

LONG DISTANCE PARENTING SCHEDULE
(For parents who live more than 150 miles apart)

**Wood County Court of Common Pleas
Domestic Relations Division / Juvenile Division**

NOTICE OF INTENT TO EXERCISE PARENTING TIME: Notice of intent to exercise parenting time must be provided in writing by the non-residential parent at least thirty (30) days in advance of the first day of the parenting time. The residential parent must acknowledge the notice within three (3) days of receipt.

PARENTING TIME FOR THE NON-RESIDENTIAL/CUSTODIAL PARENT SHALL TAKE PLACE AT SUCH TIMES AND PLACES AS THE PARTIES CAN AGREE (*these are the most important words*). This shall not normally be less than the following:

1. Summer Vacation

Summer vacation shall be from June 15 to July 31 of each calendar year. These dates cannot be changed except by agreement of both parties or a Court order.

2. School Breaks – Commences the first full day the child is not in school, regardless of whether that is a weekday or weekend, until the day prior to the child's return to school.

Even-Numbered Years

Winter Break - First to last day of break

Odd-Numbered Years

Spring Break - First to last day of break

Thanksgiving Break - First to last day of break

WHILE NO SPECIFIC TIMES ARE SET FOR LONG DISTANCE EXCHANGES DUE TO THE NEED FOR FLEXIBILITY IN MAKING TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS, THE COURT DOES EXPECT PARENTS TO BE REASONABLE IN CONSIDERING THEIR CHILDREN'S NEEDS.

3. Additional Parenting Times

- a. A once-a-month weekend beginning the third Friday of each month, unless agreed otherwise, if the traveling time for the child does not exceed three (3) hours one-way from home to home. The times are Friday at 6 p.m. to Sunday at 6 p.m. unless agreed otherwise. The residential parent must have at least one (1) week advance notice.
- b. Father's Day or Mother's Day may be spent with the designated parent. The residential parent must have at least one (1) week advance notice. If the parents are unable to agree on dates and times, then the parties shall comply with the times listed in the Local Parenting Plan and Companionship Schedule.
- c. The non-residential parent who visits the community where the residential parent lives is entitled to parenting time if they provide two (2) days advance notice to the residential parent. The parenting time may be outside the presence of the residential parent (unless prohibited by Court order).
- d. The residential parent who brings the child(ren) to the community where the non-residential parent lives must provide two (2) days advance notice and must provide parenting time between the non-residential parent and their child(ren) outside the presence of the residential parent (unless prohibited by Court order).

4. Transportation

THE PARENT COMING INTO POSSESSION OF THE CHILD(REN) IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ARRANGING AND PAYING FOR THE CHILD(REN)'S TRANSPORTATION (AND MANDATORY AIRLINE CHAPERONE).

Transportation by Car: Any responsible adult with a valid driver's license well-known to the child(ren) may be utilized to provide transportation. All child restraint laws must be complied with by any person driving the child(ren). No person transporting the child(ren) may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Transportation by Airplane: Airline regulations govern the age at which a child may fly unescorted. Airline reservations should be made well in advance and preferably be non-stop. The parent who is taking the child(ren) to the airport must call the other parent immediately upon departure to notify the other parent that the child(ren) will be arriving, and the parent who meets the child(ren) must immediately notify the other parent that they have arrived.

Note: Travel by methods other than car requires each parent to transport the child in a timely fashion to the transportation terminal for departure and pick up. Prior to making the decision on any method of transportation, parents should carefully consider the age of the child(ren), the safety of the child(ren) traveling alone, the child(ren)'s experience traveling alone, and whether an adult should chaperone the travel.

5. Long Distance Parenting Time Presumptions

a. Basis for Schedule

This parenting plan presumes that both parents are good parents and that a child is safe with either parent, based on the evidence before the Court; that both parents respect the right of their child(ren) to have two parents throughout their life for nurturing, continuity, normal development, and emotional and economic support; and that each parent respects the other's right to parent their child(ren).

b. Keeping the Children Together

This schedule presumes that if the parents have more than one child, the parenting time will be exercised with all children together.

c. Child's Response to Long Distance Parenting Time

Children whose parents live at a considerable distance from each other grow up to be as normal and healthy as children whose parents live in the same community if the parents communicate well, if both parents continue regular contact with the child(ren), and if both parents avoid the use of anger in front of the child(ren) when dealing with or talking about the other parent.

It is normal for a child to have a strong emotional reaction when leaving the residential parent, and an equally strong reaction when leaving the non-residential parent. Parents need to know that this type of emotional response is quite natural and does not mean that the child does not love the other parent or wishes not to see them. Parents need to calmly reassure the child that they will see the other parent again. A healthy child should adjust to the situation.

Some parents are naturally concerned about a very young child being separated from the residential parent for the extended periods of time set by this schedule. So long as the non-residential parent has an established relationship with the child, the general rule is that the child should spend time with that parent and will adjust to new surroundings with the assistance of both parents.

If a child indicates strong opposition to being with the other parent, it is the responsibility of both parents to calmly talk to the child as to the child's reasons, and to work together to do what is in the child's best interest, particularly avoiding confrontation or unpleasant scenes. If the matter is not settled quickly, either parent should seek the immediate assistance of a mental health professional or seek legal counsel. No parent should allow a child to decide when or whether parenting time will take place. As uncomfortable as this problem may be for either parent, this issue should not go unresolved. IT IS THE ABSOLUTE, AFFIRMATIVE DUTY OF THE RESIDENTIAL PARENT TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE CHILD(REN) GO FOR ALL PARENTING TIME, AND THE RESIDENTIAL PARENT SHALL DISCUSS WITH THE CHILD(REN) IN ADVANCE OF THE PARENTING TIME THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR CONTINUING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE OTHER PARENT.

d. Making Parenting Time a Routine

This schedule presumes that the non-residential parent shall exercise all parenting time periods so long as proper notice is given. The residential parent shall not schedule any plans for the child(ren) which interferes with the non-residential parent's time nor deny the rights set forth in this schedule to the other parent.

e. Missing Parenting Time

The non-residential parent must give notice of intent NOT to have parenting time, as soon as they are aware that parenting time is not possible. A parent who cancels parenting time forfeits the time. Since the schedule presumes ordinary parenting times will be spent with the child(ren), non-canceled time where the

parent fails to appear upsets the child(ren) considerably, as well as the residential parent. A parent who continually fails to keep their commitment to parenting time may have rights modified and may be subject to other legal remedies as well, upon motion by the residential parent. Likewise, a parent who denies Court ordered parenting time may have rights modified and may be subject to other legal remedies as well, upon motion by the non-residential parent.

f. Summer School

Summer school which is necessary for a child to pass to the next grade must be completed online or attended at a school in the non-residential parent's school district after receipt of written notice from the residential parent. The non-residential parent must make arrangements with both schools and be certain that documentation of completion is received by the school in the residential parent's community.

g. Child's Activities

Scheduled parenting time must not be delayed because a child wishes to schedule other activities (with friends, work, lessons, sports, etc.) which conflict with the non-residential parent's parenting time. The residential parent shall not schedule or allow a child to schedule any event which conflicts with the times and dates herein, unless the parties agree otherwise. This schedule anticipates that the child will develop new friends and relationships and have additional activities in a different community which are presumed to be beneficial to the child.

h. Child's Health

As a general rule, if a child is hospitalized or has a serious injury or illness, each parent should be notified. If the child becomes ill or injured while with the non-residential parent, the parent shall secure appropriate treatment and notify the residential parent. Additionally, any illness or chronic condition suffered by a child must be communicated in writing from the residential to the non-residential parent, including specifics regarding medication or treatment prescribed for the illness or condition. Sufficient medication should be sent. THE PARENTS MUST CARE FOR THE CHILD AS DIRECTED BY THE MEDICAL PROVIDERS.

i. Clothing

The residential parent is responsible for providing sufficient, appropriate, clean clothing for the parenting time period. If planned activities require special or unusual clothing needs, the non-residential parent must notify the residential parent at least two (2) days in advance of the beginning of the period. If the child does not have the type of clothing requested, the residential parent is under no obligation to comply with the request. All clothing sent by the residential parent must be immediately returned at the end of the parenting time.

j. Communication Between Parents

It is the parent's responsibility, not the child(ren)'s, to make all parenting time arrangements. It is not the child's responsibility to mediate or become involved in parental differences over parenting times, dates or activities. If the parties are unable to communicate with each other, then they are encouraged to use online communication applications. The best solution may be to seek professional help to improve their ability to communicate for the best interest of the child(ren).

k. Communication Between Parent and Child

Each parent has the right to communicate with the child(ren) as often as the parents agree. If the parents do not agree, then child(ren) shall be allowed to communicate by video/telephone with either parent a minimum of twice per week. In addition, the parties may agree to allow texting/email access to both parents.

Note that due to ongoing, rapid changes in technology and social media, not every conceivable situation can be anticipated or addressed. However, the Court strongly recommends parents consider the age and maturity of their child(ren) and cooperate to make joint decisions regarding the purchasing and use of cell phones and any other technology which may affect communication between a parent and a child. Any likely areas of dispute should be discussed in advance and written into the Court order.

Regarding discipline, a parent may rescind the use of a child's cell phone or other technology as a form of discipline, however this shall not interfere with the child's regular communication with the other parent.

l. Discipline and Changes in Child's Behavior

Parents should communicate to ensure consistent discipline between the households. Parents need to discuss behavior problems and solutions with each other as the need arises. If the parents disagree over the appropriate discipline or solutions to the child(ren)'s behavior, they should seek the assistance of a professional.

m. Child's Records

- (1) Both parents are entitled by law to equal access to their children's daycare, school, and medical records unless limited by Court order.
- (2) The residential parent is responsible for taking all necessary action for all record keeping purposes to use the child's birth or adopted name only.
- (3) School Records: The residential parent must list the non-residential parent as a parent of the child and must authorize the school to release to the non-residential parent any and all information concerning the child. The residential parent also must provide the non-residential parent with any and all passwords necessary to access the child's academic and extracurricular information online. The child should not be used to deliver the information.

Subject to R.C. 3125.16 and 3319.321(F) and unless otherwise indicated in the Entry or parenting plan, both parents are entitled to access to any record related to the child(ren). **Any keeper of a record who knowingly fails to comply with permitting record access is in contempt of Court.**

- (4) School Activities Access Notice: Subject to R.C. 3319.321(F) and unless otherwise indicated in the Entry or parenting plan, both parents are entitled access to any student activity related to the child(ren). **Any school employee or official who knowingly fails to comply with permitting school activities is in contempt of Court.**
- (5) Medical Records/Consultation: The residential parent shall, upon request by the non-residential parent, immediately comply with whatever action is required, including the signing of a full release, to provide access to any medical, dental, hospital, surgical, optometric, or mental health records of the minor child. Both parents are entitled to equal access to their child(ren)'s records, unless limited by Court order.

n. Address and Telephone Numbers

Each parent must, unless the Court orders otherwise, keep the other informed of their current address and telephone number, and an alternate telephone number in the event of an emergency.

o. Moving

Either parent must notify the other parent and the also notify the Court in writing at least 30 days in advance of their intent to change their residence. Each parent shall provide a current address and telephone number to the other parent, at all times. If the residential parent moves or gives notice of intent to move the child away from the area, the non-residential parent may file a motion objecting to the move, and the Court will address the issue.

If the parties are subject to a shared parenting plan, then the parties shall follow the terms of their shared parenting plan regarding relocation.

p. Traditions and Extended Family

This schedule is in no way meant to interfere with family traditions. Each parent is encouraged to respect each other's family traditions and to adjust the parenting time schedule accordingly. Each parent should expect new family traditions will develop. It is expected that the child(ren) will continue contact with grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and any other family members during such times as they are with their parents.

q. Step-parent's Name

A parent should not, nor permit any other person to, suggest, encourage, or require a child to refer to any person other than the child's parents as "mom" or "dad", etc.

r. Non-compliance with Court Order

Any of the rights or responsibilities outlined in this schedule may be enforced by the Court after the filing of an appropriate motion by either party. A parent may not withhold parenting rights because the other party does not obey a court order.

A parent who willfully fails to comply with this schedule may be found guilty of contempt of court, the penalty for which is a fine not to exceed \$250.00, and a jail sentence for an initial contempt not to exceed 30 days. The Court may also assess attorney fees, court costs, transportation costs, and make-up parenting time in addition to any other remedy at law. Failure to obey court orders may also be the basis for a reallocation of parental rights.

Magistrate Jill Varnes-Richardson
Magistrate Michelle L. Christie
Magistrate Mollie Hojnicky-Mathieson

Judge Matthew L. Reger
Judge Mary "Molly" L. Mack
Judge Joel M. Kuhlman
Judge David E. Woessner