

How to Respond to a Divorce, Legal Separation, or Invalidity (Annulment) Petition

Note: If you **agree** with everything your spouse or domestic partner has requested in the petition you may fill out the form *Agreement to Join Petition* (FL All Family 119). You do not need to use these instructions. To find specific instructions on agreed cases, visit

<https://kingcounty.gov/en/court/superior-court/courts-jails-legal-system/court-programs-children-families/divorce-custody-adoption/how-to-resources-family-law>

Talk to a lawyer if you can

These instructions have been developed by the King County Superior Court Family Law Information Center. They provide *legal information* only and **are not intended** to be a substitute for legal advice.

Facilitators cannot provide legal advice or complete your forms for you. It's a good idea to talk to a lawyer before you file any forms.

You can get information about their services and a list of low-cost and free legal resources at <https://kingcounty.gov/en/court/superior-court/courts-jails-legal-system/court-programs-children-families/divorce-custody-adoption/family-law-facilitators>

Step 1: Determine your response deadline

20 days	If you were served in person in Washington state.
60 days	If you were served in person outside of Washington state or by publication.
90 days	If you were served by mail.

Step 2: Fill out these forms

All these forms can be downloaded at: www.courts.wa.gov/forms/

Form Name	Form Number	Notes	Completed
Response to Petition about a Marriage	FL Divorce 211	Use form FL Divorce 212 for Response to Petition about a Domestic Partnership	☐

If you have children under the age of 18 born during your marriage, you will also fill out these forms

Parenting Plan (Proposed)	FL All Family 140	☐
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Step 3: Make Copies

Which documents should I make copies of?

- Response to a Petition about a Marriage
- Parenting Plan (Proposed)

How many copies do I need?

- **Original** set to file with Clerk's office.
- Copy 1 is to serve the other party
- Copy 2 you will keep for your records

Step 3: Take your original forms to the Clerk's Office and file

You can file your documents by either bringing your original forms to the Clerk's Office (room 2C in Kent and E-609 in Seattle),

OR

You can file online on the Clerk's website at: <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dja/courts-jails-legal-system/court-forms-document-filing/filing> If you have questions about e-filing call 206-477-3000, or email eServices@kingcounty.gov.

Step 4: Have the other party served

You may deliver or mail documents yourself. If the other party has an attorney, deliver, or mail the forms to the attorney instead. After you have delivered/mailed the forms to the other party or attorney, fill out the *Proof of Mailing or Hand Delivery* form. File this document after filling it in and signing with the Clerk's Office.

Proof of Mailing or Hand Delivery	FL All Family 112	Download at: www.courts.wa.gov/forms/	☐
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You have now responded to the Petition and must take the following additional steps.

Step 5: You and your spouse/registered domestic partner *must* go to a family law class

Self-represented parties must complete the Family Law Orientation by the deadline listed on your Case Schedule. You can register online at: <https://kcscfamlaworientation.eventbrite.com>. If you have questions or need to waive the fee, email FamLawOrientation@kingcounty.gov.

If you have children under 18, you must also complete the parenting seminar "What About the Children," by the deadline listed on your Case Schedule. You can register online at: <https://kcscparentseminar.eventbrite.com>. If you have questions or need to waive the fee, email Parentseminar@kingcounty.gov.

Step 6: Follow your Case Schedule

If you do not have a copy of your case schedule, you may get it from the Clerk's office. This contains deadlines each party must follow.

Finishing your case:

Agreement

If you come to an agreement before trial, you can finish your case after your 90-day waiting period has elapsed. For more information, please look for the Agreed instructions for divorce, legal separation or invalidity on: <https://kingcounty.gov/en/court/superior-court/courts-jails-legal-system/court-programs-children-families/divorce-custody-adoption/how-to-resources-family-law>

Trial

If you and the other party cannot come to an agreement about your divorce you will have a trial before a Judge. Make sure that both your email and mailing address are up to date so that the court can contact you. Instructions on preparing for trial are available at the Facilitators office.

- **If your case does not involve children:** you must fill out and file, the *Joint Confirmation of Trial Readiness* form and other trial documents by the deadlines in your case schedule.
- **If your case does involve children:** about 4 to 6 weeks before your trial, you will get an order in the mail telling you to come to court for a *Pre-Trial Conference*. At that hearing, the Judge will give you an Order. The Order will tell you what forms you need to finish your case and when they are due.

Informal Family Law Trial (IFLT):

Requirements to select an IFLT. All parties must state whether they wish to proceed with an IFLT or a traditional trial. All parties must agree to proceed with an IFLT. Each party shall

make its selection in writing using the [Family Law Trial Selection Form](#). The Family Law Trial Selection form must be filed prior to the trial commencing. For cases in which there is a pretrial conference hearing, the selection shall be made at that hearing. If there is no pretrial conference hearing, the selection shall be made in the [Joint Confirmation of Trial Readiness](#) form. If a party does not file a selection using either form prior to the trial commencing, the case will proceed as a traditional trial. For more information on IFLT see LFLR 23

Step 7: Complete your final documents

To finalize your case by agreement or trial, you will need to fill out the forms below.

All these forms can be downloaded at: www.courts.wa.gov/forms/

Form Name	Form Number	Notes	Completed
Findings and Conclusions About a Marriage	FL Divorce 231	Use FL Divorce 232 for Registered Domestic Partnership	☐
Final Divorce Order / Legal Separation Order / Invalid Marriage Order	FL Divorce 241	Use FL Divorce 242 for Registered Domestic Partnership	☐
Declaration in Lieu of Formal Proof		Include this if finalizing by agreement through the Facilitator's office	☐

If you have children under the age of 18 born during your marriage, you also need to fill out these forms

Parenting Plan	FL All Family 140		☐
Child Support Order	FL All Family 130		☐
Child Support Worksheets	WSCSS - Worksheets		☐
Child Support Schedule & Instructions	This is information to use to calculate Child Support Worksheets. Online Child Support Calculation software is available at https://fortress.wa.gov/dshs/dcs/SSGen/Home		

You may also need these forms if you are going to trial

Financial Declaration of (name): _____	FL All Family 131		☐
Sealed Financial Source Documents (Coversheet)	FL All Family 011	This form goes on the <i>front</i> of the financial documents you file.	☐

If your case involves financial matters you may have to provide copies of financial documents, including:

- Your W-2s and complete personal tax returns for the past 2 years
- Your most recent pay stubs (at least 6 months)
- Complete partnership/corporate tax returns for the past 2 years if you have a 5% interest or more
- Statements from all your banks and financial institutions for the past 6 months
- *Note:* The other party can ask you for a copy of your check register. If this happens, you will have 14 days to provide it.

Restraining Order	FL All Family 150		☐
Law Enforcement Information Sheet	PO 003		☐