

STATE OF MISSOURI
FAMILY COURT,
31ST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT



JUVENILE DIVISION
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CHECKLIST FOR RESPONDING TO A FAMILY LAW CASE WITHOUT AN ATTORNEY

If a family court action has been filed against you and you desire to proceed in the court case without an attorney you are considered a pro se litigant. Pro se simply means “for one's own behalf.” As a pro se litigant you are held to the same procedural requirements as an attorney. This information is being provided to assist you in your family law case and ensure you meet the procedural requirements. **Remember, the Judge, Court Staff and the Clerk’s Office cannot provide legal advice. Further, nothing contained in this checklist should be considered legal advice.** This is only provided as a guide to make the process easier. You may always consult an attorney if your situation requires more information than provided by this checklist.

The Supreme Court of Missouri has approved forms located at <http://www.selfrepresent.mo.gov> for the following types of cases:

Dissolution of Marriage (Divorce)
Paternity
Motion to Modify Child Custody and/or Child Support

You will need to complete the Litigant Awareness Program located at <http://www.selfrepresent.mo.gov>. It is a two-step process which consists of watching a video on the website listed above and then reading basic information about your particular type of case. Once you have completed both steps you may print your Certificate of Completion which will need to be filed with the Circuit Clerk.

TIMELINE

Depending on how your case proceeds there will be different requirements concerning documents to be filed and different time periods. The table below explains the time requirements for a default or settled case and the typical time required for a case where both parties are involved and no agreement has been reached.

Event	No Agreement	Settled Case	Default
	Timeline From Filing of Case		
Filing	The date the initial Petition or Motion is processed to the Circuit Clerk	The date the initial Petition or Motion is processed to the Circuit Clerk	The date the initial Petition or Motion is processed to the Circuit Clerk
Service of Process	Service of Process has been performed when a Sheriff or special process server delivers a copy of the Petition or Motion to you or your residence.	Service of Process has been performed when a Sheriff or special process server delivers a copy of the Petition or Motion to you or your residence.	Service of Process has been performed when a Sheriff or special process server delivers a copy of the Petition or Motion to you or your residence.
Required Response	Once service of process has been achieved you have 30 days to file a response in most situations. You MUST read the summons to determine the requirements in your case.	Once service of process has been achieved you have 30 days to file a response in most situations. You MUST read the summons to determine the requirements in your case.	Once service of process has been achieved you have 30 days to file a response in most situations. You MUST read the summons to determine the requirements in your case. Failure to file a response will result in your case being in default.
Case Management Hearing (in cases with dependent children)	If case involves children, Case Management Hearing will typically be set 45-60 days from when a response is filed. Date will be given by the Court. Be sure to fulfill all requirements on the order regarding this court date.	If your case is settled, you may have your case finalized at any point 30 days after service of process.	If your case is in default the filing party may proceed with the case 30 days after service of process if no response is filed.
Trial	Typically 8-12 months after response filed. Date will be given by the Court.		

CASE TYPES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR EACH

You will need to complete and file certain documents with the circuit clerk's office. These documents are available at <http://www.selfrepresent.mo.gov>. Find the type of case for your situation below.

Dissolution of Marriage (Divorce)

When the parties are married and desire to end the marriage they will need to participate in a Dissolution of Marriage. This type of case will end the marriage, divide the parties' marital assets and debts, determine maintenance, set a parenting plan concerning the children of the parties, order child support and restore a former name, if requested.

After you have been served, fully complete every section of each of the documents listed below, print the documents and take them to the Greene County Circuit Clerk's Office located on the second floor of the Court House. This office is open from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

1. Answer, Form CAFC010-R
The Answer is the document where you respond to the Petitioner's Petition. This document needs to be notarized. The Court does not provide this service. You will need to get the document notarized prior to filing. You must file your Answer within 30 days of service of process.
2. Income and Expense Statement, Form CAFC050-R
On this form you will list your income and expenses along with your spouse's income and expenses.
3. Property and Debt Statement and Proposed Separation Agreement, Form CAFC040-R
On this form you will list the assets and debts of the marriage and how you would like the assets and debts divided. Pay attention to the definitions of marital and nonmarital property and debt. Additionally, you WILL need a copy of the legal description of any real estate at your court appearance (not the common address).
4. Parenting Plan, Form CAFC501
This form must be completed if children were born to the parties at any time and any of those children are under the age of 18 (21 if enrolled full time in college). There are two parts to this form, Part A and Part B. You must complete both parts in their entirety. This plan will state how the issues in your child or children's lives are to be handled between the parents.
5. Certificate of Completion from the Litigant Awareness Program
You will print this certificate after completing the litigant Awareness Program discussed above.

Paternity Action

When a child is born out of wedlock and the parties desire to have the father of the child or children legally declared, a parenting plan entered, child support ordered and/or change the name of the minor child then a Paternity action is needed.

After you have been served, fully complete every section of each of the documents listed below, print the documents and take them to the Greene County Circuit Clerk's Office located on the second floor of the Court House. This office is open from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

1. Answer, Form CAFC311 (If you are the Father) or CAFC312 (If you are the Mother)
The Answer is the document which responds to the Plaintiff's Petition. This document needs to be notarized. The Court does not provide this service. You will need to get the document notarized prior to filing. You must file your Answer within 30 days of service of process.
2. Parenting Plan, Form CAFC501
This form must be completed if children were born to the parties at any time and any of those children are under the age of 18 (21 if enrolled full time in college). There are two parts to this form, Part A and Part B. You must complete both parts in their entirety, even if you are not asking for child support. This plan will state how the issues in your child or children's lives are to be handled between the parents.
3. Income and Expense Statement, Form CAFC250
On this form you will list your income and expenses along with the other parent's income and expenses.
4. Property and Debt Statement, Form CAFC240
You will list your property and debts on this form.
5. Certificate of Completion from the Litigant Awareness Program
You will print this certificate after completing the litigant Awareness Program discussed above.

Motion to Modify Child Custody and/or Child Support

When there is currently a judgment in place from a Dissolution of Marriage, a Paternity Action or prior modification of either and a party desires to bring a new action to request a change to the current judgment then a Motion to Modify is required. A Motion to Modify may address multiple issues. This checklist will only address a requested change to child custody and child support.

Once service of process has been obtained, fully complete every section of each of the documents listed below, print the documents and take them to the Greene County Circuit Clerk's Office located on the second floor of the Court House. This office is open from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

1. Answer to Motion to Modify Child Custody (and child support), Form CAFC111
or
Answer to Motion to Modify Child Support, Form CAFC112
The Answer is the document which responses to the other party's Motion to Modify. This document needs to be notarized. The Court does not provide notary services. You will need to get the document notarized prior to filing. A response will need to be filed timely so the Court will be aware of your desire to participate in the proceedings. Traditionally, an Answer should be filed within 30 days of service of process.
2. Parenting Plan, Form CAFC501
This form must be completed if children were born to the parties at any time and any of those children are under the age of 18 (21 if enrolled full time in college). There are two parts to this form, Part A and Part B. You must complete both parts in their entirety, even if you are not asking for child support. This plan will state how the issues in your child or children's lives are to be handled between the parents.
3. Income and Expense Statement, Form CAFC150
On this form you will list your income and expenses along with the other parent's income and expenses.
4. Property and Debt Statement, Form CAFC140
You will list your property and debts on this form.
5. Certificate of Completion from the Litigant Awareness Program
You will print this certificate after completing the litigant Awareness Program discussed above.

REQUIREMENTS OF FAMILY LAW CASES

You will need to provide certain information to the other party and the Court and complete the following classes.

1. Does your case involve children? If not continue to number 2. If children are involved you will need to attend a Court approved program designed to educate parents on the detrimental effect of parental conflict on children. A copy of the Court approved programs can be obtained from the Circuit Clerk's Office.
2. Is your case settled on ALL issues? If not you will need to attend the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) class. Information of this class will be mailed to the address the Court has on file. You are responsible for ensuring the address informing is correct and up to date. You can check the information at the Circuit Clerk's office on the second floor of the Courthouse.

3. If you are involved in a Dissolution of Marriage case and you own real estate you will need a copy of your legal description (not the common address). If you do not have a copy of the legal description you will need to contact the Recorder of Deeds in the county in which the real estate is located. For property in Greene County, the Recorder of Deeds is located in the historic courthouse at 940 N Boonville Ave., Springfield, Missouri.
4. Certificate of Completion from the Litigant Awareness Program
You will print this certificate after completing the litigant Awareness Program discussed above and file it with the Circuit Clerk on the second floor of the courthouse.
5. Certificate of Completion of an Approved Co-Parenting Class
If there were children born to the parties at any time and any of the children are under 18 years of age, an approved co-parenting class must be taken by both parties. The certificate received for completing this case must be filed with the Circuit Clerk's office on the second floor of the courthouse. The list of approved classes is available in the Circuit Clerk's office.
6. If your case is not settled and it does not go into default, the court will provide dates for future hearings in the form of orders. Be sure to follow all instructions in these orders.
7. You should bring a copy of all the documents you have previously filed with the Court to each hearing

FOR THE DAY OF COURT

You will need to be on time or the Court will not have sufficient time to hear your case and it will need to be rescheduled. When you arrive at the Courthouse go to the Circuit Clerk's Office and inform the clerk at one of the "Family" windows that you are here for Court and they will procure your file and take you to the Courtroom.