

Parenting Time Considerations During the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic [VIDEO]

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The coronavirus pandemic is creating special challenges all of us, but in particular for parents of children who are separated or divorced. In many districts, schools are closing for several weeks, but there are still many employers who have not. In the case of first responders, healthcare workers, or other essential employees, employers cannot allow their employees to work remotely from home.

This is the time to remember that children are nervous too, and the last thing they need is to see their parents fighting about them. There is a need to have communications with the other parent in order to find workable solutions for child care, which allows both parents to have access to children. The current situation may likely result in modifications, albeit temporary, of parenting time.

Parents are generally hesitant to give up parenting time but it may be necessary given the current situation. However, there are certainly things that you can do to make sure that once this difficult time is over, missed time with kids is reinstated or made up.

Getting on the phone now to create a modified schedule in the event of, or in response to, school closures and work challenges is important, rather than waiting until it is any more of a crisis. If there has to be a substantial modification of parenting time which results in one parent not seeing the children for an extended period of time, talking about makeup time in the summer is important. You don't lose your rights by making modifications, and you may just score some brownie points with the judge later on.

We are also heading into vacation time with spring breaks from secondary schools on the horizon. Given the travel restrictions that have just been put into place, it is likely that vacations will be missed. Talking to the other parent to schedule a vacation during the summer or other time during the year is important. There is no question that the children are going to be disappointed as it is, and you want them to feel comfortable that the parents are united in taking whatever steps necessary to create a reasonable alternative.

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