

# REPRESENTING YOURSELF TO GET CUSTODY IN CONNECTICUT

## *Introduction*

### What is this booklet?

This booklet is for parents who are living separately and who are representing themselves in a custody case where no custody orders have ever been made before.<sup>1</sup>

This booklet is *not* a substitute for advice from a lawyer regarding your case. It contains only general information for *uncomplicated* cases.

People are generally better off if they have an attorney, but this booklet has been prepared because not everyone can afford an attorney, and the court staff is not permitted to give any legal advice.

### What are reasons you may want to go to court?

If your child is living with you and you are a parent living apart from the other parent of your child, you may want:

- a schedule of when the child will visit with the other parent
- assurance that the child will be returned safely at the end of each visit
- to know who has the right to make decisions about the child
- child support from the other parent

### What will you have at the end of the process if you go to court?

You will have a court order setting out a parenting plan which includes:

- the decision making responsibilities of each parent
- the parenting time of each parent, and
- the financial responsibilities of each parent.

These orders are called custody orders, visitation orders and child support orders.

## SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE STARTING A

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<sup>1</sup> If you are trying to change existing custody or visitation orders, this is not the booklet you need. Please ask for the Legal Services booklet on how to modify custody or visitation orders.

## CUSTODY CASE:

### Be sure you have explored your other options.

A custody case can be hard on everyone. Another option that you could try before starting a custody case is to first meet with a family counselor or mediator to see if an agreement can be reached. Counseling is often available through a church, synagogue or agency. Family Services counselors, who work for the courts, can also mediate custody disputes (services are free).

### Custody orders are not always needed.

Custody orders cannot be made unless the court is certain first of who is the father of the child. In other words, paternity must be found before custody can be decided. A birth certificate naming a man as the father is generally not enough as neither parent signs the birth certificate. If the mother is married when the child is born, then it is presumed that the husband is the father.

If the mother was not married to the other parent at the time the child was born, then there are two ways that the fatherhood may have been established:

1. If mother and father voluntarily signed paternity papers (called an **Acknowledgement of Paternity**). This is often signed at the hospital when the child is born or at the Department of Social Services.
2. If a judge decided a man is the father after a paternity case.

Paternity must also be found before child support orders are made. If a child support order exists, then the identity of the father would have been found by the court.

#### *If you are a parent, you do not need court custody orders:*

- to enroll your child in school
- to get medical care or medical insurance for your child
- to get state or city welfare assistance

to get child support: Call 1-800-228 KIDS for help if you have a problem such as an illness which won't allow you to care for your child for a while (less than a year) and someone is willing to take care of the child during that time, a custody case does not have to be brought. You can go to Probate Court, fill out form PC 504 for Application for Appointment of Temporary Guardian and file it with the Probate Court.

Until a court orders otherwise, once paternity is established, parents are joint guardians of their child and have equal rights, powers and duties.

## MORE THINGS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE STARTING A

## CUSTODY CASE:

### **There are drawbacks to starting a custody case.**

#### *If the other parent fights for custody:*

- the case may drag on for a long period, sometimes a year.
- you may need to go to court several times
- you may need to have several appointments with the Family Services Unit
- Family Services may look into many aspects of your personal life that you may prefer keeping private such as past mental problems, criminal record, substance abuse, character of persons with whom you are living such as a new boy or girl friend.
- You will need to cooperate with Family Services, the child's attorney, and perhaps other evaluators, or you will look bad.
- If the other parent is almost totally uninvolved with the child, s/he may become involved just because a case was started.
- Court orders are not always obeyed as they should be and then the burden falls on you to go back to court and seek contempt.
- The court may make orders that you don't agree with.
- Court orders cannot force the other parent to visit the child.
- The other parent may resent an attempt to establish child support orders against him/her. Some resort to domestic violence. Others try for custody of the child to avoid paying child support.
- The other parent may obtain an attorney and you may still have to represent yourself.

#### Ask yourself:

- Will the other parent be cooperative?
- Will s/he fight for custody?
- Is s/he likely to get an attorney?
- If s/he has an attorney, will I be able to get one?

*As you can see, this is not an easy decision to make. You have to consider all the pros and cons and decide whether or not it is worth starting a case.*

## SOME COMMON QUESTIONS ANSWERED

### *What are the different kinds of custody?*

#### ***Joint custody***

*Joint custody* or *shared custody* means that both parents make the major decisions in a child's life, such as the child's education, religious upbringing and major medical care. Minor day-to-day decisions such as bedtime or what the child will wear would be up to the parent who is with the child at the time.

Joint custody does not mean that a child must live half of the time with one parent and the other half with the other parent. It does mean that physical custody shall be shared in such a way as to assure the child of continuing contact with each parent. The court will usually say with which parent the child will be primarily residing. Joint custody works best if both parents can set aside their differences and discuss what is best for their child.

#### ***Sole custody***

If a parent has *sole custody*, that parent has final decision-making ability concerning the child's upbringing although that parent may choose to consult with the other parent. The child also lives with the parent who has sole custody, who is called the "custodial parent." Generally the court will want to assure the child of continuing contact with the noncustodial parent. It is possible for the noncustodial parent to see the child as often as a parent who has joint custody. In addition, the noncustodial parent has a right to get copies of the school and health records of the child.

### *What are the different kinds of visitation?*

No matter whether joint custody or sole custody is awarded, there are many visitation possibilities. The amount and type of visitation may also depend on the ages of the children and how far the parents live from each other. Here are the different types of visitation a court may order:

#### ***Reasonable Visitation***

Reasonable visitation means you and the other parent can arrange the parenting time with your child yourselves. Reasonable visitation works well when the parents and the child do not need a fixed schedule and both parents are flexible and agreeable.

#### ***Fixed Schedule***

Fixed Schedule visitation means setting definite hours during the week for the child to spend time with the noncustodial parent. Fixed schedules can include sleepovers, weekends, weekday evenings, sharing of holidays, school vacations and summers.

## ***Supervised Visitation***

Supervised visitation means that some other adult must be present when the child is visiting with the noncustodial parent. The judge may order supervised visitation if the safety of the child is an issue.

## ***No Contact Order***

A no contact order means that the noncustodial parent may not see the child because the judge has decided contact with the parent is not in the child's best interests.

## ***What standard does the court use in deciding custody and visitation?***

It decides based on the "best interests of the child" and in so doing may consider the following factors:

1. the temperament and development of the child;
2. the capacity and disposition of the parents to understand and meet the needs of the child;
3. information obtained from the child, including the child's preference;
4. the wishes of the child's parents as to custody;
5. the past and present interaction and relationship of the child with each parent, the child's siblings and any other person who may significantly affect the best interests of the child;
6. the willingness and ability of each parent to facilitate and encourage the relationship between the child and the other parent is appropriate;
7. efforts by the parents to involve the child in the parents' dispute;
8. the ability of each parent to be actively involved in the life of the child;
9. the child's adjustment to his home, school and community;
10. the length of time that the child has lived in a stable satisfactory environment and the desirability of maintaining continuity, providing the court shall consider favorably a parent who voluntarily leaves the child's family home during a case in order to alleviate stress in the household;
11. the stability of the child's existing or proposed residences, or both;
12. the mental and physical health of all individuals involved, except that a disability of a proposed custodial person shall not be determinative of custody;
13. the child's cultural background;
14. the effect on the child of the actions of an abuser, if any domestic violence has occurred;
15. whether the child or a sibling has been abused or neglected, as defined in CGS Section 46b-120; and
16. whether the party has completed the parenting education program.

### ***Is a child's preference considered?***

The wishes of a child can be considered by a judge in deciding on a parenting plan if the child is mature enough. The closer a child is to being a teenager, the more likely a judge is to consider the child's preference. Most judges do not want a child to testify in court because of the possible damage to the parent/child relationship.

### ***What is an attorney for the minor child and a guardian ad litem?***

An attorney for the minor child represents what the child or children in a case want. If the children are considered too young or immature to know what is best for them, a Guardian ad litem (GAL) may be appointed to represent their best interest. Either parent can ask that an attorney or GAL be appointed (See Sample 12) and a court, on its own, will do so if custody is seriously contested. The attorney or GAL will be paid according to the parents' ability to pay unless s/he agrees to serve without a fee.



### ***Who is the plaintiff?***

The person who starts the custody case is called the "plaintiff" or the "applicant" because that is the person who is filing the complaint.

### ***Who is the defendant?***

The other parent is called the "defendant" or the "respondent" because she/he defends or responds to the case that is being brought.

### ***Who are the parties?***

The plaintiff and the defendant are the *parties* in the case.

### ***What is a pro se party?***

A "pro se" is a plaintiff or defendant who is representing him/herself.

### ***What is Family Services?***

The Family Services office consists of trained counselors who assist the court and the family by trying to settle disagreements. For example, the Family Services counselors meet with the parties for mediation and help them identify the rights and responsibilities of each parent and decide on the parenting plan which best meets their needs and the needs of their children. If the parties cannot reach an agreement, the case may be referred to Family Services for a Screening to help decide what is appropriate: 1) mediation 2) conflict resolution conference 3) issue focused evaluation, or 4) full custody/visitation evaluation. An example of #3 is whether the child should attend a private or public school. Number 4 may involve home visits, interviewing parents, children, teachers, doctors and others who are familiar with the situation.

### ***What if there is domestic violence in my case?***

If you are being physically abused or threatened with physical abuse, you should contact the police and the domestic violence program nearest you. (*See Appendix III*). Domestic violence program services include counselling, 24 hour hotlines, information, support groups, advocacy, referrals and emergency shelter. You can also get a restraining order. The clerk's office will help you fill out an "Application for Relief from Abuse." Often the domestic violence program will have information on preparation of the application and may come with you to the hearing. Please ask for the Legal Services booklet, "How to Get a Restraining Order."

If you are a victim of domestic violence and afraid of your child's father, it will be more difficult for you to represent yourself in a custody case. Please call 1-800-453-3320 to see if you qualify for representation by legal services.

### ***What is the Parenting Education Program? (See Sample 13)***

You must participate in a six hour court-approved parenting education program if you are a parent in a custody case. You must do this within sixty days of the return date on your Summons. The goal of the class is to explain how separation of parents affects children and how parents can help children adjust to changes in their family life. If you cannot afford the \$125 cost, you may ask the judge to waive the fee. The application form and pamphlet describing the program can be obtained at the court clerk's office or in the Family Services Office.

### ***How is paternity decided?***

Sometimes you may be unsure about the identity of a child's father. To prove that a man is or is not the father of a child, the best and clearest proofs are genetic DNA tests. If DNA tests are needed, the mother, possible father and the child all need to be tested. It takes from six to eight weeks to get back the test results. To get DNA paternity testing ordered by the court, file Motion for Orders Before Judgment (*See Sample 12*). The court may also appoint an attorney or a GAL for the child to protect the child's interest.

If you cannot afford to pay for the DNA testing, you will need to file another Application for Waiver of Fees (*See Sample 5*), and in the 4th space from the top check "Other" and specify "cost of DNA testing." If the alleged father gets the state to pay for the testing and the tests later reveal that he is in fact the father of the child, then the father will have to reimburse the state for the cost of the tests.

You cannot get a custody order unless the court is satisfied that the parties before the court are indeed the parents of the child. If a child is born to parents who are not married to each other, the court may insist that an Acknowledgment of Paternity (rather than just a child's birth certificate) be filed, before it will proceed with deciding what the parenting plan of custody and visitation should be. Acknowledgments of Paternity are often signed at the hospital when a child is born or may have been signed later if a Connecticut court entered child support order (*See Sample 23*).

### ***How is child support determined?***

Connecticut has child support guidelines for parents whose combined net income is \$2,500 weekly or less. The Guidelines include charts that set forth the amount of child support to be paid. This depends on the number of children and the combined net income of both parents. The Guidelines also list reasons the judge or family support magistrate can use for not following the guidelines. These are called "deviation criteria." The Guidelines chart must be followed unless you can convince the judge that you qualify for the deviation criteria. In addition, the Guidelines provide for a Child Care Contribution so that the other parent may have to help pay for child care costs if the costs are reasonable and necessary to allow you to maintain employment. The court will also want to assure that the children are protected by medical insurance either through a parent's employment or, if that is not available, through the HUSKY plan. You can get a copy of the Guidelines from the clerk's office or the Family Services office. Before your court hearing, you will need to complete a Child Support Guidelines Worksheet (*See Sample 17*). A Family Services counselor can help you fill this out.

### ***What are automatic orders? (See Sample 2).***

These court orders listed in Sample 2 take effect at the beginning of a custody case. They protect you, the other parent and your children from major changes in your daily life. They apply to the plaintiff as soon as the plaintiff signs the complaint and to the defendant as soon as s/he is served. They continue throughout the case unless they are ended or changed by further order of the court.

***Please be aware that an automatic order does not apply if there is a prior contradictory court order.*** So if before the divorce papers are served, a restraining order has been obtained ordering one of the parties to stay away from the family residence and the minor children, then the automatic order concerning assisting the children to have contact with the other parent and about no denial of entry to the family residence would not go into effect.

Failure to obey the automatic orders is punishable by contempt of court. If you object or want to modify any of these orders, you can ask for a hearing before a judge. (*See Sample 7*).

### ***Who has the power to make custody or visitation orders in your case?***

Not every court can make custody or visitation orders. Only courts in the child's home state or the state with the closest connection to the child can make original custody and visitation orders. This usually means one of two things for you:

- 1) The child has to have lived in Connecticut at least six months right before the custody case is started for the Connecticut courts to be able to make such orders. If you have just come to Connecticut with your children from another state and you are here less than six months, Connecticut usually cannot make custody or visitation orders. There is an exception if there is an emergency because the ***child, sibling or parent*** has been subjected to or threatened with mistreatment or neglect.

-or-

- 2) If the child has lived in Connecticut for at least six months and is then taken by the other parent to another state, you as the left-behind-parent usually have six months to start a custody case in Connecticut.

## STARTING THE CUSTODY CASE

If no custody order concerning the child exists, **AND** you are living separately from the other parent, **AND** a Connecticut court has the power to make custody orders, **AND** you decide that you still want to start a custody case, **THEN LET'S CONTINUE.**

### SAMPLE FORMS

This booklet refers to various forms that need to be filled out. Sample forms are in the back of the booklet. Except for Sample 7, all sample forms are available from the judicial website ([www.jud.state.ct.us](http://www.jud.state.ct.us)) or at the court clerk's office in the Superior Court of each Judicial District. (Appendix I has a list of the Judicial Districts, their addresses and phone numbers as well as which towns they serve). **PLEASE READ THE ENTIRE BOOKLET BEFORE GOING FORWARD** and then re-read each step as you do it. Please look at each sample form when it is described.

*If you start a custody case, you are the plaintiff. You need to take the following steps:*

## STEP 1: Prepare the Papers (You may type or print in ink)

### ***1. Complete an Application. (See Sample 1)***

An Application for Custody/Visitation tells the court and the other parent what you want. Check the custody box. There is no docket number yet, so leave that space blank.

On the first blank line where it says "Judicial District Of", you must choose the Connecticut judicial district where either you live or the other parent lives. See list of judicial districts in Appendix I. After "AT (Town)", put the town where the court is located. Example: Judicial District of Fairfield at Bridgeport. If you are confused about the name of the judicial district, you can leave this space blank and ask the Clerk when you get to Step 2.

**2. Attach a copy of the Notice of Automatic Court Orders (See Sample 2) to the end of your complaint.**

You must fill in the "Case Management Date" at No. 4 on Sample 2. The case management date is set by the court and is about 90 days after your Return Date. Get the date from the court clerk's office.

**3. Prepare an Order to Attend Hearing (See Sample 3).**

You must fill in the first four lines. There is no docket number yet, so leave that blank. The court clerk will fill in the ORDER part.

**4. Prepare an Affidavit Concerning Children (See Sample 4).**

This affidavit tells the court where and with whom the children have been living for the past five years. If you believe that your health, safety or liberty or that of your children will be threatened if you have to disclose your current address, you can fill out a Request for NonDisclosure of Location Information (See Sample 8). You can give a mailing address of a friend or a post office box where you rmail concerning this case can be sent.

**5. If you cannot afford to pay the fees, prepare an Application for Waiver of Fees (See Sample 7).**

You will have to pay the following fees unless they are waived: entry fee (\$225), marshal's fees (\$35 to \$50) and the parenting education fee (\$125). If you cannot afford to pay these fees, complete an Application for Waiver of Fees form (See Sample 5). The form asks for information about your income and expenses. A judge must approve the waiver. If you can afford to pay these fees, you may skip this step.

***If the other parent lives in Connecticut and you know his/her address, you can skip #6 and #7.***

**6. If the other parent lives OUT of Connecticut AND you know the address of the parent's home or work, you must file two forms:**

- Motion for Notice by publication or Mail in Family Cases (See Sample 6a).
- Order of Notice by Publication or Mail in Family Cases (See Sample 6b).

The **Motion for Notice** asks for the court's permission to inform the other parent by **publication**. The **Order of Notice** tells you whether the court gives you this permission.

Sometimes it is possible to have the other parent served (given the papers) when that parent comes to see you or the child. If you can't find out an address or serve the other parent in person, publication in a newspaper will be required.

You need permission from the court to publish a legal notice in a newspaper in the area

of the last known address of the other parent. Get the court's permission by filing the two forms mentioned above (*Motion* and *Order*).

If all you know of the other parent's address is that he/she went to Florida, that is not enough information to be considered a last known complete address. The last known address may well be when he/she lived with you.

Call the newspaper to find out the cost of printing a legal notice. (If you do not know the name of a newspaper, a librarian at a public library should be able to help you.) If you cannot afford to pay this amount, apply for a Waiver of Fees (Sample 5) and ask the court to pay the cost of publication.

## **8. Prepare a Motion for Orders Before Judgment (Sample 12).**

### Summary:

To start the custody case, you must:

1. Fill out a *Custody Application*, a *Notice of Automatic Orders*, an *Order to Attend Hearing*, an *Affidavit Concerning Children*, and a *Motion for Orders Before Judgment*.
2. If you can't pay the fees, fill out the Application for Waiver of Fees.
3. If the other parent lives outside Connecticut AND/OR you don't know the other parent's work or home address, fill out a *Motion for Order of Notice by Publication* and *Order of Notice by Publication or Mail*.

## STEP 2: Take the Papers to the Clerk's Office

Take all your completed papers as well as some identification to the clerk's office.

- The court clerk will review your papers.
- Ask the court clerk for help filling in the case management date on the Automatic Orders.
- The court clerk will fill in ORDER part of the Order to Attend Hearing
- The court clerk will sign the Order of Notice, if the other parent lives outside Connecticut.
- The court clerk can witness your sworn signature on an Application for Waiver of Fees which must be given to a judge to review and approve.
- The court clerk can witness your sworn signature on the Affidavit Concerning Children.
- All the papers will be returned to you. Make copies of all the papers for yourself and the other parent.
- Ask the clerk for a list of marshals.

## STEP 3: Give the Papers to the Marshal

A list of marshals, their addresses and phone numbers can be obtained from the clerk's office. Find a marshal in the county where the other parent lives. Speak to the marshal to be sure the marshal is available to serve the other parent. Give the marshal all the papers the clerk's office has reviewed and a description of the person to be served.

A marshal will serve a copy of the papers by either handing them to the defendant or leaving them where the defendant lives. He will fill out the Return of Service part of the Order to Attend Hearing which describes when and how the papers were served. The sheriff will then either return the original papers to you or file them with the court. Find out ahead of time whether you or the sheriff will have to file them with the court.

## STEP 4: If you, your children, or the other parent has ever received public assistance, send a copy of the papers to the Attorney General's Office. (Otherwise, skip to Step 5).

If the welfare assistance was received from the State of Connecticut, send a copy of the papers to:

Attorney General's Office  
55 Elm Street  
Hartford, CT 06106

Then fill out a Certification Form (See Sample 9) that will inform the court that you have mailed the papers. You must provide the town or state with copies of all future papers once they have filed an Appearance (See Sample 10). The court will notify you whenever someone files an Appearance.

## STEP 5: File the Papers at the Clerk's Office

Bring or mail the original papers and the entry fee to the clerk's office for filing at least six days before the return date. If you have a signed fee waiver, bring it now. You will have to pay the entry fee unless it has been waived. The current entry fee is \$225.00. You may bring cash, a money order or a check payable to "Clerk, Superior Court."

### Summary:

After you have prepared the papers, you take them to the Clerk's office. After the Clerk reviews the papers, you give them to a marshal to serve the other parent. After the papers are served, you file them in the clerk's office. If you have received welfare assistance, you mail the papers to give notice to the town and/or state of Connecticut depending on which gave you the assistance. Remember that you are bound by the automatic court orders when you sign the complaint unless

there are prior contradictory orders.

## YOUR CASE HAS NOW OFFICIALLY STARTED!

About two weeks after you file your papers in the clerk's office, you will receive a notice from the court telling you the Docket Number that has been assigned to your case. From now on, use this number on all papers you file with the court.

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*Unless you are the DEFENDANT, skip to the section*

*"The Court Hearing" on the next page.*

## RESPONDING TO A CUSTODYCASE

You are the *defendant* in a custody case if you have been served with custody papers. The papers consist of a Custody/Visitation Application, Notice of Automatic Orders and an Order to Attend Hearing. (See *Samples 1, 2 and 3*). You may also receive an Affidavit Concerning Children and a Motion for Orders before judgement. The Order to Attend Hearing will tell you when you must go to court for the hearing on your case.

This booklet contains only general information for *uncomplicated* situations. You are encouraged to have an attorney whenever possible. If you have decided to represent yourself, however, you should consider the following steps:

### STEP I: Filing an Appearance (*See Sample 10*).

Look at your Order to Attend Hearing to find the time and place for the court hearing on the custody of your child or children. Filing an Appearance form entitles you to receive all court calendars and papers filed regarding your case from then on. File the Appearance either in person with the court clerk or by mail. There are legal consequences to filing an Appearance. This tells the court that you are acting as your own attorney.

About two weeks after you file your Appearance, you will receive a notice from the court telling you the Docket Number that has been assigned to your case. From now on, use this Docket Number on all papers you file with the court.

### STEP II: Filing an Answer and Claims for Relief

(See Sample 11).

You do not have to file an Answer to the Custody/Visitation Application but it is a good idea to do so. Your answer will let the court know whether you agree or disagree with the statements in the Complaint and what you want. You must mail or deliver a copy of the Answer to the plaintiff, or if the plaintiff has an attorney to that attorney, at the same time that you file it with the clerk's office.

## STEP III: Prepare an Affidavit Concerning Children. (See Sample 6).

**Both sides** are required to present this affidavit at the court hearing so the judge can see if you agree about where and with whom the children have lived for the past five years.

## THE COURT HEARING

If you are the plaintiff, you should receive a court Calendar in the mail telling you again when and where your case will be heard. The number above your name on the envelope is the number of your case on the Calendar. Find your case on the Calendar and circle it.

Be sure to read the instructions at the beginning of the Calendar. Some require that you call the courthouse and the opposing party before the hearing date to say that you will be in court for the hearing. This is called marking the case "ready."

Go to the courthouse before the time set for the hearing. It can take ten to twenty minutes to get into the building because everyone must go through a security station with a metal detector. Go to the assigned courtroom and sit down. If you don't know which courtroom to go to, ask the sheriff at the metal detector or any court staff.

Listen carefully to the judge's instructions on how the cases will be heard. It is likely that the judge will ask that you and the other parent go first to Family Services to see if an agreement can be reached. If you do reach an agreement, you should write out your complete agreement so there is no misunderstanding later. (See Sample 18). You must report the agreement to the judge who still has to approve it and make it a court order.

If you do not reach an agreement, return to the courtroom and the judge will hear your case. The judge after hearing short matters, will go back to the beginning of the list and take each case in order. When your case is called, you should say "Ready" and approach the front. If the other parent wants time to get an attorney, the judge will probably continue the case for a couple of weeks and ask you all to return then. The judge may remind both sides to attend the Parenting Education Program.

If both sides are ready to proceed, the judge may want you to be "sworn in" to testify. Answer the judge's questions truthfully and clearly. If you are asking for custody or visitation, information about the ages of the children, where and with whom they have been living and the extent of each parent's involvement with them are likely. Be polite and respectful of the judge and the other parent. The other parent will have the right to ask you questions (cross-examination). After you are finished, the other side will be allowed to present its case. You now have the right

to ask questions. The judge may make a decision “from the bench” right then and there or s/he may want to think it over and you will get a copy of the decision by mail.

If the other parent does not show up, inform the court of that and ask that you be granted what you asked for. If you are asking for child support, the judge will want to know whether the other parent is working and how much he earns. If you don't know that, but do know that he is able to work and has degrees, licenses (mechanic, chef, engineer, etc.) plus prior work experience and past earnings, try to mention those.

***Important Note:*** The court protects defendants who are in the U.S. Military and are unable to come to court because of that. If the defendant has not filed an Appearance or shown up for the hearing, someone who knows that the defendant is not in the military will need to fill out a Military Affidavit (See Sample 16). If you don't know whether or not the other parent is in the military, you will have to write to *each* branch of the military and ask them to notify you if that parent is enlisted. You need to provide them with the full name, birthdate, and/or Social Security number of the other parent. ***Write to each branch promptly as it can take several months for replies.***

**It is possible for your case to be over after one hearing if the other side never appears or if a full agreement is reached.** Otherwise your case may be continued for various reasons such as appointing an attorney for the minor child or to give family services time to do an evaluation. If custody is being seriously contested, you should definitely consider getting an attorney and asking the judge to refer this case to the Family Services Office for mediation, and if mediation is unsuccessful, for a custody evaluation.

## NEXT STEPS (for both Plaintiff & Defendant)

You must attend the parenting education classes within 60 days of the return date.

Obey the automatic orders. They provide that:

- Neither party can permanently remove the minor children from Connecticut without written consent of the other or order of the court.
- Neither party can remove the other party or the children from any health or life insurance coverage and each party shall maintain existing health and life insurance coverage.
- If the parties are living together on the date of service of these orders, neither one may deny the other the use of the current primary residence of the parties.
- If the parties share a child, a party vacating the family residence shall notify the other party in writing within 48 hours of such move of an address where the relocated party can receive communication. This does not mean that you have to reveal your current residence, just an address where you receive mail.
- If the parents of minor children live apart during the divorce, they shall assist their children in continuing to have contact with the other parent which is consistent with the habits of the family, personally and by telephone.
- Each party shall participate in a case management conference with the court on the date given and, if the parties share children, must participate in the parenting education program within 60 days of the return date.

A case management system is in effect in all Connecticut courts. Its purpose is to help parties move their cases through the court system by identifying those cases that have disputed issues and requiring parties to meet and talk over these issues either with each other, a Family Services counselor or other mediators.

On or before your case management date, you and the other party must complete a Case Management Agreement and file it with the court. If you don't do so, you must attend the case management conference. If both parties disagree about custody or visitation issues, you also must attend the case management conference in person; if you fail to attend the case management conference, your case will be dismissed.

If you reach agreement with the other parent, or if the other parent has not filed an Appearance form, you will not need to go to court on your case management date. Your case is called "uncontested". Ask the clerk for a hearing date for your final hearing and fill it in on the case management agreement form.

You may ask the court at any time to enter orders. To do so, you must file a written request called a Motion with the court clerk (See sample 12).

If you decide you no longer want to continue with the case, you may stop the case at any time by filing a Withdrawal. You may get a Withdrawal form at the clerk's office. However, if the other parent has filed his own complaint, the case will continue.

### *How is paternity decided?*

Sometimes you may be unsure about the identity of a child's father. To prove that a man is or is not the father of a child, the best and clearest proofs are genetic DNA tests. If DNA tests are needed, the mother, possible father and the child all need to be tested. It takes from six to eight weeks to get back the test results. To get DNA paternity testing ordered by the court, file a Motion for Temporary Orders (See Sample 12). The court may also appoint an attorney for the child to protect the child's interest.

If you cannot afford to pay for the DNA testing, you will need to file another Application for Waiver of Fees (See Sample 7), and in the 4th space from the top, check "Other" and specify "cost of DNA testing." If the alleged father gets the state to pay for the testing and the tests later reveal that he is in fact the father of the child, then the father will have to reimburse the state for the cost of the tests.

## **THE FINAL HEARING**

If Family Services has been asked to do a custody evaluation, they will make a recommendation as to custody. The parties are then given another chance to come to an agreement by accepting the recommendation. If there is still no agreement, the court will set a date to hold a hearing and make the final decision.

### Documents you need for the final hearing

The parties should come to court for the final hearing with the following documents and copies of them for themselves and the other party:

*Financial Affidavit (See Sample 15)*

This form must be signed before a notary public, attorney or court clerk. The plaintiff and an appearing defendant are each required to file a financial affidavit. Call legal services for a copy of our booklet "Financial Affidavits" if you need help filling this out or ask a Family Services counselor for assistance.

### ***Military Affidavit (See Sample 16)***

The court protects defendants who are in the U.S. military and unable to come to court because of that. This form assures the court that the defendant is not in the military. It must be completed by someone who knows that the defendant is not in the military if the defendant has not filed an appearance and does not show up for the final hearing. It must be signed before a notary public, attorney or court clerk.

### ***Affidavit Concerning Children (See Sample 6)***

This form must be completed by the plaintiff and signed before a notary public, attorney or court clerk. The court clerk can give you this form.

### ***Child Support Guidelines Worksheet (See Sample 17)***

This worksheet must be completed if you are asking for child support. Go to Family Services before the hearing if you need help filling out the worksheet. The court clerk can give you this form.

### ***Agreement of the Parties (See Sample 18)***

If you and the other parent have reached a final agreement, you should write out your agreement as completely and in as much detail as possible. The Family Services Office can help you reach an agreement.

### ***Arrearages (past due amounts):***

At the final hearing, you should ask for payment of money owed to you that has not been paid according to court orders. If you choose not to do this, then you may be unable to collect these arrearages in the future.

## **Other important information about the final hearing**

If the other parent has never filed an appearance, you should still try to notify that parent of the final hearing date. Bring any witnesses you have to court with you. Witnesses can be persons who know both you and your child or know the other parent. They should be able to testify about what they have observed you or the other parent do with the child or problems the other parent has that show that it is in the best interests of the child to be with you. The judge is more likely to give greater weight to the testimony of a professional such as a child's therapist, a family services officer or teacher. If you want to make sure that the witness comes to court, you need to have the witness served with a subpoena. Ask the court clerk for help in issuing a subpoena. A subpoena can be served by anyone over 18 years who has no interest in the outcome of the case. At the time the witness is served, s/he must also be offered 50 cents for being a witness plus

10 cents a mile for travel to the courthouse. Re-read the section, "The Court Hearing" in this booklet.

Arrive at the courthouse a few minutes early and take a seat in the assigned courtroom. When the judge calls your case, stand and say "Ready, your honor." The judge will then manage the hearing and direct the parties what to do. Answer any questions that you are asked by the judge and do not interrupt the judge.

If all is in order, the judge will make custody orders that day and any other orders that are appropriate. Try to write down those orders.

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR OWN CUSTODY CASE

## AFTER THE FINAL HEARING

### Prepare the Judgment File

The plaintiff should complete a Custody Judgment form (See Sample 19 if the defendant appeared or Sample 20 if defendant never appeared) and submit it to the clerk's office for signature by the judge. If you are uncertain of the orders, you can look at the clerk's notes of the hearing in the file. After the Judgment is signed, you can obtain a certified copy of it for your records for about \$15.00.

### Wage Withholding

If you have obtained an immediate wage withholding order which allows the other parent's employer to take support out of wages, complete the Withholding Order for Support form (See Sample 21). Bring it to the clerk's office for signature. Send the signed form to the employer by certified mail, return receipt requested.

OR



Call 1-800-228-KIDS and ask for help collecting and enforcing your financial orders from the Department of Social Services. Their fee is \$25.00 which can be waived if you can't afford it.

### Modifying your court order

You may need to change a court order because of changes in your life, the life of the other parent or the child. You should be aware that orders concerning child support, custody and visitation may be subject to change or modified after the final hearing on application to the court. You usually need a substantial change for a modification. See the list of Legal Services booklets on the next page for help on how to do this.

### Enforcing your court order

Most people are law abiding citizens and follow court orders. Unfortunately, sometimes a court order is ignored. If the other parent is not obeying court orders, you may ask a judge to enforce the court order by filing a written motion for contempt. See the list of Legal Services Booklets

on the next page for help on how to do this.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

- The courthouse library has The Connecticut Practice Book, Volumes 1 and 2 and the Connecticut Practice Series - Volumes 7 and 8: Family Law and Practice with Forms by Rutkin, Efron and Hogan.
- The Connecticut Women's Educational and Legal Fund (CWEALF), 135 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06106, Telephone (860) 524-0601 has a booklet which includes information on serving the other party by publication.
- The Child Support Hotline supplies information concerning child support enforcement or modification. Call 1-800-228-KIDS.

## LEGAL SERVICES BOOKLETS

Legal Services has the following family booklets available, many of them with sample forms and many also available in Spanish.

### Family Law Series

A Guide to Fee Waivers

Financial Affidavits

Custody Disputes

Representing Yourself in a Divorce

Representing Yourself in a Custody Case

How to Defend Yourself in a Paternity Case

How to Get Back Your Maiden Name After a Divorce

How to Get a Contempt Order

How to Modify Child Custody Orders

How to Modify and Enforce Child Visitation Orders

How to Modify Child Support and Alimony Orders

### Family Violence Series

How to Get a Restraining Order

How to Continue a Restraining Order

### Child Support Series

What Happens When Your AFDC Stops

Help with Child Support Enforcement

If You are Behind in Child Support Payments

Help Modifying Support Orders

Establish Paternity and Support for Your Child

## LEGAL ADVICE OR REPRESENTATION

If you want an attorney and don't know one, you may look in the telephone yellow pages under

“Attorneys” or call the Lawyer Referral Service of the Connecticut Bar Association at 1-800-842-0067. If you have a low income, you may qualify for free legal help from one of the legal services programs in Connecticut. To find out if you qualify, call 1-800-453-3320 (English and Spanish), Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. They may be able to match you with a local attorney or legal aid office.

## DISCLAIMER

The court staff may assist you with procedural questions; however, the staff cannot act as your attorney or give you legal advice. You are solely responsible for any actions you take on your own behalf. The clerk’s office is not responsible for any errors or omissions in this booklet. If you feel you need more information or assistance, you should either consult an attorney or read the appropriate sections of the Connecticut General Statutes and the Connecticut Practice Book which can be found in the courthouse libraries located throughout the state.



RETURN DATE/DOCKET NO. \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERIOR COURT  
JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF

\_\_\_\_\_  
PLAINTIFF

vs.

at

\_\_\_\_\_  
DEFENDANT

DATE

MOTION FOR MODIFICATION OF AUTOMATIC ORDERS

I request that the court modify the following automatic orders:

(Please check all that apply).

- no permanent removal of children from Connecticut without written consent of other party.
- parenting education program within 60 days
- maintenance of health insurance
- maintenance of life insurance
- no denial of entry to residence
- notice of address in 24 hours if vacate residence
- assist children to have contact with other parent
- case management conference

I have had a restraining order or protective order against the other party. Yes  No

The other party and I were living separately at the time the papers were served. Yes  No

The child(ren) have been living in a state other than Connecticut since \_\_\_\_\_.

The reason I need a modification is the following: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I request that the exceptions to the automatic orders be ordered immediately and that a hearing with notice to the respondent be scheduled.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

ORDER

The above motion having been heard, is hereby GRANTED/DENIED.

\_\_\_\_\_  
JUDGE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

CERTIFICATION

I certify that a copy of this motion was mailed/delivered TODAY to (specify names and addresses.)

\_\_\_\_\_.

I certify that a copy of this motion was given by me to a sheriff for service.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

DOCKET NO. \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERIOR COURT  
JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF

PLAINTIFF

vs. \_\_\_\_\_

at

DEFENDANT

DATE

ANSWER and CLAIMS FOR RELIEF

In response to EACH paragraph of the Complaint, please CIRCLE whether you AGREE, DISAGREE or DO NOT KNOW.

- |          |          |             |
|----------|----------|-------------|
| 1. Agree | Disagree | Do Not Know |
| 2. Agree | Disagree | Do Not Know |
| 3. Agree | Disagree | Do Not Know |
| 4. Agree | Disagree | Do Not Know |
| 5. Agree | Disagree | Do Not Know |
| 6. Agree | Disagree | Do Not Know |
| 7. Agree | Disagree | Do Not Know |
| 8. Agree | Disagree | Do Not Know |

The defendant claims (CHECK THE BOXES NEXT TO THOSE ITEMS YOU ARE ASKING FOR)

- Custody of the minor child(ren)
- Child Support
- Specific visitation with the minor child(ren)
- Such other relief as the court thinks just and proper.

**DEFENDANT’S CERTIFICATION**

I certify that a copy of the above was mailed/delivered today to (specify names and addresses) NOTE: A copy of this form must be mailed/delivered to the attorney for the plaintiff or, if none, to the plaintiff.

\_\_\_\_\_

Defendant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Defendant’s Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

DOCKET NO. \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERIOR COURT  
JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF

PLAINTIFF

vs.

at

DEFENDANT

DATE

MOTION FOR TEMPORARY ORDERS (PENDENTE LITE)

The [ ] plaintiff [ ] defendant moves that temporary orders be granted concerning: (check all that apply)

- [ ] child custody
- [ ] child support
- [ ] child visitation
- [ ] referral to Family Services
- [ ] appointment of attorney for minor child(ren)
- [ ] DNA testing for paternity of child (name of child): \_\_\_\_\_
- [ ] other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

[ ] I certify that a copy of this motion was mailed/delivered TODAY to (specify names and addresses.)  
\_\_\_\_\_

[ ] I certify that a copy of this motion was given by me to a sheriff for service.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE COURT:

**ORDER**

**The above motion having been heard, it is ordered that:**

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

Judge \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>25</sup> Date Signed \_\_\_\_\_

DOCKET NO. \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERIOR COURT  
JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF

\_\_\_\_\_  
PLAINTIFF

vs.

at

\_\_\_\_\_  
DEFENDANT

DATE

MILITARY SERVICE AFFIDAVIT

State of: \_\_\_\_\_

County of: \_\_\_\_\_

THE UNDERSIGNED, BEING DULY SWORN, SAYS:

1. I am the plaintiff in this case.

2. The defendant is a civilian and is not now and has not for the last thirty days been in the military service of the United States.

3. I know this because the defendant

[ ] resides at \_\_\_\_\_

[ ] works at \_\_\_\_\_

[ ] \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Plaintiff's Signature

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Subscribed and sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 199 .

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public/Commissioner of Superior Court

DOCKET NO. \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERIOR COURT  
JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF

\_\_\_\_\_  
PLAINTIFF

vs.

at

\_\_\_\_\_  
DEFENDANT

DATE

AGREEMENT (attach other pages if necessary)

The plaintiff and defendant agree as follows:

- 1. As to custody of the children
- 2. As to visitation with the children: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Holiday and School Vacation Visits: \_\_\_\_\_

- 3. Who will drop off/pickup for visits: \_\_\_\_\_

- 4. As to current child support: \_\_\_\_\_

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

As to arrears in child support: \_\_\_\_\_

Wage Withholding: [ ] Immediate [ ] Contingent

Payable to [ ] State of Connecticut [ ] Name \_\_\_\_\_

This amount is in accordance with the Child Support and Arrearage Guidelines:

Yes [ ] No [ ] Don't know [ ]

If the orders deviate from the Guidelines, state the reasons for the deviation. \_\_\_\_\_

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

- 5. As to health insurance and unreimbursed medical costs: \_\_\_\_\_

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

We hereby certify that the above conforms with the agreement of the parties.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Plaintiff Date 27 Defendant Date

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
SUPERIOR COURT  
FAMILY DIVISION

**CUSTODY JUDGMENT**

**DOCKET NO.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judicial District

\_\_\_\_\_  
At (address of Court)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Case

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Judge

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Plaintiff

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address of Plaintiff

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Defendant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address of Defendant

**JUDGMENT**

This action by writ, and complaint, claiming custody and other relief, as on file, came to this court on (return date) \_\_\_\_\_, and then to later dates when the defendant appeared and when the [ ] plaintiff [ ] defendant appeared to prosecute the claim for custody.

The Court, having heard the evidence finds the following:

1. The plaintiff and the defendant are the parents of the following minor children with the following birthdates:
2. The plaintiff and the defendant are living separate and apart.
3. This Court has jurisdiction under the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Act to make custody and visitation orders.

WHEREUPON IT IS ADJUDGED that

1. [ ] the parties shall have joint custody of the minor child(ren) and their primary residence shall be with the [ ] mother [ ] father.  
[ ] mother [ ] father shall have sole custody of the minor child(ren)
2. [ ] mother [ ] father shall have the following visitation with the minor child(ren).
3. [ ] mother [ ] father shall pay \$\_\_\_\_\_ per week as child support for the minor child(ren) to [ ] the other parent [ ] the State of Connecticut with  
[ ] an immediate wage execution [ ] a contingent wage execution.

\_\_\_\_\_  
BY THE COURT (Judge/Clerk)

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE OF JUDGMENT

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
SUPERIOR COURT  
FAMILY DIVISION

**CUSTODY JUDGMENT - DEFAULT**

**DOCKET NO.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judicial District

\_\_\_\_\_  
At (address of Court)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Case

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Judge

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Plaintiff

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address of Plaintiff

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Defendant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address of Defendant

**JUDGMENT**

This action by writ, and complaint, claiming custody and other relief, as on file, came to this court on (return date) \_\_\_\_\_, and then to the present time when the plaintiff appeared to prosecute the claim for custody and the defendant made default of appearance.

The Court finds (1) that said writ and complaint was duly served on the defendant, and (2) that the defendant is not now nor within thirty days prior hereto has been in the military or naval service of the United States, an affidavit re military service having been filed.

The Court, having heard the evidence finds the following:

- 1. The plaintiff and the defendant are the parents of the following minor children with the following birthdates: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. The plaintiff and the defendant are living separate and apart.
- 3. This court has jurisdiction under the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Act to make custody and visitation orders.

WHEREUPON IT IS ADJUDGED that

- 1.  the parties shall have joint custody of the minor child(ren) and their primary residence shall be with the  mother  father.  
 mother  father shall have sole custody of the minor child(ren).
- 2.  mother  father shall have the following visitation with the minor child(ren)\_\_\_\_\_

- 3.  mother  father shall pay \$\_\_\_\_\_ per week as child support for the minor child(ren) to  the other parent  the State of Connecticut with  an immediate wage execution  a contingent wage execution.

Said support orders are to be effective on notice to the party against whom they are entered and filing return thereof with the Clerk.

\_\_\_\_\_  
BY THE COURT (Judge/Clerk)

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE OF JUDGMENT

# APPENDIX I

## JUDICIAL DISTRICTS

(If either the plaintiff or the defendant resides in certain towns starred below, then the plaintiff has a choice of judicial districts in which to bring the case.)

**Ansonia-Milford**, 14 West River Street, Milford, CT 06460; Tel 877-4923

includes Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Derby, Milford\*, Orange, Oxford, Seymour, Shelton, and West Haven\*. \*Starred towns can also use New Haven.

**Danbury**, 146 White Street, Danbury, CT 06810; Tel 797-4400

includes Bethel, Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield and Sherman.

**Fairfield**, 1061 Main Street, Bridgeport, CT 06601; Tel 579-6527

**Hartford-New Britain**, There are three judicial district court locations from which to choose:

95 Washington Street, Hartford, CT 06106; Tel 566-3170

177 Columbus Boulevard, New Britain, CT 06051; Tel 827-7133

131 North Main Street, Bristol, CT 06010; Tel 582-8111

includes Avon, Berlin, Bloomfield, Bristol, Burlington, Canton, East Granby, East Hartford, East Windsor\*, Enfield\*, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby, Hartford, Manchester\*, Marlborough, New Britain, Newington, Plainville, Plymouth, Rocky Hill, Simsbury, Southington, South Windsor\*, Suffield, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windsor, and Windsor Locks. Starred towns can also go to Tolland, while Plymouth can use Waterbury too.

**Litchfield**, 15 West Street, Litchfield, CT 06759; Tel 567-0885

includes Barkhamsted, Bethlehem, Bridgewater, Canaan, Colebrook, Cornwall, Goshen, Hartland, Harwinton, Kent, Litchfield, Morris, New Hartford, New Milford, Norfolk, North Canaan, Roxbury, Salisbury, Sharon, Thomaston, Torrington, Warren, Washington, and Winchester.

**Meriden**, 54 West Main Street, Meriden, CT 06450, Tel 238-6666

**Middlesex**, 1 Court Street, Middletown, CT 06457-3374; Tel 343-6400

includes Chester, Clinton, Cromwell, Deep River, Durham, East Haddam, East Hampton, Essex, Haddam, Killingworth, Middlefield, Middletown, Old Saybrook, Portland, and Westbrook. Cromwell can also use Hartford-New Britain.

## Appendix I

### *Judicial Districts (continued)*

***New Haven***, 235 Church Street, New Haven, CT 06510; Tel 789-7908

includes Bethany\*, Branford, Cheshire, East Haven, Guilford, Hamden, Madison, Meriden, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Wallingford, and Woodbridge\*. Starred towns can also use Ansonia-Milford.

***New London***, 70 Huntington Street, New London, CT 06320; Tel 443-5363

includes Bozrah, Colchester, East Lyme, Franklin, Griswold, Groton, Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, Lyme, Montville, New London, North Stonington, Norwich, Old Lyme, Preston, Salem, Sprague, Stonington, Voluntown, and Waterford.

***Stamford-Norwalk***, 123 Hoyt Street, Stamford, CT 06905; Tel 965-5307

includes Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, Norwalk, Stamford, Weston, Westport, and Wilton. These towns can also use Fairfield.

***Tolland***, 69 Brooklyn Street, Rockville, CT 06066; Tel 875-6294

includes Andover, Bolton, Columbia, Coventry, Ellington, Hebron, Mansfield, Somers, Stafford, Tolland, Union, Vernon, and Willington.

***Waterbury***, 300 Grand Street, Waterbury, CT 06721; Tel 596-4023

includes Middlebury, Naugatuck, Prospect, Southbury, Waterbury, Watertown\*, Wolcott, and Woodbury\*. Starred towns can also use Litchfield and Southbury can also use Ansonia-Milford.

***Windham***, 155 Church Street, Putnam CT 06260; Tel 928-7749

includes Ashford, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Chaplin, Eastford, Hampton, Killingly, Plainfield, Pomfret, Putnam, Scotland, Sterling, Thompson, Willimantic, Windham, and Woodstock.

## APPENDIX II

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ORGANIZATIONS

Statewide Toll Free Hotline: 888-774-2900

#### **Ansonia**

The Umbrella Project  
435 East Main St.  
Ansonia, CT 06401  
Office: 203-736-2601  
Hotline: 203-736-9944

#### **Dayville**

Domestic Violence Program  
United Services, Inc  
1007 North Main Street  
Dayville, CT 06241  
Hotline: 860-774-8648  
Office: 860-774-2020  
[www.unitedservicesct.org/contact-frames.htm](http://www.unitedservicesct.org/contact-frames.htm)

#### **Bridgeport**

The Center for Women and Families of  
Eastern Fairfield County  
753 Fairfield Ave.  
Bridgeport, CT 06604  
Hotline: 203-384-9559  
[www.cwfefc.org/home.html](http://www.cwfefc.org/home.html)

#### **Enfield**

Network Against Domestic Abuse  
of North Central Connecticut  
139 Hazard Avenue, Building 3-9  
Enfield, CT 06082-4583  
Office: 860-763-7430  
Hotline: 860-763-4542

#### **Columbia**

Domestic Violence Program  
United Services, Inc.  
233 Route 6  
Columbia, CT 06237  
Office: 860-228-4480  
Hotline: 860-774-8648 or 860-456-9476  
[www.unitedservicesct.org/contact-frames.htm](http://www.unitedservicesct.org/contact-frames.htm)

#### **Greenwich**

Domestic Abuse Services  
Greenwich YWCA  
259 E. Putnam Ave.  
Greenwich, CT 06830  
Office: 203-869-6501  
Hotline: 203-622-0003  
[Greenwich@ywconnect.org](mailto:Greenwich@ywconnect.org)  
[www.ywcagreenwich.org/domesticabuse.htm](http://www.ywcagreenwich.org/domesticabuse.htm)

#### **Danbury**

Women's Center of Greater Danbury  
2 West Street  
Danbury, CT 06810  
Office: 203-731-5200  
Hotline: 203-731-5206  
Email: [womenscntr@snet.net](mailto:womenscntr@snet.net)  
Website: [www.WomensCenterofGreaterDanbury.org](http://www.WomensCenterofGreaterDanbury.org)

#### **Hartford**

Interval House  
P.O. Box 340207

(Domestic Violence Organizations Continued)

Hartford, CT 06134-0207  
Office: 860-246-9149  
Hotline: 860-527-0550  
info@intervalhousect.org  
www.intervalhousect.org

**Meriden**

Meriden-Wallingford Chrysalis, Inc.  
Five Colony Street, Suite 302  
Meriden, CT 06451  
Hotline: 203-237-1501  
Office: 203-238-3713

**Middletown**

New Horizons  
P.O. Box 1036  
Middletown, CT 06457-1036  
Office: 860-344-9599  
Hotline: 888-774-2900 or 860-347-3044

**New Britain**

Prudence Crandall Center for Women  
P.O. Box 895  
New Britain, CT 06050  
Office: 860-225-5187  
Hotlines: 860-225-6357  
888-774-2900  
helppcc@cttel.net  
www.prudencecrandall.org

**New Haven**

Domestic Violence Services of  
Greater New Haven, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1329  
New Haven, CT 06505  
Office: 203-865-1957  
Hotline: 203-789-8104  
endabuse@dvsgnh.org

www.dvsgnh.org

**New London**

Women's Center of Southeastern Connecticut  
16 Jay St.  
New London, CT 06320  
Office: 860-447-0366  
Hotline: 888-774-2900 or 860-701-6000  
www.womenscenterofsect.org

**Norwalk**

Domestic Violence Crisis Center  
5 Eversley Avenue, Suite 303  
Norwalk, CT 06851  
Hotline: 888-774-2900  
www.dvccct.org

**Norwich**

Women's Center of Southeastern Connecticut,  
Inc.  
225 Main Street  
Norwich, CT 06360  
Office: 860-886-4376  
Hotline: 860-886-4370

**Sharon**

Women's Support Services  
P.O. Box 341  
Sharon, CT 06069-0341  
Office: 860-364-1080  
Hotline: 860-364-1900  
E-mail: wssdv@snet.net

**Southbury**

Safe Haven  
88 main St. South Suite 203B  
Southbury, CT 06488  
Office: 203-262-8700  
Hotline: 203-575-0036

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## APPENDIX III

### LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDERS

#### STATEWIDE LEGAL SERVICES OF CONNECTICUT, INC.

*This office oes intake for entire state*

(860) 344-0380 - Central Connecticut, Middletown area

(800) 453-3320 - All other regions

#### Other Legal Services Programs

Hartford, Hartford County: (serving Hartford County and City of Hartford)

Greater Hartford Legal Aid

999 Asylum Avenue, 3rd Floor - Hartford, CT 06106

TEL (860) 541-5000 FAX (860) 541-5050

Greater New Haven Area:

New Haven Legal Assistance Association, Inc.

State Street - New Haven, CT 06510

TEL (203) 946-4811 TDD (203) 946-4811 FAX (203) 498-9271

#### Throughout Connecticut:

- Connecticut Legal Services Administrative Office\  
62 Washington Street  
Middletown, CT 06457  
TEL (860) 344-0447  
FAX (860) 346-2938

CLS Bridgeport  
211 State Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06604  
TEL (203) 336-3851  
FAX (203) 333-4976

- CLS New Britain  
587 Main Street  
New Britain, CT 06051  
TEL (860) 225-8678  
FAX (860) 225-6105

- CLS New London  
153 Williams Street  
New London, CT 06320  
TEL (860) 447-0323  
FAX (860) 443-0109

- CLS Stamford  
20 Summer Street  
Stamford, CT 06901  
TEL (203) 348-9216  
FAX (203) 348-2589

- CLS Waterbury  
85 Central Avenue  
Waterbury, CT 06702  
TEL (203) 756-8074  
FAX (203) 754-0504

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- CLS Willimantic

872 Main Street,  
P.O. Box 258  
Willimantic, CT 06226  
TEL (860) 456-1761  
FAX (860) 456-7420