

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
FAMILY COURT  
Domestic Relations Branch**

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINT YOUR NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
STREET ADDRESS

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY, STATE AND ZIP CODE

**SUBSTITUTE ADDRESS:** CHECK BOX IF YOU HAVE WRITTEN SOMEONE ELSE'S ADDRESS BECAUSE YOU FEAR HARASSMENT OR HARM.

PLAINTIFF,

v.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINT YOUR SPOUSE'S NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
STREET ADDRESS

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY, STATE AND ZIP CODE

DEFENDANT.

\_\_\_\_\_ DRB \_\_\_\_\_

RELATED CASES:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**COMPLAINT FOR ABSOLUTE DIVORCE  
Action Involving Child Support  yes  no**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am the Plaintiff in this case and state that  
PRINT YOUR NAME

**1. This Court is the proper place to decide my request for divorce and related issues because:** [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

I have been a resident of the District of Columbia for more than six months immediately before filing this Complaint.

My spouse has been a resident of the District of Columbia for more than six months immediately before filing this Complaint.

My spouse and I are the same gender and were married in the District of Columbia. Neither my spouse nor I reside in the District of Columbia. Neither my spouse nor I reside in a jurisdiction that will allow us to maintain an action for divorce.

**2. My spouse and I were married** [CHECK ONE]

by ceremony on \_\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_.

DATE

CITY AND STATE

by common law on or about \_\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_.

DATE

CITY AND STATE

**3. My spouse and I separated on or about** \_\_\_\_\_.

DATE

**4. I state the following about the separation:** [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

The separation has been **mutual and voluntary**, and has continued without interruption or cohabitation for a period of **six months or more** immediately before filing this Complaint.

The separation has continued without interruption or cohabitation for a period of **one year or more** immediately before filing this Complaint.

**5. I state the following with regard to my married name:** [CHECK ONE]

I did not change my name when I married my spouse.

I changed my name when I married my spouse. I do not wish to return to a former name.

I changed my name when I married my spouse and I now wish to return to my birth name or another legal name I used before my marriage. I have no illegal or fraudulent reason for making this request. The former name I want restored is:

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINT NAME YOU WOULD LIKE THE COURT TO RESTORE

**Marital Property & Marital Debt**

**6. I state the following about property from my marriage:** [CHECK ONE]

My spouse and I have no marital property.

My spouse and I have an agreement resolving all of our marital property issues and I am not asking the Court to divide or distribute any marital property.

My spouse and I have a written agreement resolving all of our marital property issues and I am not asking the Court to divide or distribute any marital property.

My spouse and I have marital property that I am asking the Court to divide or distribute, and I have completed and attached the additional information required on Attachment A, which I incorporate into this Complaint.

I am not sure if my spouse and I have marital property.

**7. I state the following about debt from my marriage:** [CHECK ONE]

My spouse and I have no marital debt.

My spouse and I have an agreement resolving all of our marital debt issues and I am not asking the Court to assign responsibility for any marital debt.

My spouse and I have a written agreement resolving all of our marital debt issues and I am not asking the Court to assign responsibility for any marital debt.

My spouse and I have marital debt that I am asking the Court to assign responsibility for, and I have completed and attached the additional information required on Attachment A, which I incorporate into this Complaint.

I am not sure if my spouse and I have marital debt.

### Alimony

**8. I state the following about my need for alimony from my spouse:** [CHECK ONE]

I need permanent and/or temporary alimony from my spouse and I believe my spouse has the ability to pay alimony to me.

I do not want my spouse to pay alimony to me.

### Custody

**9. I state the following about our child(ren) who are under the age of 18:** [CHECK ONE]

My spouse and I do not have any children together (through birth or adoption) who are under the age of 18.

My spouse and I do have children together (through birth or adoption) who are under the age of 18, but I am not asking the court to decide custody at this time.

My spouse and I do have children together (through birth or adoption) who are under the age of 18, and we have an agreement about custody; I am not asking the court to decide custody at this time.

My spouse and I do have children together (through birth or adoption) who are under the age of 18, and I am asking the court to decide custody. I have completed and attached the additional information required on Attachment B, which I incorporate into this Complaint.

## Child Support

**10. I state the following about my request for child support:** [CHECK ONE]

My spouse and I do not have any children together (through birth or adoption), or our children together are over the age of 21 years and are not adult disabled children.

My spouse and I do have children together (through birth or adoption) who are under the age of 21 or who are adult disabled children, but I am not asking the Court to award child support at this time.

My spouse and I do have children together (through birth or adoption) who are under the age of 21 or who are adult disabled children, and we have an agreement regarding child support; that agreement is consistent with the Child Support Guideline of the District of Columbia and/or it is fair and just.

My spouse and I do have children together (through birth or adoption) who are under the age of 21 or who are adult disabled children. I am asking the Court to award child support, *and* I have completed and attached the additional information required on Attachment C, which I incorporate into this Complaint.

## Attachments

**11. I have included the following attachment(s):** [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

- No attachments
- Attachment A (Marital Property and/or Marital Debt)
- Attachment B (Child Custody)
- Attachment C (Child Support)

## Request for Relief

**I RESPECTFULLY REQUEST that the Court grant me an Absolute Divorce and** [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

- Divide marital property and/or assign marital debts in a manner that is equitable, just and reasonable.
- Award alimony in a manner that is fair and just, including: [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]
  - temporary alimony
  - permanent alimony
- Award custody in the best interests of the child(ren).
- Hold a hearing on my request for child support within 45 days of filing and issue a Notice of Hearing and Order Directing Appearance (“NOHODA”) to the other parent with the date and time of the hearing.
- Award child support according to the Child Support Guideline of the District of Columbia and other applicable laws, including: [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]
  - current child support (support starting today and continuing into the future)
  - retroactive child support (support for time before today)
  - medical support
- Note that we have an agreement. I request that the Court: [CHECK ONE]
  - include* our agreement as a part of its order.
  - not include* our agreement as a part of its order.
- Restore me to my former name.

**I ALSO REQUEST that the Court award any other relief it considers fair and proper.**

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[CHECK ONE]

- I *do not* know of any proceedings in the District of Columbia or in any state or territory involving the same claim or subject matter as this case.
  - I *do* know of proceedings in the District of Columbia or in any state or territory involving the same claim or subject matter as this case, as listed on the first page of this Complaint (“Related Cases”).
-

I solemnly swear or affirm under criminal penalties for the making of a false statement that I have read the foregoing Complaint for Absolute Divorce and that the factual statements made in it are true to the best of my personal knowledge, information and belief.

Respectfully Submitted,

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SIGN YOUR NAME

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DATE (mm/dd/yyyy)

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STREET ADDRESS

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CITY, STATE AND ZIP CODE

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TELEPHONE NUMBER

**SUBSTITUTE ADDRESS:** CHECK BOX IF YOU HAVE WRITTEN SOMEONE ELSE'S ADDRESS BECAUSE YOU FEAR HARASSMENT OR HARM.

## **RULE 4 SERVICE**

WHEN YOU FILE YOUR COMPLAINT, THE FAMILY COURT CENTRAL INTAKE CENTER WILL GIVE YOU A **SUMMONS** THAT YOU MUST SERVE ON THE OTHER PARTY ALONG WITH A COPY OF YOUR COMPLAINT.

YOU MUST SERVE THE OTHER PARTY BEFORE THE SUMMONS EXPIRES IN **60** DAYS.

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO SERVE THE OTHER PARTY WITHIN THE **60** DAYS, YOU CAN ASK THE FAMILY COURT CENTRAL INTAKE CENTER TO GIVE YOU ANOTHER SUMMONS. THE SECOND SUMMONS IS CALLED AN “ALIAS SUMMONS.” YOU **MUST** ASK FOR THE ALIAS SUMMONS **BEFORE** THE FIRST SUMMONS EXPIRES.

HERE ARE THE WAYS YOU CAN SERVE THE COMPLAINT AND SUMMONS:

- **by having someone else** (NOT you), who is over 18 years old and not a party to the case,
  - **hand it to the other party;** or
  - **leave a copy at the other party’s home** with a person of suitable age and discretion who lives there

- AFTER THE OTHER PARTY IS SERVED, THE SERVER MUST COMPLETE AN AFFIDAVIT OF SERVICE AND FILE IT WITH THE FAMILY COURT CENTRAL INTAKE CENTER (“CIC”). AFFIDAVITS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE CIC.

**OR**

- **by mailing it to the other party** by certified mail, return receipt requested.

- AFTER THE RETURN RECEIPT (“GREEN CARD”) COMES BACK TO YOU, FILE IT WITH THE CIC ALONG WITH A COMPLETED AFFIDAVIT OF SERVICE. THESE AFFIDAVITS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE CIC.

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
 TRIBUNAL SUPERIOR DEL DISTRITO DE COLUMBIA  
 FAMILY COURT - DOMESTIC RELATIONS BRANCH  
 JUZGADO DE FAMILIA- DIVISIÓN DE RELACIONES DOMÉSTICAS  
 500 Indiana Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001**

A Complaint for:  
 Demanda de:

Divorce  
 Divorcio

Legal Separation  
 Separación Legal

Annulment  
 Anulación

Other:  
 Otro

Custody  
 Tutela

Standby Guardianship  
 Tutoría de Reserva

Visitation  
 Visitas

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In the Matter of:  
 En la causa de:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Plaintiff  
 Demandante

Jacket Number  
 Número del expediente \_\_\_\_\_

vs.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Defendant  
 Demandado

**SUMMONS  
NOTIFICACIÓN**

TO:  
 A:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Name  
 Nombre

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Address  
 Dirección

You are hereby SUMMONED to the Family Court of D.C. Superior Court and required to Answer the attached Complaint. Your Answer must be filed with the Clerk of this Court in the Family Court Central Intake Center, D.C. Superior Court, Room JM-520, 500 Indiana Avenue, N.W. Your Answer must be properly filed within twenty (20) days after service of this Summons and Complaint upon you. This 20-day period does not include the day on which you were served. A copy of your Answer must be served upon the plaintiff's attorney or plaintiff, whichever is indicated below. If you do not file your answer on time, the court may make orders affecting your marriage, your property, and custody and visitation of your children. You may be ordered to pay support and attorney fees. It is recommended that you seek the advice of an attorney to assist you in this case.

*Por medio de la presente se le ORDENA comparecer en persona al Juzgado de Familia en el Tribunal Superior del Distrito de Columbia y se le exige su contestación a la demanda adjunta. Debe presentar su contestación con el actuario de este tribunal en el "Family Court Central Intake Center" Tribunal Superior del Distrito de Columbia, Oficina JM-520, 500 Indiana Avenue, N.W. La contestación debe presentarse de manera adecuada dentro del plazo de veinte (20) días después de que este citatorio y demanda se le hayan entregado formalmente. Este plazo de 20 días no incluye el día de la notificación formal. Debe entregarse una copia de la contestación formalmente al indicado, ya sea el abogado del demandante o el demandante,*

**PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY OR PLAINTIFF  
 ABOGADO DEL DEMANDANTE O DEMANDANTE**

Name: Nombre:	Address: Dirección:
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Witness, the Honorable Chief Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia and seal of said Court.  
 Doy fe, el Honorable Juez Presidente del Tribunal Superior del Distrito de Columbia y el sello de dicho tribunal.

SEAL  
 Sello

Clerk of the Superior Court  
 of the District of Columbia  
 Actuario del Tribunal Superior del Distrito de Columbia

Date of Issue:  
 Fecha de emisión: \_\_\_\_\_

By:  
 Por: \_\_\_\_\_

Deputy Clerk  
 Actuario Auxiliar

\*This summons expires 60 days from the date of issue noted above. This case will be dismissed if the Plaintiff fails to comply with Rule 4 (I).  
 (See back)

\* Este citatorio se vence 60 días después de la fecha de emisión. Esta causa será sobreesida si el demandante no cumple con la Regla 4(1).

Please note that additional information is available on the reverse side of this form.

Favor de notar la información adicional al dorso de este formulario.



## Relevant D.C. Superior Court Rules

### **Domestic Relations Rule 4 Process:**

4(l) *Time Limit for Service.* Within 60 days of filing the complaint, the plaintiff must file proof of service of the summons, the complaint and any order directed by the Court to the parties at the time of filing. The proof shall be filed as to each defendant who has not responded to the complaint. Prior to the expiration of the foregoing time period, a request may be made by praecipe to extend the time for service. The praecipe shall include a certificate of good faith efforts to complete service by the attorney. Upon presentation of the request and certification the Clerk shall re-issue a summons for one additional 60-day period. If time in excess of the 120 days is required, the party may file a motion for additional time. Failure to comply with the requirements of this rule shall result in the dismissal without prejudice of the complaint. The clerk shall enter the dismissal and shall serve notice of it on all the parties entitled to such notice.

### **Domestic Relations Rule 55. Default:**

55(a) *Entry.* Where a defendant or respondent has failed to plead, or to appear in Court although ordered to do so, the plaintiff or petitioner shall be entitled to an entry of default by the Clerk. To obtain an entry of default, plaintiff or petitioner shall file with the Clerk a statement, made under oath, reciting that (i) proof of service has been filed, (ii) the time for the adverse party to plead or appear in Court has passed; and (iii) there has been compliance with the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act of 1940. The statement in support of a request for entry of default need not be served on the defendant or respondent. These procedures do not apply to the proceedings otherwise covered by statute or rule, including those to determine paternity.

## General Information

**Divorce Cases-** In matters involving a complaint for divorce; you must present an original or certified copy of your marriage license to the court at the time of your final hearing.

**Custody Cases-** In matters involving a complaint for custody, you must present an original or certified copy of each child's birth certificate to the court at the time of your final hearing.

## Helpful Resources

### **The Family Court Self-Help Center**

The Family Court Self-Help Center is a free walk-in service that provides unrepresented people with general legal information in a variety of family law matters (such as divorce, custody, visitation, and child support).

The Center staff can:

- Provide you with information about D.C. family law matters;
- Inform you of legal rights and obligations;
- Describe your legal options;
- Help you determine which forms are most appropriate for you and how to complete them;
- Explain how to navigate the court process, and what to expect in court; and
- Refer you to other helpful clinics and programs.

. The Family Court Self-Help Center is located in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, Room JM-570. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, from 8:30 am to 5pm (walk-ins will not be accepted after 4:30pm).

## The Family Court Mediation Program

The Family Mediation Program is a free service, which helps settle disputes between parties with family law issues. The goal of the program is to educate parties, improve communication and allow parties to reach workable solutions regarding their children and other family matters in a private setting.

The program is available to DC residents and their significant others. You do not need to be represented and you do not even need to have a pending case in court. Consider using the Family Mediation Program if you and your significant other need help resolving disputes regarding:

- Division of Property and Debts
- Custody and Visitation Rights
- Child Support
- Spousal Support

The Family Mediation Program is located in the John Marshall Annex (room JM 515) of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, 2nd Floor of the Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division. The entrance is down the steps on the east end of the building. Call 202-879-1549 or stop in to speak with a Dispute Resolution Specialist.

## Reglas aplicables del Tribunal Superior del Distrito de Columbia

### Regla 4 de Relaciones Domésticas, Notificación:

4(1) Plazo para la Notificación. Dentro del plazo de 60 días después de instaurar la demanda, el demandante debe presentar la prueba de notificación, la querrela y cualquier orden emitida por el juez en el momento de la instauración. La prueba debe presentarse en cuanto a cada demandado que no haya contestado. Antes de que caduque el plazo, se puede hacer una petición mediante un aviso por escrito para extender el plazo. El aviso debe incluir documentación de que el abogado hizo lo posible por entregar la notificación. Al presentar la documentación de la petición, el actuario volverá a emitirla por un plazo adicional de 60 días. De necesitar más de 120 días, la parte podrá presentar una petición de tiempo adicional. Se podrá sobreseer la demanda sin perjuicio de volverla a presentar en caso de incumplirse con los requisitos. El actuario asentará un sobreseimiento y notificará a todas las partes que tienen derecho de que se les notifique.

### Regla 55 de Relaciones Domésticas. Incomparecencia:

55(a) *Asiento*: El actuario le otorgará un fallo por incumplimiento al demandante o actor en caso de que el demandado no se presente ni se defienda aunque el juez se lo haya ordenado. Para obtener dicho fallo, el demandante o actor deberá declarar bajo juramento que (i) se ha presentado la prueba de notificación oficial, (ii) ha pasado el plazo para que la parte opuesta se defienda o comparezca, (iii) se ha cumplido con lo que estipula la Ley “Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act of 1940” [Ley de 1940: Recurso Civil para Soldados y Marineros]. No es necesario presentarle al demandado el pedimento de fallo por contumacia. Estos procesos no se aplicarán a los procedimientos que estén protegidos por otra ley o regla, incluso los que determinan la paternidad.

## Información General

**Causas de Divorcio-** *En causas donde la demanda es para el divorcio, debe presentarle al juez el acta de matrimonio, ya sea original o copia certificada, en su audiencia final.*

**Causas por tutela-** *En causas donde la demanda es por la tutela, debe presentar el acta de nacimiento, ya sea original o copia certificada, en su audiencia final.*

## Recursos Útiles

### El Centro de Asistencia Personal en el Juzgado de Familia (“Family Court Self-Help Center”)

El centro es un servicio gratuito donde no se requiere cita previa. Se le brinda información general a las personas que no tengan representación de un abogado. Dicha información legal cubre diferentes temas relacionados con el Juzgado de Familia (como lo son el divorcio, la tutela, visitas y manutención.)

El personal del centro puede:

- Brindarle información sobre temas del tribunal de familia en DC;
- Informar sobre derechos y obligaciones legales;
- Describir sus opciones legales;
- Determinar cuáles son los formularios adecuados y asistirle en llenarlos,
- Explicar el sistema del tribunal y cómo seguirlo, al igual que explicar lo que puede esperar en el tribunal; y
- Brindarle información sobre otros programas útiles.

El centro está ubicado en el Tribunal Superior del Distrito de Columbia, Oficina JM-570. Atención al público de lunes a viernes, 8:30am a 5:00 p.m. (no se atenderá al que se presente después de las 4:30p.m.).

## El Programa de Mediación para el Juzgado de Familia

La mediación para el tribunal de familia es un servicio gratuito que ayuda a resolver disputas entre las partes en asuntos de derecho familiar. El objetivo del programa es la educación de las partes en un ambiente privado, para mejorar la comunicación y permitirles llegar a soluciones viables en cuanto a los hijos y otros temas sobre la familia.

El programa, a disposición de residentes de D.C. y sus compañeros sentimentales allegados. No necesitan representación de un abogado, ni necesitan tener una causa pendiente en el tribunal. Considere el uso del centro si usted y su pareja necesitan resolver disputas sobre lo siguiente:

- División de bienes y deudas
- Derechos de tutela y visitas
- Manutención (de menores)
- Pensión alimenticia (cónyuge)

El programa de mediación para la familia está ubicado en el “John Marshall Annex” Oficina JM-515 del Tribunal Superior del Distrito de Columbia, 2° piso en la División de Resolución Alternativa de Disputas (“Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division”). La entrada queda bajando las escaleras en la parte oriental del edificio. Llame al 202-879-1549 o preséntese para hablar con un especialista de resolución de disputas.



## Superior Court of the District of Columbia Family Court

### Cross Reference Intake Form

Party	Name	Address	Date of Birth	Social Security Number	Driver License Number
Plaintiff/Petitioner <sup>1</sup>					
Co-Plaintiff/Co-Petitioner					
Defendant/Respondent <sup>2</sup>					
Co-Defendant/Co-Respondent					
Child					
Child					
Child					
Child					
Child					
Household Members					
Household Members					

1. What type of case are you filing today? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you have any other court cases in this court? \_\_\_\_\_. If yes, please list the name, type, and case number: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you have any other court cases in another court? \_\_\_\_\_. If yes, please list the name of the court, case, type, and number: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Are you *pro se* (representing yourself)? \_\_\_\_\_. If yes, please visit the Family Court Self-Help Center in Room JM-570.

<sup>1</sup> The person who is filing the case is the plaintiff/petitioner

<sup>2</sup> The person against whom the case is filed is the defendant/respondent

**Disclaimer: This form will not be kept in the official court jacket. After your information has been entered into the system, this form will be destroyed.**