

**YAVAPAI COUNTY**  
**Self-Service Center**

**INSTRUCTIONS:                    COMPLETING THE PARENTING PLAN**

**TYPE OR PRINT IN BLACK INK ONLY**

**TO COMPLETE THESE FORMS YOU WILL NEED TO:**

- Use the Parenting Time Guidelines of the Yavapai County Superior Court to help you fill out your Parenting Plan. The Guidelines are in this packet.
- Remember the Court will do what it believes is in the best interests of the children. So, even though both parties agree as to how they want to handle legal decision-making, parenting time and support, the **judge will decide** what order to make, including whether to modify any current legal decision-making, parenting time and/or child support orders.

**DEFINITIONS:**

1. **“Joint Legal Decision-Making”** means both parents share decision-making and neither parent’s rights or responsibilities are superior except with respect to specified decisions as set forth by the court or the parents in the final judgment or order.
2. **“Sole Legal Decision-Making”** means one parent has the legal right and responsibility to make major decisions for a child.
3. **“Legal Parent”** means a biological or adoptive parent whose parental rights have not been terminated. Legal parent does not include a person whose paternity has not been established pursuant to § 25-812 or 25-814.
4. **“Parenting Time”** means the schedule of time during which each parent has access to a child/the children at specified times. Each parent during their scheduled parenting time is responsible for providing the child(ren) with food, clothing and shelter and may make routine decisions concerning the child(ren)’s care.

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- **IF THIS IS A JOINT LEGAL DECISION-MAKING/PARENTING TIME AGREEMENT:** Both **parents** must complete, sign and date the Agreement.
- **IF THIS IS A PROPOSED LEGAL DECISION-MAKING/PARENTING TIME AGREEMENT:** **Only you** must complete, sign and date the Agreement. This is what you file if you and the other parent do not agree.
- Please read these instructions carefully as you complete the forms. Type the information if at all possible, or write neatly and clearly in black ink.
- The Parenting Plan contains a number of sections that are important to most parents. Under each major section or heading, more than one option has been listed. Read these choices over carefully and then check the box next to the option you are selecting.

- There are mediators in the community who can help you make decisions about legal decision-making and parenting time. Mediation may be requested through the court.

### WHAT IS YOUR PROPOSED AGREEMENT?

- Four possible options have been included. Check the box next to the option that best describes the legal decision-making arrangement you are requesting: 1) Sole Legal Decision Making By Agreement; 2) Sole Legal Decision-Making Requested By The Parent Submitting This Plan; 3) Joint Legal Decision-Making By Agreement; or 4) Joint Legal Decision-Making Requested By Parent Submitting This Plan.

### WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO ABOUT PARENTING TIME?

1. Specify your parenting time arrangements as clearly as possible. For example, when referring to “weekends” it is helpful to define when the “weekend” begins and ends:

**Example:** Alternating weekends from after work, generally at 6:00 p.m. until Sunday at 6:00 p.m.

Some parents define weekends differently from the above because that is what is best for their own child(ren)’s needs. Regardless of the schedule, what is most important is that you have made those details absolutely clear to one another and to the Court.

2. Avoid vague or ambiguous statements such as “**will share, will divide, or will decide later,**” etc. These statements may result in future disputes related to different understandings or interpretations. Although flexibility and mutual agreement is encouraged, the document must be sufficiently clear and specific to be legally enforceable.
3. There are spaces for you to note additional terms in your agreement. Depending upon the needs of your family, you may or may not wish to include agreements regarding transportation of the children between the parental homes; parenting time arrangements with other relatives such as grandparents; terms pertaining to activities for the children; or any other provisions which are important to your family.