

Legal Resources

Methods for finding legal resources in your community include:

- ◆ Consult a lawyer referral service. One can be found at www.wsba.org, under “Find Legal Help.”
- ◆ For self-help information on a variety of legal topics, see www.washingtonlawhelp.org
- ◆ For those with low income who live outside King County, call the Northwest Justice Project’s CLEAR line at 1-888-201-1014.
- ◆ A list of legal service providers for those with low income who live within King County can be found by calling (206) 464-1519.
- ◆ Ask a family member, friend, or coworker for a referral to a lawyer.
- ◆ Court forms and instructions can be downloaded at www.courts.wa.gov/forms/.

To download a complete copy of the Family Law Handbook, visit the Washington Courts Web site at <http://www.courts.wa.gov/> under Resources, Publications, and Reports.



The Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) was established by the 1957 Legislature to “advance the efficient and effective operation of the Washington judicial system.” The agency operates under the direction and supervision of the Chief Justice of the Washington State Supreme Court, pursuant to Chapter 2.56 RCW.

For more information, visit www.courts.wa.gov

Family Law Handbook 2009

Summary



Understanding the laws on
marriage and divorce in
Washington State

2009 Family Law Handbook Summary



The Family Law Handbook was developed to help residents understand family law in Washington State.

The Legislature directed the Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts to create this Handbook for individuals getting a marriage license, and for those who are seeking divorce or responding to a divorce action.

The Handbook may help you understand the rights and responsibilities spouses have to each other and any children during and after marriage.

While the Family Law Handbook is not designed to give legal advice, it will provide general information about the marriage contract, marital laws, and laws about divorce in Washington State. It is always a good idea to consult with an attorney about your rights and responsibilities regarding any legal issue, including marriage and divorce.

Chapters in the Handbook include:

- Marriage in Washington State
- Prenuptial Agreements
- Ending a Marriage
- Property Rights: Dividing Assets and Debts
- Spousal Maintenance (Alimony)
- The Effects of Divorce on Children
- Shared Parenting for Divorcing Parents
- Relocation: Moving With Children
- Child Support
- Domestic Violence
- Child Abuse and Neglect
- Community Resources

Community Resources and Helpful Web Sites

- ◆ Premarital and couples counseling.
- ◆ Stronger Families Web site at www.strongerfamilies.org
- ◆ The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, Initiative for Healthy Marriages Web site at www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/
- ◆ Community Health Departments and Districts. See www.doh.wa.gov or call the health department or district listed in your local directory.
- ◆ The United Way, at www.unitedway-wa.org
- ◆ Couples and marriage support groups sponsored by churches or synagogues.
- ◆ The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), see www.dshs.wa.gov/
- ◆ or call your local DSHS Community Services Office.
- ◆ Support Groups — A list of local, state, and national resources for families can be found at <http://parenting.wsu.edu/resources>