

[SAMPLE INSTUCTIONS]

I. GETTING STARTED. . . .

My Michigan Lawyer will explain to you in 6 easy steps how to complete your own divorce in any county in Michigan without the expense of a lawyer. Be sure to read all of the instructions and complete all of the divorce forms for each step completely. You will need to make copies of all documents for your records and provide the court with the original and the 4 additional copies. My Michigan Lawyer inserted the majority of the information when you completed the interview sheet. Review all documents carefully for accuracy before you submit them to the court.

A divorce starts with the filing of a divorce summons and complaint in the county where you have resided for a minimum of 10 days. To start your divorce, **step one** describes preparing and filing your divorce summons and complaint with the court.

After preparing the summons & complaint it must be served (given to) your spouse. The court requires that you provide proof that you have given a copy of the divorce summons & complaint to your spouse. This document is called a proof of service. Everything you need to know about preparing a proof of service is described in **step two**.

Every case involves a waiting period that is required by law. After filing the complaint, your case cannot be finalized for a minimum of 6 months. **Step three** describes the waiting period and documents that need to be prepared during this period.

Step four describes how to prepare your divorce judgment. Before finalizing your case, a divorce judgment needs to be prepared. The divorce judgment determines the final rights and obligations of the parties. In addition, the final divorce judgment states the final distribution of assets and debts.

After preparing your divorce judgment, **step five** explains how to finalize your divorce. This requires that you prepare 4 documents: (1) affidavit of default, (2) a default, (3) notice of pro con hearing, and (4) proof of service. All of these documents are required to finalize your case.

The final step in completing your divorce is “**a pro con hearing**”. At this hearing you will state that everything in the original complaint is true, that you want a divorce with the terms of the divorce that are stated in the final judgment. **Step six** will describe everything you need to know in order to finalize your case at the pro con hearing to make the divorce final and legally binding.

Make sure that you follow all steps completely. Each step has a check list with completed example documents to help you complete every step accurately.

Lastly, there are always questions when going through a divorce. Typically no one has gone through a divorce before and is unsure about their particular case. Chapter four answers the most common questions that are asked during a divorce.

Before getting started there are some terms which you should know. The person filing the divorce is the **A plaintiff** @ in the divorce. Your spouse is the **A defendant** @. The **A summons** @ is the first page of the summons and complaint. The summons states who the plaintiff and defendant are and other basic information.

The **A complaint**@ consists of the pages that follow the summons. The complaint states basic facts about your case such as when you were married, when you separated, and the fact that there has been a breakdown in your marriage and you want a divorce.

The **A divorce judgment**@ is the document that states the final rights and obligations of the parties. A divorce judgment is entered and the divorce becomes final at a **A Pro Con hearing**@.

The “**Friend of the Court**” is an agency that collects and distributes child support and enforces parenting time orders. They also provide mediation services.

Now is the time to get started on your divorce.

[SAMPLE DOCUMENT]

STATE OF MICHIGAN
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF KENT - FAMILY DIVISION

* * * *

JANE DOE

Plaintiff,

CASE NO: _____-DM

v

HON: _____

JOHN DOE

Defendant.

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JANE DOE

In Pro Per

123 Oak, Grand Rapids, MI

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**COMPLAINT FOR DIVORCE AND
AFFIDAVIT PURSUANT TO MCLA 600.659, MSA 27A.659**

Plaintiff, Jane Doe, states as a complaint against the Defendant:

1. The Plaintiff or Defendant has resided in Michigan for at least 180 days and in Kent County for at least 10 days immediately before filing this complaint.
2. That neither party is currently on active duty in the United States Military or reserves.
3. The parties were married on June 1, 1995, in Detroit, Michigan.
4. Plaintiff's complete name before the marriage was Jane Jones and is now Jane Doe. Defendant's complete name before the marriage was John Doe and is now John Doe.
5. On July 10, 2002 they stopped living together as husband and wife.

6. There has been a breakdown of the marriage relationship to the extent that the objects of matrimony have been destroyed and there remains no reasonable likelihood that the marriage can be preserved.
7. During this marriage, the parties acquired various property that needs to be divided.
8. The wife is not pregnant.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff requests the Court to: Dissolves the marriage and grants a divorce.

- a. Divide marital property fairly and grant other relief that the Court deems just and equitable.

I declare that the statements above are true to the best of my information, knowledge, and belief.

Dated: _____

Jane Doe, Plaintiff

