be reached while away from home.

#### **I. Phone Contact and Electronic Communication**

Both parents have the right to contact the children at reasonable times with reasonable frequency when the children are with the other parent. Contact includes phone calls and all other electronic communication, including email, texting, Skype, Facetime,

videoconferencing and social networking. The children may contact, whether by phone or by other electronic device, either parent at any and all reasonable times as the children wish.

The frequency of telephone contact shall be reasonable, defined as once per day, or as the parents agree. Phone calls shall be reasonable in duration and not disruptive to the parent with the children. The other parent shall not participate in these calls. If the children are not available when the parent calls, the parent with the children shall have them return the other parent's call as soon as possible.

#### **J. Contact information and access to records**

Each parent shall keep the other informed of the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the children's health care, schools, and consistent child care providers.

Both parents shall have access to the children's medical, dental, optometric, psychiatric and psychological records.

Both parents shall have access to the children's school records.

Both parents shall have access to the children's baby-sitting, day care, preschool, and/or latchkey records.

Both parents shall have access to the children's religious records.

#### **K. Extra-curricular activities**

The children are entitled to participate in a reasonable amount of activities, school related or otherwise. Parents should communicate and cooperate in order to support their children's activities. Parents are encouraged to attend their children's activities. Scheduled parenting time shall not be delayed or denied because children have other scheduled activities (with friends, work, lessons, sports, etc.). Each parent shall provide the other parent with notice of all activities, school related or otherwise, in which the children participate. Schedules of all activities and the name of the activity leader (including address and telephone number if reasonably available) shall be given to the other parent.

#### **L. Car/Booster Seat**

Each parent should have a car/booster seat for any child required by law to ride in one. If the parents are unable to provide separate car/booster seats, the parents shall transfer the car/booster seat when parenting time exchanges occur.

#### **M. Current address and phone number**

Except as otherwise ordered by the Court, each parent shall keep the other informed of his or her current address and telephone number at all times. Any change of address, or phone number shall be reported to the other parent within 48 hours.



## **N. Home schooling**

For holidays, home schooled children will follow the schedule of the residential parent's school district.

## **O. Medications**

When it is necessary for a child to take prescribed medications, the residential parent shall provide the non-residential parent with an adequate supply of medications to care for the child's needs during parenting time at the beginning of the parenting time.

All medications shall be administered to the child by the non-residential parent as prescribed. If the non-residential parent is not physically present to administer medications at the prescribed times, it is that parent's responsibility to ensure that a suitable adult administers the medications as prescribed.

## **P. Schoolwork**

Parents shall provide time for the children to study, complete homework assignments, papers, or other school assigned projects, even if the completion of this work interferes with the parent's plans with the children. If schoolwork is assigned by the school prior to the parenting time, the residential parent shall inform the other parent of the work to be done and it must be completed during the parenting time.

## **Q. Physical Appearance**

The non-residential parent shall not alter the physical appearance of the children, including cutting or coloring hair, piercing the body and permanent tattooing, without the prior written consent of the residential parent.