

# HOW TO FILE YOUR PARENTING PLAN

## What Costs will I need to pay to file my Parenting Plan?

There is generally no fee for filing your Parenting Plan with the Circuit Clerk, but there may be a filing fee if you file the Parenting Plan along with a petition or response. If you cannot afford this fee, you may apply for a fee waiver with the court. For more information about getting a fee waiver, visit [www.illinoislegalaid.org/feewaiver](http://www.illinoislegalaid.org/feewaiver).

## What do I do after I fill out the forms?

### Step 1 – Review and Sign the Parenting Plan

- Look over your Parenting Plan to make sure all the information is correct. If you need to make changes and can no longer get back to the questions, you can make changes by hand.
- If all the information is correct, sign and date the Parenting Plan on the last page.

### Step 2 – File the forms with the court.

- The Parenting Plan is usually filed after filing a petition, response, motion or other court pleading, but you can file it at the same time as your other pleading.
- If you are the petitioner, you will usually file your Parenting Plan along with a divorce case of a Petition for Allocation of Parental Responsibilities. (Search “Getting Allocation of Parental Responsibilities” on [www.illinoislegalaid.org](http://www.illinoislegalaid.org) for more info.)
- If you are the respondent, you will usually file the Parenting Plan along with your response.
- If you are the petitioner, the Parenting Plan MUST BE FILED WITHIN 120 DAYS of filing your petition or divorce case; if you are the respondent, it must be filed within 120 days of when you were served.
- File the Parenting Plan at the courthouse where you have filed (or will file) the case that the Parenting Plan will be a part of
- To help you find a courthouse, visit: [www.illinoiscourts.gov/circuitcourt/circuitmap/map1.asp](http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/circuitcourt/circuitmap/map1.asp)

### Step 2 – File the forms with the court. (continued)

- Make 3 extra copies of the Parenting Plan and bring them to the Circuit Clerk at the courthouse with the originals.
- The Circuit Clerk will give you a hearing date and time. Make sure you do not miss the hearing.
- The Circuit Clerk will stamp and keep the original forms. Have the Circuit Clerk also stamp the extra copies of your forms.
- If applicable, pay the filing fee or ask the court for a fee waiver.

*Note: You may be able to file online. Check your local Circuit Clerk’s website at:*  
<http://www.ilcourtclerks.org/illinois-court-clerks/>

### Step 3 – Go to your court hearing.

- Get to the court 45 minutes before your hearing time.
- Bring these items to your court hearing:
  - Photo ID.;
  - Stamped Copies of your Parenting Plan and other case documents; and
  - Any other papers related to your case.
- Confirm the court room number and to that room.
- Check in quietly with the judge’s clerk, court assistant, or court bailiff. Wait for your name and case number to be called.
- You may be placed under oath, answer the judge’s questions truthfully.
- The Judge will consider the Parenting Plan, in deciding allocation of parental responsibilities.
- If the judge approves your Parenting Plan, he or she will fill out and sign the order section on the form and give a copy back to you.

THESE INSTRUCTIONS ARE FOR INFORMATION ONLY, DO NOT FILE THEM WITH THE COURT