Duval County Divorce Cheat Sheet

Divorce with Minor Children and Assets

Fourth Judicial Circuit • Duval County, Florida

Duval filing procedures and legal sources checked November 14, 2026

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Use this packet if you are filing or responding to a regular divorce involving minor children and property or debt. Start with the section that applies to you. Then follow the shared steps through disclosure, parenting, support, settlement or trial, and implementation of the judgment.

Find your next step

- Starting a case — pages 2–3
- Answering or filing a counterpetition — page 4
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If you received divorce papers

Write down the date of formal service and read the summons today. A standard answer is generally due within 20 days after service. The parenting course and financial disclosure have separate deadlines. File your response in the existing case and serve the other side. If you want the court to grant relief of your own, review the counterpetition instructions on page 4.

Keep a case folder

Keep the case number, division, service date, docket receipts, orders, notices, proof of service and a deadline calendar. Keep tax returns, bank records and other discovery in a private folder. Use the case docket and your assigned division's instructions to confirm hearing dates and how exhibits or proposed orders must be submitted.

Duval Clerk Family Law • Florida Courts official forms

1 Prepare the Petition

Confirm the right court

- At least one spouse must have lived in Florida for the six months immediately before filing. Gather a qualifying Florida driver license, Florida ID or voter registration record showing the required period, or use corroborating testimony or a sworn corroborating witness affidavit. See §§ 61.021 and 61.052(2).
- Confirm Duval County venue under § 47.011 and Florida venue law. In a dissolution, examine where the spouses last lived together with a common intent to remain married, as well as the respondent's residence and any other applicable venue basis. Florida residency, venue, power over the other spouse and authority to decide parenting are separate questions.
- Check the child's home state and any existing parenting orders under the UCCJEA. Usually the home state is where the child lived with a parent or person acting as a parent for the six consecutive months immediately before filing, or since birth for a child under six months. Temporary absences generally count. Prior orders, recent moves, military service, an out-of-state spouse or international service require a separate review.
- Identify prior or pending divorce, injunction, support, dependency, adoption, paternity and other related proceedings. Obtain the orders and case numbers. Identify any Department of Revenue child support case and follow applicable notice and participation requirements.

State all the relief you want

Use Form 12.901(b)(1). State that the marriage is irretrievably broken if that is your ground. Include the requested parental responsibility, time-sharing, support, retroactive support if sought, property and debt division, home disposition, retirement division, alimony, fees, and name restoration where applicable. Add specific facts and proposed relief for disputed issues. File a proposed parenting plan when appropriate and identify it as proposed until both parties sign or the court adopts it.

Prepare the opening forms

- Petition, Family Court Cover Sheet 12.928, Notice of Related Cases 12.900(h), and UCCJEA Affidavit 12.902(d).
- Separate Notice of Social Security Number 12.902(j) with the Rule 2.420 confidentiality notice. File any required address designation. Review privacy before uploading any attachment.
- Prepare summons 12.910(a), service instructions 12.910(b) if used, residency proof, and the financial affidavit and support worksheet as available. Follow the separate disclosure and worksheet deadlines. Ask the clerk about any local intake or vital statistics information sheet.

Chapter 61 • Florida venue statute

2 File and Serve the Papers

1. Open a circuit family case in Duval County using the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal or file at the Family Law Clerk, Duval County Courthouse, 501 West Adams Street, Room 1191, Jacksonville, FL 32202. Keep the case number, filing receipt and accepted PDFs. For mail filing or payment, confirm delivery instructions with the Clerk.

2. The Duval Clerk lists $409 to file, $10 per summons and a $12 administrative fee for self-represented parties, including those found indigent. The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office lists $40 for ordinary summons service. For one self-represented filer with one local summons, budget $471 before copies or other charges. Ask the Clerk how civil indigency applies and confirm the total.

3. Get an issued summons and provide it, the filed petition, Duval Standing Family Law Order, and other required documents to the sheriff or an authorized process server for the place of service. The Jacksonville Sheriff's Civil Process window is in Room 5141 of the courthouse. Call 904-255-2470 to confirm copies, hours and payment.

4. Track service and verify that the return of service appears on the docket. Rule 12.070 generally allows 120 days after filing to serve initial process, subject to its exceptions and extensions. Move for more time before the deadline if needed. Portal e-service of later documents ordinarily does not substitute for initial service of process.

5. If the respondent voluntarily appears or signs a permitted waiver, confirm what has been waived and file the correct documents. Constructive service requires diligent search and strict compliance with Chapter 49. It can limit available support, money and property relief. Obtain review before using it. For service outside Florida, see §§ 48.193–48.194 and § 61.061. International service can implicate treaties.

6. Read the Duval Standing Family Law Order as soon as you file or receive it. It applies to the petitioner on filing and the respondent on service or waiver and acceptance. Review its terms on assets, insurance and child-related conduct. Follow any injunction or superseding order and check current § 61.13 for time-sharing.

7. If you represent yourself, contact Duval Family Court Services for a case-status or hearing inquiry. It is on the second floor in Room 2150 at the courthouse, 904-255-1060. The Clerk files papers. Family Court Services helps with checklists, procedural next steps and hearing information.

Clerk fees • Clerk Family Law and e-filing • Sheriff civil process • Family Court Services • Standing order

3 Answer the Petition

1. Record the date of service. Under Rule 12.140(a), an answer is generally due within 20 days after formal service. Count under Rule 2.514. Exclude the triggering day and count calendar days. If the last day falls on a weekend or legal holiday, apply the rule's next-day provision. Follow any court order and act promptly if more time is needed. A request for more time should be made before the deadline.

2. Use Form 12.903(b) for an answer. Address each numbered allegation with an admission, denial or statement that you lack sufficient knowledge. Preserve appropriate defenses. If you dispute service, personal jurisdiction or venue, review Rule 12.140 before filing because some objections can be waived.

3. Use Form 12.903(c)(1) when you also want affirmative relief in a divorce with children. State your own requests for parenting, support, division of property or debt, the home, alimony, fees or other relief as applicable. The Duval Clerk posts $295 for a dissolution counterpetition. The statewide schedule lists $392.50 including assessments when the counterpetition seeks dissolution. Confirm the amount the Clerk will collect. A counterpetition generally must be answered within 20 days after service.

4. If all terms are agreed, review Form 12.903(a), Answer, Waiver, and Request for Copy of Final Judgment. Read each waiver and compare the petition, signed settlement and parenting plan before signing. A waiver may affect notice of the hearing.

5. File the response in the existing case under its case number and division. Serve the petitioner's lawyer, or the petitioner if self-represented, under Rule 2.516 and Family Rule 12.080. Include the certificate of service. A self-represented party generally designates a service email unless excused under the applicable rule. Use the Clerk's current designation or excusal form as appropriate.

6. File your UCCJEA information and separate SSN notice as required. Provide the sworn financial affidavit, serve mandatory disclosure, file the certificate, and prepare your proposed parenting plan and child support worksheet. Take the approved parenting course within 45 days after service unless excused by the court.

7. If a deadline passed, check the docket immediately. If default has been entered, seek prompt review of Rule 12.500(d) or Rule 12.540 as applicable and bring the summons, return, default and hearing notices to that review.

2026 statewide clerk filing-fee schedule

Answer 12.903(b) • Answer and counterpetition 12.903(c)(1) • Answer to counterpetition 12.903(d)

4 Exchange Financial Disclosure

Due dates and handling

In an ordinary divorce seeking financial relief, each party generally serves Rule 12.285 disclosure within 45 days after service of the initial pleading on the respondent. For an early temporary financial hearing, Rule 12.285(b)(1) generally requires the requesting party to serve the required documents at least ten days before the hearing and a responding party not seeking relief to serve at least five days before it, subject to the rule and prior service. Calendar the actual deadlines from the rule and any order. Seek an extension before the due date. Serve objections at least five days before the due date and follow the rule's hearing procedure.

File and serve the sworn financial affidavit, short form below $50,000 individual annual gross income or long form at $50,000 or more, subject to the rule's filing exceptions. Form 12.902(k) can waive public filing if the rule's conditions are met, including prior exchange of complete sworn affidavits. File 12.932 after serving disclosure and identify precisely anything missing. Exchange raw financial records privately unless ordered to file them. File the child support worksheet at or before a hearing to establish support. Its filing cannot be waived by agreement. Supplement material changes.

Gather the Rule 12.285 records

- Three years of complete personal federal, state, gift and foreign returns as applicable, with schedules and W-2, 1099 and K-1 forms. Provide the missing-year tax forms required by the rule when returns have not been prepared or filed.
- Six months of pay records and a statement of income sources and amounts omitted from those records. Provide supporting documentation for affidavit figures.
- Twenty-four months of loan applications, financial statements, credit reports and other financial disclosures. Provide deeds for interests held in the last three years, notes for money owed to either party in the last 24 months, and leases covered by the rule.
- Twelve months of bank and brokerage statements, including applicable closed or joint accounts, plus cancelled checks and registers for accounts with check-writing privileges. Include retirement statements and plan descriptions, virtual currency statements and current holdings, and applicable life insurance records and current health and dental cards.
- Three tax years of corporate, partnership or trust returns for interests covered by the rule. Provide debts at filing and for the applicable 24-month period, promissory notes, credit and charge statements and current leases.
- Written marital or premarital agreements, applicable nonpaternity records, existing support orders and the records tracing nonmarital, appreciation or unequal distribution claims for the periods in the rule.

If information remains missing, document the request, confer, then use appropriate interrogatories, production requests, subpoenas, or a motion to compel. Protect account numbers and identifiers. Keep an exchange log with the date and items delivered.

Rule 12.285 text • October 2026 forms amendment

5 Prepare the Parenting Plan

Complete the parenting class

Both parents generally must complete an approved course of at least four hours. Petitioner completes within 45 days after filing. Respondent completes within 45 days after service. File each completion certificate before final judgment. Request a good-cause excusal or other accommodation from the court when warranted. Follow safety instructions and avoid arranging joint attendance where unsafe.

DCF approved providers • Duval parenting resources

Write a schedule someone can follow

- Identify shared or sole parental responsibility, any ultimate decision-making authority, and who handles education, nonemergency health care and activities. Identify the school boundary address and how parents will share school and medical records.
- Set ordinary weekday and weekend overnights, exchange times and locations, transportation responsibility, school holidays, summer blocks, holidays and special days. Say which schedule overrides another. Define pickup when school is closed and how each parent will communicate with the child.
- Count overnights on a calendar with holidays and summer already applied. Give the count and supporting calendar to the court for the child support worksheet. Identify an agreed calendar or submit your own proposed plan.
- Address travel and notice, passports if applicable, and safety conditions. Use the safety-focused or long-distance form when appropriate. If requesting a protected exchange location or supervision, identify the evidence and the actual terms sought.
- Before a qualifying move with the child, review § 61.13001. The general definition uses at least 50 miles and at least 60 consecutive days, with statutory exceptions. An agreement or petition and additional procedures may be required. A long-distance parenting form alone does not authorize relocation.

If you disagree about time sharing

Section 61.13 contains a rebuttable presumption that equal time-sharing is in the child's best interests unless otherwise provided by law or agreed by the parties. To rebut it, prove by a preponderance of the evidence that equal time-sharing is contrary to the child's best interests. Except when the parties agree to a schedule and the court approves it, the court must evaluate the statutory factors and make specific written findings when creating or modifying a schedule. Organize evidence around daily caregiving, stability, school and travel, communication, ability to honor the schedule, the child's needs, and any domestic violence, abuse or safety issues. Address parental responsibility separately. If you have interstate or safety concerns, review the UCCJEA and applicable injunction orders before proposing exchanges or disclosing addresses.

§ 61.13 parenting and time-sharing • Florida parenting plan forms

6 Calculate Child Support

Gather inputs for both parents

1. Determine monthly gross income using § 61.30(2). Review wages, overtime, bonuses, benefits, retirement, self-employment, rent, interest and other applicable income. For self-employment, use gross receipts less ordinary and necessary expenses required to produce income. For a business, support the treatment of distributions, retained earnings and personal expenses with records.
2. Subtract only statutory deductions under § 61.30(3), including actual applicable income taxes, FICA or self-employment tax, mandatory union dues or retirement, qualifying health insurance for the parent, court-ordered support for other children actually paid, and qualifying spousal support. Keep dependent-child premium costs separate for the support calculation. Convert weekly income × 52 ÷ 12 and biweekly income × 26 ÷ 12. Use tax liability supported by evidence.
3. Add the two monthly net incomes. Divide each parent's net by the combined net to obtain income shares. Look up the basic obligation in the § 61.30(6) table by combined net income and number of children. Apply the statutory low-income provision where relevant. Above $10,000 combined monthly net, use the $10,000 table amount plus the statutory percentage of excess for the number of children.
4. Identify eligible childcare tied to employment, job search or qualifying education and the incremental cost of the children's health coverage. Address noncovered medical, dental and prescription costs as provided by the statute or order. Use receipts and the employer's premium breakdown. Allocate and credit direct payments once.
5. Count annual overnights. If each parent has at least 20 percent, generally 73 nights in a 365-day year, use the substantial time-sharing calculation. Below that threshold use the ordinary calculation and consider any supported deviation. A 50/50 schedule can still produce a monthly transfer.
6. File Form 12.902(e) at or before the support hearing. Use Form 12.943 for a requested deviation and give the judge evidence and proposed findings. Section 61.30 permits a variation within five percent after considering relevant factors. A variation beyond five percent requires a written finding explaining why the guideline amount would be unjust or inappropriate.

Keep these records with your worksheet

Pay stubs, tax returns, earnings and expense evidence for self-employment, evidence of any imputed income, cost and payer of childcare and child-only coverage, overnight calendar, proof of existing support paid, Social Security benefit information, and proof of payments requested as retroactive credits.

Official worksheet 12.902(e) • § 61.30 full table and formula

Child Support Worked Examples

Assume one child, monthly net income of $3,000 for Parent A and $2,000 for Parent B, and combined net income of $5,000. The table amount is $1,000. Income shares are 60% and 40%. Parent B pays $200 eligible childcare and Parent A pays $100 for the child's health insurance. These are illustrations using agreed inputs.

Example 1 Ordinary calculation

Assume Parent B has most overnights and Parent A has fewer than 73. Add eligible costs to basic support. $1,000 + $200 + $100 = $1,300. Parent A's 60% share is $780. Credit Parent A for the $100 already paid for the child's insurance. The transfer from Parent A to Parent B is $680 per month under these assumptions.

Example 2 Substantial time sharing

Assume Parent A has 146 nights (40%) and Parent B has 219 nights (60%).

- Multiply basic support by 1.5 to get $1,500. Apply income shares. Parent A's share is $900 and Parent B's share is $600.
- Multiply each share by the other parent's overnight percentage. Parent A owes $900 × 60% = $540. Parent B owes $600 × 40% = $240. The base difference is $300 from A to B.
- Parent A's share of the $300 eligible expenses is $180. A already pays $100, leaving $80 to transfer to B for these costs. The combined transfer is $380 per month. Use the official worksheet to reflect the actual payer and avoid adding expenses already allocated separately.

Retroactive support and the final order

The court may award initial retroactive support to when the parents stopped residing together with the child, up to 24 months before filing. Use the income and time-sharing evidence for the relevant periods, calculate separately when inputs materially change, and credit documented payments under § 61.30(17). Examine statutory treatment of Social Security dependent benefits before calculating credits.

Ask the order to specify the monthly obligation, start date, retroactive balance and repayment, payment channel, health coverage and uninsured expense allocation, and termination or step-down provisions when there are multiple children. Review § 61.13 for age, high-school and termination requirements. Prepare the income deduction and withholding documents as applicable. Confirm the accepted payment method before paying and retain receipts.

§ 61.30 child support • Duval Clerk family and child support resources

7 Divide Property and Debt

1. Inventory real estate, vehicles, bank and investment accounts, retirement, businesses, digital assets, valuable personal property, mortgages, loans, taxes and credit cards. Record title, acquisition date, classification, value date, value, balance, proposed recipient and supporting exhibit.
2. Under § 61.075, set apart nonmarital property and start marital distribution from equal division. Trace premarital assets, third-party gifts, inheritances, agreements and any commingling. Review marital principal paydown, passive appreciation and improvements. Current § 61.075 requires a writing that meets § 689.01 for an interspousal gift of real estate and sets fair market value and enterprise goodwill standards for closely held businesses. Identify and document any proposed unequal division.
3. Classify assets and debts using the statutory cutoff, generally the earliest of a valid separation agreement, another date expressly set by agreement, or petition filing. Establish valuation dates separately. Obtain bank statements at the relevant dates, current payoff statements, appraisals or other competent value evidence, and retirement or business records. A contested judgment must make the applicable written findings under § 61.075(3).
4. For a home buyout, use value and lien balances on a consistent date. Spell out the refinance deadline, how equity and credits are calculated, payment and deed delivery through closing, who pays carrying costs, and a sale fallback if refinance fails. An allocation between spouses does not release a borrower from lender liability. Address sale credits and setoffs expressly under § 61.077.
5. For retirement, identify the plan and proposed marital share, survivor or beneficiary terms where available, valuation date, gains or losses, fees and tax treatment. Determine whether a separate qualified domestic relations order or other plan-specific order is needed and obtain administrator review.
6. Prepare the local equitable distribution spreadsheet and update it before pretrial. Add a proposed equalizing payment if needed. Bring admissible proof of each disputed value and each claimed liability.

Alimony and fees

Section 61.08 requires evidence of actual need and ability to pay. Current forms of alimony include temporary, bridge-the-gap, rehabilitative and durational. Bridge-the-gap is limited to two years and rehabilitative to five years with a specific plan. Durational generally requires a marriage of at least three years. The ordinary duration limits are 50%, 60% or 75% of the marriage length by statutory category, subject to statutory exceptions. The amount is limited to reasonable need or 35% of the difference in net incomes, whichever is less. Bring a budget and reliable net income evidence. Section 61.16 fees require financial evidence and proof of the services and amounts sought.

§ 61.075 • § 61.08 • Duval division procedures

8 Temporary Relief and Mediation

If you need a temporary order

File a motion specifying the interim relief and supporting facts. Form 12.947(a) covers temporary support, time-sharing and other relief in a case with children. Prepare a temporary schedule, current affidavits and worksheet as applicable. Confirm hearing time, notice, mediation prerequisites and exhibit delivery under the assigned judge's instructions. A hearing notice must describe the relief to be heard. Follow Rule 12.285 for early temporary financial hearings. For safety or an immediate risk to a child, use the appropriate verified procedure and disclose related orders. A request marked emergency still needs facts supporting emergency treatment.

Mediate contested issues

The Fourth Circuit's ADR Unit provides court-connected family mediation. Its published guidance directs self-represented parties in contested family matters and qualifying represented parties to court-connected mediation. Follow your referral or division instructions for scheduling and whether private mediation is permitted. Confirm eligibility, applicable $60 or $120 session fees, indigency and payment with ADR at 904-255-1090. If domestic violence would compromise mediation, raise it before the session under §§ 44.102 and 61.183.

Bring both financial affidavits, an asset/debt schedule, current proposed parenting plan, calendar, support worksheet, and a written list of unresolved issues. Review any partial agreement before signing, specify what remains for the judge, and file or submit the executed agreement as directed. The court must review child-related terms.

If you settle everything

Use the appropriate signed marital settlement agreement and, in a case with children, a complete agreed parenting plan and support worksheet. Resolve the transfer dates and every unresolved issue. For a final hearing, use the checklist and scheduling procedure published for your assigned division. Self-represented filers can contact Family Court Services about readiness and scheduling. A signed settlement requires a final judgment to dissolve the marriage.

Fourth Circuit ADR • Duval division checklists • Family Court Services • Temporary motion 12.947(a)

9 Default and Contested Trial

If no answer is filed

Verify valid service, the expired response deadline and the docket. Under Rule 12.500, clerk default is generally available when the other party has filed or served no document. If a document was filed or served, review the court-default procedure and notice requirement. File the appropriate motion, proposed default, return of service and military-status proof under the federal Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. Use the Department of Defense status system where appropriate. Give required hearing or trial notice. Establish residency, parenting best interests, support, valuations and requested relief with evidence. Default does not replace evidence or authorize relief beyond the pleadings.

Prepare for pretrial and trial

Read your trial-setting or pretrial order and the assigned Duval family division's published procedure. Check how to request trial or a case management conference and whether mediation or an attempted settlement is required before setting trial. Follow the referral if a magistrate is assigned.

- Calendar the meet-and-confer, pretrial statement, discovery cutoff, witness and exhibit exchange, and any rebuttal disclosure deadlines.
- Update sworn financial affidavits and the guideline worksheet when facts change. Identify any filing waiver that applies.
- Prepare the required asset and debt schedule, with values and dates, disputed items and proposed allocation. Confirm any required joint format and how to submit it.
- If the other party will not cooperate, document your efforts and follow the order's requirements for a separate submission or timely request for direction.

Prepare a short list of findings and orders you want, then match each one to testimony, a document or a stipulation. Mark exhibits, follow the division's upload or delivery directions, bring copies, and arrange a court reporter and interpreter if needed. Get permission before bringing a child to testify under Rule 12.407. For a magistrate or support hearing officer, read the referral, objection and review deadlines in Rules 12.490 and 12.491 and in the actual order.

Duval trial and hearing procedures • Military status verification • Florida Family Law Rules

10 Final Judgment and Follow Through

Before the final hearing

- Confirm the judge, date, time, location or remote link, and notice or waiver. Section 61.19 generally bars entry before 20 days after filing unless the court finds injustice would result from the delay.
- Check the docket for the petition, response or valid default, service proof, residency evidence, related-case notice, UCCJEA affidavit, confidential SSN notices, financial affidavits or approved filing waiver, certificates of disclosure, parenting course proof or excusal, and child support worksheet.
- Prepare the applicable final judgment, proposed or signed parenting plan, marital settlement agreement if any, and income deduction paperwork. Make sure the judgment, agreement, plan and worksheet use consistent terms. Follow the division's proposed-order submission procedure. Bring the required copies and exhibits. File the final disposition form if directed.
- Prepare testimony and evidence showing residency and irretrievable breakdown, plus the facts needed for each disputed request. For contested support, provide net incomes, overnights, childcare, insurance, arrears or retroactive amounts and evidence for deviations. For property, provide classification, value, debt, assignment and equalization findings.

After the judge signs

1. Retrieve the signed judgment and all incorporated exhibits. Check the docketed date and serve copies if directed. Order certified copies for lenders, title, schools or plan administrators as needed.
2. Follow payment and income withholding instructions. Confirm the registry or State Disbursement Unit has the information needed to credit payments. Maintain payment and reimbursement records.
3. Calendar every transfer and refinance deadline. Obtain and record deeds where necessary, change titles, follow through with retirement orders, check insurance and beneficiaries, close or separate joint accounts under the judgment, and confirm any agreed sale or payout.
4. Use the judgment's parenting schedule and keep a record of exchanges and expenses. Seek enforcement or a modification using the proper procedure if circumstances change. Child support modification and parenting modification have separate legal standards.
5. Review the signed judgment immediately for omissions or inconsistencies. Rule 12.530 generally allows 15 days to serve a rehearing motion in a nonjury case from filing of the judgment. A notice of appeal ordinarily must be filed within 30 days of rendition under Rule 9.110, subject to authorized motions that affect rendition under Rule 9.020. Duval County circuit appeals generally go to the Fifth District Court of Appeal.

Duval Clerk CORE records • Florida court rules • Fifth District Court of Appeal

Forms for Filing and Answering

Open the linked form or the official directory for the exact number. Download the instructions as well as the form. Use the form version posted when you file. Swear, affirm or notarize where the form requires it.

Open the case

- 12.901(b)(1) Petition with dependent or minor children
- 12.928 Family Court Cover Sheet
- 12.900(h) Notice of Related Cases
- 12.902(d) UCCJEA Affidavit
- 12.902(j) Notice of Social Security Number • Clerk filing and confidentiality resources
- 12.902(i) Affidavit of Corroborating Witness
- 12.910(a) Summons • 12.910(b) Process Service Memorandum
- Duval address, email designation and excusal forms
- Duval civil indigency and filing forms
- Duval Standing Family Law Order to serve

Respond in the existing case

- 12.903(a) Answer, Waiver, and Request for Copy of Final Judgment
- 12.903(b) Answer
- 12.903(c)(1) Answer and Counterpetition with Children
- 12.903(d) Answer to Counterpetition
- 12.914 Certificate of Service • 12.900 series for limited appearance or nonlawyer assistance

Forms for Finances and Children

Both parties

- 12.902(b) Short Financial Affidavit
- 12.902(c) Long Financial Affidavit
- 12.932 Certificate of Compliance with Mandatory Disclosure
- 12.902(k) Joint Verified Waiver of Filing Financial Affidavits
- 12.902(e) Child Support Guidelines Worksheet with instructions and table
- 12.943 Motion to Deviate from Child Support Guidelines
- 12.995(a) Parenting Plan
- 12.995(b) Safety-Focused Parenting Plan • 12.995(c) Relocation or Long-Distance Plan and 12.950 relocation series
- 12.902(f)(1) Marital Settlement Agreement with Children
- Duval parenting resources and completion certificate information

Additional discovery or temporary orders

- 12.930(a) Notice of Service of Standard Family Law Interrogatories and 12.930(b) Initial Interrogatories
- 12.931(a) Notice of Production from Nonparty and 12.931(b) Subpoena. Follow the notice, objection and service rules before seeking third-party records.
- 12.947(a) Temporary Motion with Children • 12.947(b) Proposed Temporary Order
- 12.941 emergency child-related forms, 12.942 guardian ad litem forms, and 12.944 child testimony forms

Forms for Hearings and Judgment

Notice and hearing

- 12.923 Notice of Hearing. Check division-specific language, hearing format, access details and accommodations.
- 12.920 magistrate referral and hearing forms • 12.921 Child Support Hearing Officer Notice
- 12.911 subpoenas for trial, hearing or deposition
- 12.912 military forms, 12.913(a)(2) Notice of Action with Children, 12.913(b) diligent search, and 12.922(a)–(b) default forms. Use only the forms for your service or default situation.
- Division-specific uncontested checklists and procedures • Duval divorce checklists

Final judgment and withholding

- 12.990(b)(1) Uncontested Final Judgment with Minor Children
- 12.990(c)(1) Final Judgment with Dependent or Minor Children. Confirm the judge's required form and proposed order format.
- 12.996 series Income Deduction Order, Notice to Payor, and Florida Addendum • Federal Income Withholding for Support form
- 12.999 Final Disposition
- Plan-specific retirement order, deed, sale or refinance instructions, and other implementing documents as applicable. Request the retirement administrator's model and use the title company's closing requirements.
- Duval Clerk family and child support resources • Fourth Circuit support enforcement forms
- 12.905 modification and 12.960–12.961 enforcement forms

Florida Courts forms • Duval Clerk Family Law • Duval divorce checklists

Duval County Administrative Orders

These are the orders identified for ordinary Duval County domestic relations divorces and common related procedures. Use the circuit's active-order index and your case docket to identify later amendments, temporary assignment orders and additional orders triggered by your case.

- Signed Duval Standing Family Law Order
- § 61.21 parenting course • Duval parenting resources
- Family Court Services and walk-in hours
- Fourth Circuit Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Assigned division procedures and final hearing checklists
- General Magistrates and Child Support Enforcement Hearing Officers
- Court program contact directory
- Family Law Clerk FAQs, e-service and indigency
- Divorce filing checklists
- Duval Clerk CORE records

Fourth Judicial Circuit administrative orders

Florida Statutes and Rules

Statutory roadmap

- §§ 61.011, .021, .043, .046, .052, .061 and .19 — circuit dissolution, residency, commencement, definitions, grounds and proof, nonresidents, and judgment waiting period. § 47.011 governs general venue. Chapters 48 and 49 govern personal and constructive service. § 57.082 addresses civil indigency.
- §§ 61.071, .075, .076, .077, .079, .08 and .16 — temporary alimony and suit money, classification and distribution, retirement, marital-home credits, premarital agreements, alimony and fees.
- §§ 61.13, .21, .125, .13001, .13003, .20, .401–.405 and .455 — parenting and support, course, parenting coordination, relocation, electronic communication, social investigations, guardians ad litem, and safe exchange.
- §§ 61.13, .29, .30, .1301, .14 and .181–.1826 — support orders, guidelines and retroactivity, income deduction, modification and enforcement, registry and disbursement provisions. §§ 61.1255 and .31 cover qualifying dependent adult children.
- §§ 61.501–.542, particularly .503, .514, .515, .517 and .522 — UCCJEA definitions, initial and continuing jurisdiction, emergency jurisdiction and disclosures. Chapter 88 applies to interstate support. §§ 44.102, 44.401–.406 and 61.183 cover mediation and confidentiality. § 741.30 addresses domestic violence injunctions.
- Chapter 90 — evidence, especially §§ 90.401–.403, .604, .702, .801–.805, .901–.902 and .952 –.956. 50 U.S.C. §§ 3931–3932 govern military default and stay protections. 29 U.S.C. § 1056(d)(3) addresses ERISA-qualified domestic relations orders.

Procedure roadmap

- Family Rules 12.070, .080, .100, .110, .140, .170 and .190 — process, service, pleadings, defenses, counterclaims and amendments. Rules 12.200 and .440 — case management, pretrial and setting trial.
- Family Rules 12.280, .285, .340, .350, .351, .360, .365, .380 and .410 — discovery, disclosure, interrogatories, documents, third-party production, examinations, expert discovery, sanctions and subpoenas. Use the actual rule when calculating response or notice deadlines.
- Family Rules 12.407, .451, .490, .491, .500, .530, .540, .615, .740, .741, .742 and .750 — child testimony, technology, magistrates, support hearing officers, defaults, rehearing, relief from judgment, support contempt, mediation, parenting coordination and self-help.
- Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.420, .425, .514, .516, .525, .530 and .545 — court-record confidentiality, redaction, time, service, filing, communications technology and case management. Appellate Rules 9.020, .110, .130 and .330 address rendition, final and specified nonfinal appeals, and appellate rehearing.

2026 Florida Statutes • Florida court rules • Florida Supreme Court opinions

Selected Florida Appellate Decisions

Use these decisions to identify the evidence and findings needed for your issues. Check later decisions, statutes and procedural history before citing a case in court. Older cases may predate statutory changes.

- Carroll v. Carroll, 341 So. 2d 771 (Fla. 1977). Dissolution venue and the last place the intact marriage was lived.
- Canakaris v. Canakaris, 382 So. 2d 1197 (Fla. 1980). Discretionary review and equitable treatment in dissolution. Apply the current §§ 61.075 and 61.08 to the requested remedies.
- Robertson v. Robertson, 593 So. 2d 491 (Fla. 1991). Jointly titled real property and the marital presumption. Read with the current statute.
- Hooker v. Hooker, 220 So. 3d 397 (Fla. 2017). Donative intent and competent substantial evidence for findings of interspousal gifts.
- Johnson v. Rollins, No. 4D2026-0557 (Fla. 4th DCA Oct. 7, 2026). Recent paternity appeal applying § 61.13's equal-time-sharing framework and addressing relief outside the pleadings and inadequate evidence.
- Swift v. Poitras, No. 6D2024-2391 (Fla. 6th DCA Sept. 10, 2026). The decision discusses retroactive support, substantial time-sharing and childcare. Duval appeals ordinarily go to the Fifth DCA under § 35.043.
- Lee v. Lee, 352 So. 3d 420 (Fla. 2d DCA 2022). Property accounting, offsets and findings in a dissolution-related partition.
- Recent appellate opinions and family-law updates. Search for Rosen v. Rosen, 696 So. 2d 697 (Fla. 1997), for need, ability and other relevant fee factors. Search for Zold v. Zold, 911 So. 2d 1222 (Fla. 2005), for treatment of undistributed S-corporation income.

Florida Courts Domestic Relations Benchguide • Child Support Benchbook. Verify older practice summaries against the current statutes and rules.

Find Your Judge and Judicial Assistant

1. Open Duval Clerk Case Search and locate the case by number. Check the division on the case summary, then open the most recent case management order, reassignment order or hearing notice to confirm the judge.
2. Open the Fourth Circuit's Duval Judges page. Scroll to Circuit Family Division, open your assigned FM division, and verify the judge, judicial assistant, courtroom and division procedures.
3. Check the assigned division's current scheduling, conferral, mediation and notice requirements. Confirm the method and deadlines for exhibits and proposed orders. Follow the notice and orders entered in your case.
4. Contact Family Court Services if representing yourself. When the division directs contact with its judicial assistant, copy the other side as required and include the case number, motion title and requested time. Keep communications procedural.

Duval domestic relations directory snapshot

- FM-B Russell Healey • FM-C Mark H. Mahon • FM-D Lindsay Tygart
- FM-E Maureen T. Horkan • FM-F Ashley Wells Cox • FM-G John I. Guy
- Current division procedures and judicial assistants • Family Court Services

Serve Discovery and File the Certificate

1. Identify the recipient. If the other spouse has appeared through a lawyer, serve the lawyer at the designated service address. If self-represented, use the spouse's designated service address or another method authorized by Rule 2.516, the applicable rules and any case order. Observe protective orders and restricted-address procedures.
2. Arrange delivery under Rule 12.285(l), any written agreement or court order, and applicable service rules. For electronic document production, confirm an accepted secure delivery method and that the recipient can open the files. Give an itemized cover list with date ranges and keep proof of transmission or delivery. The recipient is the other side or its lawyer. The judge, JA and clerk do not receive your raw production as a routine step.
3. Complete sworn Form 12.932. Use the real service date and identify what was delivered with particularity. For example, identify the type of account, statement months and any missing month without putting an account number or private identifier into the filed certificate. State any incomplete items specifically. Sign and swear or affirm as the form requires.
4. File Form 12.932 as its own PDF in the existing case through the portal or clerk. Select the matching certificate document type if available. Serve the filed certificate on the other side and retain the acceptance and docket entry. File the sworn financial affidavit separately unless a valid waiver or exception applies. File the support worksheet separately by the applicable hearing deadline.
5. When additional records are served, document the supplement and file an updated certificate as appropriate. A notice for interrogatories under 12.930(a) is a different filing. Use the correct certificate for automatic mandatory disclosure. Keep the actual interrogatory answers, production and records private unless required for court use.

Example document list for an exchange

"Federal income tax returns for 2023–2025 with schedules. Pay statements for May through October 2026. Checking account statements for November 2025 through October 2026. October statement requested from the bank and will be supplemented." Replace the example dates and identify accurately what was provided and what remains outstanding.

Protect private information

For public filings, apply Rules 2.420 and 2.425. Ordinarily use a minor's initials and birth year, and omit SSNs and bank or card account numbers. Check rule exceptions for approved forms, jurisdiction and child-related orders. When filing information that is confidential under Rule 2.420, file the appropriate notice identifying the document and exact location without restating the sensitive value. When protection requires a court determination, use the applicable motion procedure. Do not attach raw tax returns, ID cards, SSN cards or unredacted bank records to the certificate.

Rule 12.285 • 12.932 Certificate of Compliance • Court rules and confidentiality procedures

Prepare and Present Evidence

Build the exhibit list

Create a row for each exhibit showing the exhibit number or letter, title, date range, page count, issue proved, sponsoring witness, source, foundation and date exchanged. Use your division's numbering and tagging instructions. For electronic copies use readable PDFs, page numbers and stable file names. Keep originals. Keep both a courtroom copy and a properly redacted filing or exchange version where required. Prepare playable copies of audio or video and confirm the court's accepted format.

- Parenting — use a calendar and school, healthcare, childcare and communications records to explain the requested schedule and tie it to § 61.13 factors. Keep relevant messages in context with dates, sender and enough surrounding messages to explain them.
- Support — use income and deduction records, daycare invoices, health premium breakdown, overnight counts, payment history and the signed worksheet. If seeking retroactive support, break out each period and show credits. Bring the person who can explain the inputs.
- Property and debt — bring deeds, acquisition records, payoff statements, valuation evidence, retirement statements and traces of disputed nonmarital funds. Add the equitable distribution spreadsheet with each proposed value and allocation. For a refinance, include available lender terms and deadlines.
- Alimony and fees — prepare proof of net income, budget, ability to pay, a rehabilitation plan if requested, invoices and testimony or stipulations supporting the requested amounts.

Lay foundation and follow the hearing order

1. Determine how each exhibit will be authenticated. For messages, identify a witness who can recognize the sender, account or device and confirm accuracy. For third-party records, arrange a witness or qualifying certification under §§ 90.803(6) and 90.902(11) with the required reasonable written notice and opportunity to inspect. Check hearsay within hearsay.

2. For a voluminous summary, follow § 90.956. Give timely written notice, file proof, make the underlying records available to the other side, and arrange for a qualified witness. For experts, disclose and exchange information by the applicable order and arrange live testimony or an admissible stipulation.

3. Exchange the proposed exhibits and witness list by the dates in the pretrial and division orders. Ask which materials are to be filed, uploaded or delivered to chambers, and how much advance notice is required. Filing an exhibit or sending it to chambers does not admit it into evidence.

4. At the hearing, identify the exhibit, ask the witness to establish its source and accuracy, offer it into evidence, and wait for the court's ruling. For disputed facts, give testimony from personal knowledge or present an admissible record. Bring copies for the judge, clerk and other side as directed. Prepare a proposed final judgment with the findings and relief you seek.

Florida Evidence Code • Unified pretrial order • Judges and division instructions

Case Deadline and Evidence Checklist

Case number _____ Division _____ Judge _____

Judicial assistant _____ Division contact _____

Date filed _____ Date respondent served _____ Return docketed _____

Calendar and confirm

- ☐ Answer or counterpetition deadline _____ Filed and served _____
- ☐ Counterpetition answer deadline if applicable _____ Filed _____
- ☐ Financial disclosure deadline _____ Served on _____
- ☐ Financial affidavit filed or waiver docketed _____ 12.932 filed _____
- ☐ Petitioner parenting course due _____ Certificate filed _____
- ☐ Respondent parenting course due _____ Certificate filed _____
- ☐ Mediator selection or referral _____ Mediation _____ Result _____
- ☐ Support worksheet filed _____ Overnight calendar checked _____
- ☐ Pretrial meeting _____ Affidavit update due _____
- ☐ Exhibit and witness exchange _____ Pretrial statement due _____
- ☐ Equitable distribution spreadsheet due _____ Discovery closes _____
- ☐ Final hearing or trial _____ Notice served _____ Exhibits delivered _____

Match requested relief to proof

- ☐ Residency and dissolution — qualifying ID, affidavit or witness and testimony.
- ☐ Parenting — proposed plan, overnight calendar, supporting exhibits and witnesses.
- ☐ Support — worksheet, income, deductions, childcare, insurance and prior payments.
- ☐ Property and debt — values, dates, balances, tracing and proposed distribution.
- ☐ Alimony and fees if requested — need, ability to pay and proof of amount.
- ☐ Judgment — consistent parenting plan, support terms and implementing orders.

Exhibit log starter

Exhibit _____ Document _____ Date range _____

Issue proved _____ Witness _____

Foundation or certification _____ Exchanged on _____

Court submission method and due date _____

Educational use only • Not a substitute for legal advice • The Family Law Firm

Parenting and Time-Sharing Best-Interest Factors

Florida law separates parental responsibility (decision-making) from time-sharing (the schedule). Shared parental responsibility is generally ordered unless it would harm the child. For time-sharing there is a rebuttable equal-time presumption, subject to statutory exceptions and party agreement. Address the child's best interests with specific facts, dates and records.

(a) Whether each parent supports an ongoing relationship with the other parent, follows the schedule and handles changes reasonably.

(b) How responsibilities will be divided after the case, including care delegated to others.

(c) Whether each parent puts the child's needs ahead of personal wishes.

(d) How long the child has had a stable home environment and whether preserving it benefits the child.

(e) Whether the schedule is workable given school and travel time. This factor creates no relocation presumption.

(f) Each parent's moral fitness.

(g) Each parent's physical and mental health.

(h) The child's record at home, school and in the community.

(i) The child's reasonable preference if the judge finds the child sufficiently mature and able to express one.

(j) How well each parent knows the child's friends, teachers, medical providers, routines and interests.

(k) Whether each parent can provide consistent discipline and routines for schoolwork, meals and bedtime.

(l) How well the parents communicate, share information and cooperate on major issues.

(m) Violence, abuse, abandonment, neglect or reasonable fear of imminent domestic violence, even without a separate case. The court must acknowledge in writing its consideration of accepted evidence of prior or pending related actions.

(n) Knowing false statements to the court about prior or pending cases involving those safety issues.

(o) Parenting tasks performed before and during the case, including care by third parties.

(p) Each parent's involvement and ability to participate in school and activities.

(q) Whether each parent can maintain a setting free of substance abuse.

(r) Whether each parent shields the child from the case, court documents and disparaging comments.

(s) The child's developmental stage and needs and each parent's ability to meet them.

(t) Other facts relevant to this child's parenting plan or schedule.

§ 61.13(3) full statutory text • Parenting plans 12.995(a)–(c)

Dividing Assets and Debts

Section 61.075 directs the court to identify each spouse's nonmarital property and debt, then divide marital assets and liabilities starting from an equal division. A judge can order an unequal division when statutory factors justify it. In a contested case, organize evidence for written findings on classification, value and allocation.

Classify and value each item

- Marital property often includes assets acquired and debts incurred during the marriage, vested and unvested retirement benefits earned during the marriage, and gifts between spouses. Title alone does not decide classification. Jointly titled property can carry a marital presumption under the statute.
- Premarital assets, personal inheritances or third-party gifts, and property excluded by a valid written agreement may be nonmarital. Trace separate funds with statements, deeds and transfer records. Marital labor or money can create a marital component in an otherwise nonmarital asset. Ask for separate calculations if marital funds reduced mortgage principal on a nonmarital home.
- Classification generally uses the earliest of filing, a valid separation agreement date or another date expressly set in that agreement. The court selects a just and equitable valuation date and may use different dates for different items.
- List asset or debt, title, marital or nonmarital claim, acquired date, value and valuation date, balance, proposed recipient, and supporting exhibit. Obtain appraisals, retirement statements or business valuation evidence when disputed.

What can justify an unequal division

The statute considers contributions to the marriage and to a spouse's career or education, homemaking and childcare, economic circumstances, length of the marriage, interruptions to a career or education, the value of keeping a business or other asset intact, contributions to income and assets or debt, whether keeping the home for a dependent child or another party is equitable and financially feasible, intentional waste within the statutory window, and other factors needed for equity.

Work out the transfer terms

For a home buyout, specify value, mortgage and liens, credit claims, buyout and refinance deadlines, possession, taxes and insurance, and a sale fallback. A divorce judgment allocating a joint debt generally does not release either signer from the lender's contract. For retirement accounts, ask the administrator what division order it will accept and address gains, losses and survivor benefits.

§ 61.075 equitable distribution • § 61.076 retirement • § 61.077 home credits • § 61.079 premarital agreements

Alimony, Child Support and Attorney Fees

Alimony under § 61.08

The requesting spouse must prove actual financial need and the other spouse's ability to pay. The court considers marriage length, marital standard of living and postjudgment needs, age and health, income and resources, earning capacity and employability, contributions to the marriage and children's responsibilities. The court may consider adultery and its economic impact in setting an award.

- Temporary support can be requested while the case is pending. Bridge-the-gap support covers identifiable short-term transition needs, lasts no more than two years and is generally nonmodifiable in amount or duration.
- Rehabilitative alimony requires a specific plan for education, training or work preparation and can last up to five years.
- Durational alimony generally requires a marriage of at least three years. Short-term marriages are under 10 years, moderate-term marriages are 10 to under 20 years, and long-term marriages are 20 years or more. Ordinary duration caps are 50%, 60% and 75% of marriage length, respectively. Exceptional extensions require clear and convincing evidence. The amount is capped at reasonable need or 35% of the net-income difference, whichever is less.
- Bring a sworn budget, records of income and expenses, evidence of work capacity or limitations, and any rehabilitation plan. For existing awards, review the governing judgment, effective law and § 61.14 before seeking modification or termination.

Child support and fees

Support can include up to 24 months before filing, limited by when the parents stopped living together with the child. Gather actual payments and expense records for credits and evidence of historical income. Address insurance, uncovered health expenses, childcare and payment routing in the proposed judgment. An equal overnight schedule may still result in a support payment.

Under § 61.16 the court considers both parties' financial resources when deciding requests for reasonable attorney fees and costs. Request fees in the appropriate pleading, identify the relief sought at the hearing and prepare evidence of the fees and both parties' finances.

§ 61.08 alimony • § 61.14 modification • § 61.16 fees • § 61.30 child support

Choose the Correct Divorce Filing Path

Regular divorce

- With dependent or minor children, start with 12.901(b)(1). Review the instructions if a spouse is pregnant or a child's parentage, dependency or jurisdiction is disputed.
- With property or debt to resolve and no dependent or minor children, review 12.901(b)(2). With no dependent or minor children or property to divide, review 12.901(b)(3) and its instructions. For either path, use the corresponding settlement and final judgment forms and review any alimony and financial disclosure requirements.
- Agreed regular cases still require the appropriate petition, applicable waiver or service, required supporting documents, and an entered judgment. A partial agreement should clearly identify the issues the judge must decide.

Simplified dissolution

Start with joint Form 12.901(a) and its current eligibility instructions. This route generally requires agreement on divorce and division of any assets and debts, no qualifying children or pregnancy under the form, no alimony request, and both spouses' consent to the process and waivers. Confirm the county checklist, signatures and hearing appearance requirements. If a local summary differs from the statewide form, call the Clerk before choosing this route.

Useful filing and follow-through links

Official petitions, affidavits and judgments • Florida Courts self-help • Florida E-Filing Portal

County divorce resources • County procedures and hearing requests • Florida Child Support Program

Florida Family Law Rules • Florida Bar Lawyer Referral Service • Florida domestic violence resources

Four Duval divorce checklists • Clerk fee schedule • Duval judicial directory and hearing forms

Duval's simplified checklist calls for both spouses to appear in person. Confirm the hearing instructions and bring proof of residency. For a regular uncontested case, check the assigned family division's final hearing checklist and ask Family Court Services how the case will be scheduled.

Before filing, check the latest court forms, local orders, filing fees and portal instructions. File required confidential notices separately, redact protected identifiers and exchange disclosure records privately as required. Verify docket acceptance and calendar service, disclosure, parenting class and hearing deadlines.