

Checklist: What to Include in a Parenting Plan

By Rebecca Perra, Attorney, Mediator, and Judicial Education Coordinator at OurFamilyWizard

Day-to-day activities

- **Custody plan:** What is the baseline custody schedule between the parents?
- **Visitation plan:** How will you handle visitation during the other parent's custodial time?
- **Dropoff and pickup:** How, where, and when will custody exchange occur?
- **Transportation:** How will children be transported between households?
- **Childcare:** How will you manage additional childcare, and how will expenses be handled?
- **Third-party relationships:** Who else (family, friends) can spend time with, transport, or communicate with the child?
- **Extracurricular activities:** How will you manage extracurriculars, and who will manage expenses? Are any activities off-limits (e.g., tackle football)?
- **Children's belongings:** Will you have sets of belongings (clothes, toys, gear) at each household?
- **Parent dual attendance:** How will you manage events that both parents want to attend (e.g., parent-teacher conferences, big games)?

Communication

- **Virtual parenting communication:** How will you handle virtual parenting during the other parent's custody time?
- **Children's media and technology permissions:** When can children start using social media? Which platforms?

Healthcare

- **Providers:** How will you agree on providers for the child?
- **Expenses:** How will you manage medical expenses between the parents?
- **Health insurance:** Which parent will assume health insurance for the child?
- **Routine appointments and check-ups:** How will you manage and attend routine appointments where both parents want to be present?

Child rearing values

- **Religion:** Will you raise the child under a certain faith? What will that look like?
- **Schooling:** Will you pursue public or private school? How will you manage expenses?
- **Post-secondary education:** Is there a plan or expectation for funding post-secondary education?
- **Discipline:** Do you agree to parent and discipline the children according to a certain parenting style? How will consequences be assigned?

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Parental behavior

- **Overnight guests:** Are overnight guests allowed?
- **Significant others:** How will you manage a child's time with a parent's new partner? When can they meet, and how much time can they spend with them?

Holiday and vacation schedules

- **Holiday custody schedule:** Who will have custody during holidays?
- **Special dates:** How will you manage special dates or events (e.g., a wedding or family reunion) on the other parent's custody time?
- **School breaks:** How will you manage custody and childcare during school vacations?
- **Out-of-area or international travel:** How will you manage communication and expenses for out-of-area or international travel?
- **Unanticipated schedule changes:** How will you make custody decisions in case of unanticipated schedule changes?

Safety

- **Safety measures:** Do you require any standard safety measures for certain activities (e.g., wearing a helmet when riding a bike)?
- **Internet safety:** How and how often can the child access the internet? Are there any restrictions on websites or usage?
- **Guns or weapons in the home:** How will you ensure the child's safety if there are guns or other weapons in the house?
- **Curfew:** Do the children have a curfew?
- **Child solo transportation:** When and where can the child transport themselves (e.g., walking, public transportation, or driving to school, activities, or friends' or relatives' houses)?

Additional considerations

- Who will claim tax deductions?
- What happens if a parent has to relocate?
- Which language will you speak and teach at home (if the family is multilingual)?
- What happens if a parent doesn't adhere to a part of the parenting plan?
- How often will you revisit and revise the parenting plan?