

YAVAPAI COUNTY
Self-Service Center

INFORMATION

RESPONDING TO PETITION FOR ORDERS OF PATERNITY, LEGAL DECISION-MAKING, PARENTING TIME AND CHILD SUPPORT

DOCUMENTS YOU SHOULD HAVE RECEIVED WITH THE PETITION

✓ **SUMMONS:**

You have been summoned to appear in court. The Summons tells you how many days you have to respond, depending on how you were served with the court papers. Be sure to respond on time. If the time to respond has passed, the other party must complete an **Application and Affidavit for Entry of Default** and send you a copy. Then, you have 10 more days to respond. If you do not respond on time, a default judgment can be entered. That may mean you will not get to tell the judge your side of the story.

✓ **ORDER AND NOTICE TO ATTEND PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM CLASS and RESPONDENTS NOTICE TO PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM:**

These are important documents. You and the other parent must attend and complete a class in the Parent Education Program. This is a very exciting and wonderful class. They designed it to help you. The purpose of the Parent Education Program is to give parents information about the impacts that the changes in the family unit, and court involvement have on children involved in a divorce, legal separation, paternity, or legal decision-making case. This Notice applies to all parents who file an action for dissolution of marriage or legal separation, or any paternity proceeding, in which a party has requested that the court determine legal decision-making or parenting time on or after January 1, 1997, and to all other domestic relations cases if ordered by the Court. **Make sure you read these notices and do what they say.**

✓ **PETITION FOR ORDERS OF PATERNITY, LEGAL DECISION-MAKING, PARENTING TIME AND CHILD SUPPORT:**

This is the form the other party completed to tell the Court what he or she wants concerning paternity, legal decision-making, parenting time, child support and health insurance for the child(ren).

✓ **PARENT'S WORKSHEET FOR CHILD SUPPORT AMOUNT:**

This form tells the Court how much the other party believes should be ordered for child support, based on the income of the two parents and the Arizona state guidelines.

- ✓ **LEGAL DECISION-MAKING/PARENTING TIME PLAN:** If the you and the other parent have agreed on a legal decision-making plan and both signed the Agreement, you should have received a copy of it with the other documents.

READ EACH DOCUMENT VERY CAREFULLY, and decide what you want to do. Here are some choices:

- **Do nothing.** This means the other party can get a paternity order and tell the judge his or her side of the story, without you telling your side at all. This is called a default. The other party can only ask for the things that are in the Petition. However, it may not be a good idea to ignore the court proceeding and have a court order in which you had no input.
- **Decide with the other party how you want to handle everything:** paternity, legal decision-making, parenting time, child support and health insurance for the child(ren). Then you and the other party can file papers with the court stating your agreement on everything. We call this a **Consent Judgment**. A lawyers and/or mediator can help you with this.
- **Tell the Court you don't agree with what the other party said in the Petition or other documents.** You may file a written **RESPONSE** stating your side of the story, and how you want to handle everything: paternity, legal decision-making, parenting time, child support and health insurance responsibilities. **We call this a contested matter.** However, even if you file a written Response, you and the other party can later decide to agree on everything and file a **Consent Judgment**. A lawyer and/or mediator can help you. If you file a written Response and do not settle everything with the other party, there are documents to file to ask the Court to set the case for trial. These forms are available at the Self-Service Center.

TIME LIMITS FOR RESPONDING:

HOW TO COUNT YOUR TIME LIMIT FOR RESPONDING

- Begin counting from the **DAY AFTER** you were served.
- ! **INCLUDE WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS IN YOUR COUNT** until you reach the number of days in the Time Table below. If the last day to respond falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, you **DO NOT** count that day. Count the next business day as the last day to respond. If you respond on time, the Petitioner **CANNOT PROCEED BY DEFAULT**.

SEE THE CHART ON PAGE 3

IF YOU WERE SERVED BY:

COUNT

EVENT

1. Acceptance of Service in Arizona 20 days after you signed the Acceptance of Service
2. Acceptance of Service out-of-state 30 days after you signed the Acceptance of Service
3. Process Server or Sheriff in Arizona 20 days after you received papers
4. Process Service or Sheriff out-of-state ... 30 days after you received papers
5. Certified mail in Arizona 20 days after you signed the certified mail receipt
6. Certified mail out-of-state 30 days after you signed the certified mail receipt
7. Publication 60 days after the 1st date of publication