

Common Questions about Orders with Children

Who can ask for orders about the children?

Either parent can ask for an order about the children. In Colorado, this is called 'parental responsibility'. If you and the other parent have an agreement about the children, one parent is the *Petitioner*. The other parent is the *Co-Petitioner*.

If you do not have a joint agreement, the person who files is called the *Petitioner*, and the other parent is called the *Respondent*.

How does the other parent participate?

The other parent (the Respondent) has the right to file a Response (JDF 1420) to your Petition. This is the Respondent's opportunity to tell the court if they agree or disagree with the information in your Petition. The Respondent must mail you a copy of their Response.

Can a non-parent ask for parental responsibility?

Yes. If you are not the parent but have had parental responsibility of the child(ren) for at least 182 days, you may file a case. You must start the case while you still have parental responsibility or within 182 days of no longer having parental responsibility.

How do I know when to go to court?

The court will tell you when you have to go back to court. You will get a letter from the court or the family court facilitator's office.

What if the other parent is not the "legal" father?

The court cannot make parental responsibility orders until the legal father is determined. See form JDF 1500, [Paternity Instructions](#) before you start your parental responsibility case.

Where do I ask for the parental responsibility order?

File your court forms in the county where the child(ren) have lived for the last 182 days. If the child is under 6 months old, file where the child has lived since birth.

If you are *not* the parent but you have parental responsibility of the child(ren), file in the county where the children are living.

Do I have to pay to ask for a parental responsibility order?

Yes. The court charges \$222 to file the forms. If you cannot afford to pay the filing fee, fill out the *Fee Waiver Application* (JDF 205) and take it to the Court Clerk, along with a blank Order form (JDF 206). The court will decide and let you know if your request has been approved. There might be other costs, such as to certify or copy documents, for mediation, or parenting classes. Ask the court clerk for more information.

What is mediation?

Mediation is a way make an agreement with the other parent without going to court. Parents who cannot agree on parental responsibility may be asked to do mediation or another kind of dispute resolution. Your local court can give you a list of local mediators or contact the Office of Dispute Resolution for information: (720) 625-5940. <https://www.courts.state.co.us/Administration/Unit.cfm?Unit=odr>

Will I have to take a parenting class to get a parental responsibility order?

Yes. Both parents have to take a parenting class to get a parental responsibility order. Read your *Case Management Order* to see a list of parenting classes in your area.

Can the court assign a lawyer or investigator to my case?

Yes. If the court wants more information about the family, it can appoint an investigator. Or if the court believes the child needs a lawyer, it will appoint one for the child. The parents do not get a court-appointed lawyer. If you think the child needs a lawyer, you can also ask the court to appoint one.

What if I also need information about divorce or, separation?

Check out *Divorce with Children*. It will give you information on the instructions, fees, and forms for the process.

What if I don't feel safe around the other parent?

If you feel the other parent/party may harm you physically or emotionally, ask for a temporary civil protection order to prevent domestic abuse. The clerk's office can help you with this.

What if I need a reasonable disability accommodation at court?

Contact your local ADA Coordinator at www.courts.state.co.us/Administration/HR/ADA/Coordinator_List.cfm

What if I change my mind?

Parties who change their minds about their case after filing the Petition must notify the court quickly and file a [Stipulated Motion to Dismiss](#) (JDF 1305).

For more information and help

Visit the Self-Help Center or Family Court Facilitator at the court where your case is. They CANNOT give you legal advice, but they can help you navigate the court and give you basic information about family law cases.

Read more about the laws on this topic. Search the Internet for §14-10-124, C.R.S. (Colorado Revised Statutes)

Talk to a lawyer if you have more questions.