

TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
FAMILY LAW DIVISION

Instructions and Overview
For Your
SAFETY FOCUSED PARENTING PLAN*

(These instructions are intended to be used while completing the Safety Focused Parenting Plan)

**Legal matters can be very complex. If you have questions or concerns about the use of these forms, instructions, or your legal rights, it is strongly recommended that you talk to an attorney. All instructions and forms distributed by the Twelfth Judicial Circuit are provided merely to serve as a guide. The Twelfth Judicial Circuit does not guarantee that either the instructions or the forms will achieve the result desired by the parties or ensure that an individual judge will follow the procedures exactly or accept each and every form drafted. Any person using these forms and/or instructions does so at their own risk, and the Twelfth Judicial Circuit shall not be responsible for any losses incurred by any person in reliance on the instructions and/or forms.*

For best results, complete the assessment in the 12th Judicial Circuit's "Instructions and Assessments for your Parenting Plan" prior to using the Safety Focused Parenting Plan.

Step One: Getting Started

1. Before you fill in any part of the Safety Focused Parenting Plan, you should make a copy of the blank form. Save this copy for when you are ready to fill out a final version to file with the Court.
2. At the top of the first page fill in the county where the plan is being filed or where the original action took place. This is the county of original jurisdiction, Sarasota, Manatee, or DeSoto.
3. On the top left side of the page, fill in the names of the Petitioner and the Respondent on the lines provided. If you have an existing court case, use the labels and names as they appear on the original documents filed with the court. If you do not have an existing court case, then it does not matter who is the petitioner or respondent until the case is filed.
4. On the top right side of the page, enter your case number and division, if you have one. If the Parenting Plan you are submitting is agreed upon by both parents, write "Both" otherwise, fill in the name of the parent who is proposing the Parenting Plan where it says "Parenting Plan of:".

Step Two: Identification of the Parties

1. List the names of the Father and the Mother; as well as, each of their contact information, unless the contact information is deemed confidential by Court Order.
2. List the minor children involved in this parenting plan, including their date of birth, current address, and future address, if known, or if the address is unknown then a location (ex. Albuquerque, New Mexico).
3. List any minor children that are not addressed by this plan. Including their date of birth, who they live with (ex. Aunt, Grandfather, etc.) and their address.

Step Three: Choose your Options

A. Parental Responsibility and Time Sharing Sections

Parental Responsibility: The Safety Focused Parenting Plan has two options for parental responsibility; shared parental responsibility or sole parental responsibility. **If the Court orders shared parental responsibility, both parents maintain shared decision-making for all major decisions that affect the child(ren). Sole parental responsibility is a court ordered relationship in which one parent makes all of the decisions regarding the minor child(ren).**

The law states that the Court must order that the parental responsibility of the minor children shall be shared by **both** parents, unless the Court finds that shared parental responsibility would be detrimental to the child. Examples of what the Court may consider as detriment would be evidence of domestic violence or child abuse. The Court has to make specific findings of detriment to order one parent to have sole parental responsibility of the children. If the Court determines that one parent should have sole parental responsibility, the Court may make arrangements for time-sharing as specified in this parenting plan that will best protect the child or spouse from harm. **Even if the parties agree to a designation of shared or sole parental responsibility, the final decision rests with the Court.**

Parenting Time: You may choose **one** of the two options for parenting time:

Option A: Supervised Parenting Time or No Parenting Time

If you chose this option, you feel that your child cannot be safe alone with the other parent. The other parent will either have **no** parenting time or only supervised parenting time.

Option B: Unsupervised Time Sharing- No Overnights

If you chose this option, you feel your child can safely spend limited time with the other parent under certain conditions. Overnight time sharing is not permitted.

B. Communication Section

Note: None of the following applies if a court order has been entered restricting access to the information.

Virtual Communication: Select all options that apply. Remember to write in specific days and times that communication will take place or number of times per week, etc.

Communication: List the means of communication. (Ex. phone, email, computer, etc.)

C. Exchange and Travel Section

Carefully read all of the options in each of the sections and check ALL that apply. Fill in the appropriate blanks and describe in detail your plan for exchanging the child(ren), if the option allows for it.

D. Information Sharing Section

Provide each parties' complete information, unless a court order has been entered restricting access to the information.

E. Other Terms Section

Describe any other provisions you would like to include in your parenting plan.

F. Dispute Resolution

Decide whether you will agree to resolve any disputes that may arise in the future through mediation or other means.

Step Four: File with the Court

If the plan is proposed by only one parent, then that parent alone should sign. If the plan is agreed to by both parents, both parents must sign the parenting plan and have their signatures witnessed by a **notary public** or **deputy clerk**. After completing the plan, you should file the original plan and a Notice of Filing with the Clerk of Court in the county where the petition was filed and keep a copy for your records. **NOTE:** If an agreed parenting plan is not filed by the parties, the Court shall establish a plan.

Even if you and your child(ren)'s other parent are unable to come to an agreement on a parenting plan, please complete the assessment to determine which parenting plan may be right for your family. Purchase the appropriate parenting plan from the Clerk of Court, or download the plan from the 12th Judicial Circuit's website at www.jud12.flcourts.org. Prepare as a draft in the event your case is referred to mediation.

The Do's and Don'ts of Parenting

** Note: The following rules apply to the extent that they do NOT conflict with the provisions of your safety plan!*

Both Parents

DO:

- Maintain healthy communication with your children.
- Make it a priority to communicate regularly with the other parent.
- Religiously follow the parenting plan to make the process routine, easy and positive for your children.
- Strive to keep your word to the children.
- Contact the other parent immediately if there is an emergency involving the children while they are with you.

DON'T:

- Be uncooperative. The children will suffer consequences if their parents do not cooperate.

Parent A

(The parent with whom the child has more time-sharing)

DO:

- Share information about school, teachers, activities, friends and relatives with the other parent.
- Be flexible and supportive of the children's relationship with the other parent.
- Encourage excitement for the anticipated communication and/or travel with the other parent.

DON'T:

- Edit, coach, monitor, or otherwise interfere with the children's communication with the other parent.
- Take it personally if the children do not wish to call you regularly when they are with the other parent.