

**STATE OF MISSOURI**

**DIVORCE PACKAGE**

**ADULT CHILDREN**

**With or Without Property**

**Control Number MO-004 -D**

This packet contains the following:

1. Information about Divorce
2. Form List
3. Form Explanations
4. Instructions and Steps
5. Checklist
6. Access to Law Summary

**You and your spouse must agree to all terms of the divorce to use this packet.**  
**All forms to be filed with the Court must be printed on Bond paper.**

## INFORMATION ABOUT DIVORCE

1.       **WHO CAN USE THESE FORMS:** You may use this petition form for divorce only when all of the following facts are true;
  - (a)               Your marriage is irretrievably broken and there is no reasonable likelihood that the marriage can be preserved.
  - (b)               There are no minor children of said marriage, and the wife is not now pregnant. All children of the marriage are over the age of twenty-one (21) and emancipated.
  - (c)               You and your spouse agree on all terms of the divorce.
  - (d)               You or your spouse has lived in Missouri and in the county of filing for ninety (90) days before filing the divorce.
  
2.       **THE BASICS:** In a typical divorce, there are basically two requirements that must be met before you can file for a divorce. Those requirements are below:
  - (a)       You must satisfy the ***residency*** requirements. You or your spouse must have resided in Missouri for at least ninety (90) days immediately preceding the filing of the petition.
  - (b)       You must satisfy ***the no-fault procedures***.
  
3.       **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS:** Missouri law requires that one of the spouses must be a resident of the state for a minimum of ninety (90) days immediately prior to the filing of the petition for divorce.
  
4.       **GROUND FOR DIVORCE:** Missouri law permits divorces based upon the irretrievable breakdown of the marriage with no reasonable likelihood of reconciliation.
  
5.       **LEGAL SEPARATION:** Missouri law permits a judgment of separation to be granted if at least one of the parties has been a resident of the state for a minimum of ninety (90) days immediately prior to the filing of the petition. In addition, the court must find that there is a reasonable likelihood that the marriage can be preserved. **AMS 30-452-305**  
  
      **This package does not contain forms for a legal separation.**
  
6.       **WAITING PERIOD:** There is a thirty (30) day waiting period from the filing of the petition before the court will grant a judgment of dissolution of marriage.

7. **ALIMONY/SUPPORT:** Since this is an agreed divorce you will decide issues of alimony. The forms assume that no alimony will be paid and is waived but you may add provisions for alimony if you desire. In a contested case, the courts may award alimony to either spouse only upon a finding that the spouse seeking the alimony lacks sufficient property to provide for his/her reasonable needs and is unable to support himself/herself through appropriate employment, or, is a custodian of a child whose condition is such that the custodian should not be required to seek employment. Factors the court considers in determining the amount and terms of alimony include:

- (a) The financial resources of the spouse seeking alimony,
- (b) The time necessary for the spouse seeking support to acquire sufficient education or training,
- (c) The comparative earning capacity of each spouse,
- (d) The standard of living established during the marriage,
- (e) The obligations and assets of the marriage, both separate and marital,
- (f) The duration of the marriage,
- (g) The age, physical and mental condition of the spouse seeking support,
- (h) The ability of the supporting spouse to meet both his needs and the needs of the spouse seeking support,
- (i) The conduct of the parties during the marriage,
- (j) And any other relevant factors.

Alimony may be awarded in a gross sum to be paid to the recipient, or may be awarded on a year-to-year basis. The award of alimony terminates upon the remarriage of the recipient spouse or that spouse's death. The order establishing alimony must also state whether the award is modifiable or non-modifiable. If the award is modifiable, the court may modify the award only upon a showing that the circumstances have changed so substantially as to make the terms unreasonable.

8. **DISTRIBUTION OF PROPERTY:** Since this is an agreed divorce the parties will have agreed to property distribution. Missouri is an equitable distribution state. In a contested case, this means that the court will divide the marital property between the parties as it deems equitable and just, after setting aside to each spouse the separate property of each. Factors the court considers in dividing the property between the parties include:

- (a) The economic circumstances of the parties at the time of the division of property;
- (b) The contribution of each spouse to the marital estate;
- (c) The value of the non-marital property set apart to each spouse;
- (d) The conduct of the parties during the marriage, and;
- (e) Custodial arrangements for minor children.

9. **NAME CHANGE:** A spouse may petition the court requesting that upon divorce the court restore the party to the use of a former or maiden name.

## **FORMS LIST**

The forms included in this package are:

1. Petition for Dissolution of Marriage **(MO-CAFC001)**
2. Respondent's Answer to Petitioner's Petition for Dissolution of Marriage  
**(MO-CAFC010)**
3. Waiver of Service and Entry of Appearance **(MO-803D)**
4. Summons **(MO-804D)**
5. Statement of Property and Debt and Proposed Separation Agreement  
**(MO-CAFC040)**
6. Statement of Income and Expense **(MO-CAFC050)**
7. Filing Information Sheet **(MO-CAFC067)**
8. Notice of Hearing **(MO-CAFC510)**
9. Judgment of Dissolution of Marriage **(MO-CAFC070)**
10. Certificate of Dissolution of Marriage **(MO-CAFC065)**

## **FORM EXPLANATIONS**

All forms included in this package are identified and described below.

1.                   **Petition for Dissolution of Marriage** - The Petition for Divorce is the document in which you are asking the court to grant your divorce along with any other relief requested.
  
2.                   **Respondent's Answer to Petitioner's Petition for Dissolution of Marriage** – This document is used by the Respondent to acknowledge receipt of the Petition and Summons and to enter an appearance. It is further used to request that the Court grant a Decree of Dissolution of Marriage pursuant to the terms of Petitioner's Petition at any time and without further notice to Respondent. This form must be dated and signed AFTER the petition and other documents are filed.
  
3.                   **Waiver of Service and Entry of Appearance** – This document is used by the Respondent to acknowledge receipt of the Petition and Summons and to enter an appearance. It is further used to request that the Court grant a Decree of Dissolution of Marriage pursuant to the terms of Petitioner's Petition at any time and without further notice to Respondent. This form must be dated and signed AFTER the petition and other documents are filed.
  
4.                   **Summons** – This document is used to inform the Respondent that a suit has been filed against him or her and orders the Respondent to appear before the court and file any pleadings necessary within 30 days after service of the summons. If the respondent is to sign the Waiver of Service and Entry of Appearance, you do not need to issue the summons. When you file the Petition and other documents you can inform the clerk that the Respondent is going to sign a waiver and to not issue a summons. The clerk may have a form for you to sign requesting that the summons not be issued.
  
5.                   **Statement of Property and Debt and Proposed Separation Agreement** – This document is used to identify the assets and debts of the parties and to acknowledge whether those assets and debts are joint assets and debts of the parties or individual assets and debts. This form must be completed by both parties and resolve all issues of property, debts and other matters. It must be signed by both parties before a notary public and filed with the Clerk.

6.                   **Statement of Income and Expenses** – This document is used to identify all income from every source and all expenses of the parties. This form is to be completed by the Petitioner.
7.                   **Filing Information Sheet** – This form is used to provide the court with information regarding the parties and any minor children of the marriage.
8.                   **Notice of Hearing** – This form is to set a date to present the decree to the Court and to answer any questions from the Court.
9.                   **Judgment of Dissolution of Marriage** – This document grants the divorce and any other relief requested.
10.                  **Certificate of Dissolution of Marriage** – Most courts require that you file two copies of the Certificate of Dissolution of Marriage.

## INSTRUCTIONS AND STEPS

**STEP 1:** Complete the following forms:

- *Petition for Dissolution of Marriage*
- *Statement of Income and Expenses*
- *Filing Information Sheet*

The Petitioner, or person filing the action, completes the *Petition for Dissolution of Marriage, Statement of Income and Expenses and Filing Information Sheet*.

**STEP 2:** The above listed documents are then filed with the Clerk of the Circuit court in your County. A filing fee must be paid at this time. Contact the Clerk in advance to determine the correct amount to be paid and acceptable methods of payment.

**STEP 3:** The party filing the petition should send to the other spouse the *Waiver of Service and Entry of Appearance* form. If the other spouse completes the *Waiver of Service and Entry of Appearance* form and returns it, the *Waiver* should then be filed with the clerk and no official *Summons* will be issued to that spouse. If the other spouse does not complete the *Waiver of Service and Entry of Appearance* form, then a *Summons* is issued directing the Respondent to answer the *Petition*. The Clerk will inform you how the *Summons* may be served on the Respondent. After the *Summons* is served to the Respondent, the *Respondent's Answer to Petitioner's Petition for Dissolution of Marriage* is sent to the Respondent. The *Respondent's Answer to Petitioner's Petition for Dissolution of Marriage* is completed by the other spouse and filed.

**STEP 4:** Both parties complete the *Statement of Property and Debt and Proposed Separation Agreement* together and have it signed before a notary public. Then file with the Clerk.

**STEP 5:** After the required waiting period of thirty (30) days from the filing of the *Petition*, contact the clerk for a time to present the *Judgment* to the Court. Ask the clerk what procedures the Judge uses in your county for this and follow this procedure.

**STEP 6:** If you are required to attend a hearing, go to the hearing and answer any questions the court may have. It is best for both parties to attend the hearing, if required. Have the completed *Judgment* and 3 copies of the *Judgment* at the hearing. If you are not required to actually attend a hearing, go to Step 7.



**STEP 7:** Complete the *Judgment*. After the *Judgment* has been signed and filed, the *Certificate of Dissolution of Marriage* should be completed and filed. A copy of the *Certificate of Dissolution of Marriage* should then be mailed to the Respondent along with a signed copy of the *Judgment*.

**No Divorce may be final until thirty (30) days have elapsed between the date the Petition is filed and the date the Judgment is signed and filed with the Clerk.**

**Notes:** When presenting Pleadings to the Clerk, make sure you have at least 4 copies for the Clerk. The Clerk will return the copies to you that the Court does not need.

If a Certificate of Mailing is on any form, a copy of the form should be mailed to the person indicated.

## CHECKLIST

- ☐ The Petitioner completes the following:
  - *Petition for Dissolution of Marriage*
  - *Statement of Property and Debt and Proposed Separation Agreement*
  - *Statement of Income and Expenses*
- ☐ Filing Fee Paid.
- ☐ *Waiver of Service and Entry of Appearance* completed and filed with the clerk. If not completed, *Summons served on Respondent and Respondent's Answer to Petitioner's Petition for Dissolution of Marriage* form completed and filed with the clerk.
- ☐ Attend hearing if required.
- ☐ *Judgment* presented to Court after required waiting period has elapsed.
- ☐ *Certificate of Dissolution of Marriage* completed.

## NOTE ABOUT COMPLETING THE FORMS

The forms in this packet contain “form fields” created using Microsoft Word. “Form fields” facilitate completion of the forms using your computer. They do not limit your ability to print the form “in blank” and complete with a typewriter or by hand.

If you do not see the gray shaded form fields, go the View menu, click on Toolbars, and then select Forms. This will open the forms toolbar. Look for the button on the forms toolbar that resembles a shaded letter “a”. Click in this button and the form fields will be visible.

To complete the forms click on the gray shaded areas and type. You may also change other words in the document if the document is not locked. The separation agreement is a good example of a document that is not locked and allows you to make modifications outside the gray shaded areas.

Some forms may be locked which means that the content of the forms cannot be changed while the form is locked. You can only fill in the information in the fields. If you need to make any changes in the body of the form, it is necessary for you “unlock” or “unprotect” the form. **IF YOU INTEND TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE CONTENT, DO SO BEFORE YOU BEGIN TO FILL IN THE FIELDS. IF YOU UNLOCK THE DOCUMENT AFTER YOU HAVE BEGUN TO COMPLETE THE FIELDS, WHEN YOU RELOCK, ALL INFORMATION YOU ENTERED WILL BE LOST.** To unlock, click on “Tools” in the Menu bar and then selecting “unprotect document”. You may then be prompted to enter a password. If so, the password is “uslf”. That is uslf **in lower case letters without the quotation marks**. After you make the changes relock the document before you begin to complete the fields. After any required changes re-lock the document, then click on the first form field and enter the required information. You will be able to navigate through the document from form field to form field using your tab key. Tab to a form field and insert your data. If you experience problems, please let us know.

## **LAW SUMMARY**

You may access the law summary for your State by using the link below:

<http://secure.uslegalforms.com/lawsummary/MO/MO-004-D.htm>

## **DISCLAIMER**

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THESE FORMS WERE PREPARED FOR STATEWIDE USE. HOWEVER, SOME COUNTIES OR JUDGES MAY REQUIRE CERTAIN MODIFICATIONS TO THE FORMS FOR USE IN YOUR PARTICULAR COUNTY AND MAY REQUIRE SPECIAL FORMS NOT INCLUDED. CHANGES REQUIRED BY PARTICULAR JUDGES ARE NOT UNCOMMON EVEN IF THE FORMS HAD BEEN PREPARED BY YOUR ATTORNEY. REGARDLESS, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO USE THESE FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS, WITH ANY REQUIRED MODIFICATIONS, TO MAKE IT THROUGH THE PROCESS. IF YOU NEED TO MAKE CHANGES, OR IF SPECIAL FORMS ARE REQUIRED IN YOUR COUNTY, YOU CAN MAKE THE CHANGES AND REFILE, OR OBTAIN THE SPECIAL FORMS EITHER FROM THE CLERK OR A CLOSED DIVORCE FILE WHICH YOU CAN USE AS AN EXAMPLE.