

**BASIC PARENTING SCHEDULE
WARREN COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION**

This Court encourages parents who are divorcing or divorced to create parenting schedules tailored to the specific needs of their child(ren), taking into account their respective work schedules and the individual needs of the child(ren).

If parents have no specific written parenting schedule, the parents shall follow the schedule set forth below. This Court-imposed schedule is intended to further two goals: (1) preservation of or development of a close relationship between child(ren) and each parent; and (2) consideration of the changing developmental needs of the child(ren).

Note: For purposes of interpreting this order and if a shared parenting plan refers to this order, the party with whom the child(ren) spend the majority of time shall be referred to herein as the residential parent and the other parent as the non-residential parent provided that the shared parenting plan does not contain any provisions to the contrary.

A. INFANTS: 0 - 2 MONTHS

For infants up to two months of age, the non-residential parent may spend time with the baby in the residential parent's home three days per week, for two hours per visit. If the parties cannot agree as to days and time, the following schedule shall be followed: 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on each Sunday and each Tuesday and Thursday evening from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

B: INFANTS: 2 MONTHS - AGE 2 (Commencing at age 2 months, parenting time is spent away from residential parent's residence.)

1. Beginning at two months through twelve months, the non-residential parent may spend time with the child away from the residential parent's residence every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and one day each weekend, alternating between Saturday and Sunday, from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
2. From twelve months to two years, the non-residential parent may spend time with the child as follows: every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and on alternating weekends from Saturday at 10:00 a.m. to Sunday at 6:00 p.m.

3. **Holidays:** In odd numbered years, the non-residential parent may spend time with the child(ren) from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on President's Day, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve. In even numbered years, the non-residential parent may spend time with the child(ren) from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Easter, July 4th, Labor Day and Christmas Day.
4. **Older Siblings:** If there are older brothers and sisters of the infant child(ren), the parenting time (including holidays) set forth below for children ages two years through twelve years shall govern infant visitation once the infant is two months old.

C. CHILDREN AGE 2 THROUGH 12: The non-residential parent shall spend time with the children as follows:

1. **Weekends:** Alternate weekends beginning Friday at 6:00 p.m. and ending Sunday at 6:00 p.m.
2. **Weekdays:** Every Wednesday (or other day by agreement) from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

D. TEENAGERS - AGE 13 THROUGH 15:

Weekends and Weekdays: It is recommended that the above schedule for children age two through twelve be continued through age fifteen if possible. However, parents should respect a teenager's need to spend time with peers and in organized activities, and less time with each parent, especially during weekends and summer holidays. Quality of time is more important than a rigid schedule. Flexibility in scheduling is necessary. When possible, it is preferable to consider the teenager's wishes as long as the parents agree. At a minimum, the non-residential parent may spend time with children in this age bracket every Wednesday from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and at least one overnight and day on alternating weekends.

E. TEENAGERS - AGE 16 UNTIL 18:

Parenting time for children in this age bracket shall be fixed between the child and the non-residential parent. Parenting time shall not be limited other than as the child and the non-residential parent choose.

F. HOLIDAYS:

1. In **odd** numbered years, **Mother** will have the child(ren) and in **even** numbered years **Father** will have the children on:

Easter: from Saturday at 6:00 p.m. to Sunday at 7:00 p.m. (Only applies to pre-school age children)

July 4th: from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Labor Day: from Friday at 6:00 p.m. to Monday at 7:00 p.m.

Christmas: from December 24th at 9:00 p.m. to January 1st at 6:00 p.m.

2. In **odd** numbered years, **Father** will have the child(ren) on and in **even** numbered years **Mother** will have the children on:

President's Day: from Friday at 6:00 p.m. to Monday at 7:00 p.m.

Memorial Day: from Friday at 6:00 p.m. to Monday at 7:00 p.m.

Thanksgiving: from Wednesday night at 6:00 p.m. to Thursday at 7:00 p.m. unless the following weekend is that parent's regularly scheduled weekend, in which case the parenting time shall continue until Sunday at 6:00 p.m.

Christmas: from December 21st or the last day of school, whichever is later, at 6:00 p.m. to December 24th at 9:00 p.m.

Spring Break: commencing at 9:00 a.m. the day after school recesses to 6:00 p.m. the day before school resumes. (Only applies to school age children).

3. Other important days:

Mother's Day: With the mother from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Father's Day: With the father from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Birthdays: No special provision is made for the children's birthdays unless otherwise agreed.

Other Cultural Holidays: Any other religious holidays, cultural holidays or days of significance not referenced herein shall be addressed by agreement of the parties or court order.

If any of the above holidays falls on a Monday following that parent's regular weekend, then the parenting time will be continuous through the holiday.

G. Extended Parenting Time, Summer Vacations and Travel:

The non-residential parent shall have extended parenting time with the child(ren) to coincide with his or her work vacation if possible. The parenting time may extend to two weeks (non-consecutive) for ages two to four years; it may extend to two consecutive weeks for ages four and five years; and it may extend for up to four weeks (with no more than two weeks being consecutive) for ages six through twelve years. The residential parent may also have an extended vacation with the child(ren) not to exceed two weeks. All parenting/vacation time taken under this section must be taken in blocks of time of at least seven days. Each parent must give the other parent thirty days prior written notice of the dates he or she intends to have extended parenting time or vacation with the child or children. In the case of conflict, the schedule of the parent who first gives written notice to the other parent shall prevail. For any vacation or holiday travel, each parent must provide the other parent with destination, times of arrival and departure, and methods of travel. If there are children in different age brackets, the provisions set forth for the oldest age bracket shall govern as to all children, except that there shall be no extended parenting time/vacation for children under two years of age. NOTE: Child support will not be reduced during summer vacation periods specified in this provision.

H. RULES REGARDING PARENTING TIME:

1. **Conflicting Schedules:** In the event of any conflict between parenting time schedules, the following is the order of precedence:
 - a. Holidays
 - b. Vacation periods or extended parenting times
 - c. Weekends and mid-week days

For example, one parent may not schedule his or her summer vacation to include July 4th if July 4th is the other parent's holiday that year. As another example, the residential parent may be entitled to have the children on the Easter holiday even though it falls on the non-residential parent's alternating weekend. In this case, the non-residential parent's weekend shall conclude at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday evening.

2. **Illness:** Parenting time shall be provided to the non-residential parent even if the child is ill unless the child is hospitalized or a physician has recommended that the child not be removed from the residential parent's home, in which event immediate notice shall be given to the non-residential parent. Any weekend parenting time that is missed under this provision shall be made up the following weekend.

3. **Telephone and Mail:** Both parents may have reasonable telephone contact with the child(ren) not to exceed once a day between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. If the children are not available, the child(ren) should return the telephone call. Both parents shall encourage free communications between the child(ren) and the other parent and shall not do anything to impede or restrict reasonable communications by telephone or mail between the child(ren) and the other parent, whether initiated by the child(ren) or the other parent. Any mail between the child(ren) and either parent shall be strictly confidential and shall not be opened or read by the other parent.
4. **Cooperation:** Both parents shall refrain from criticizing the other parent or arguing with the other parent in the presence of the child(ren).
5. **Exchange of Phone Numbers:** Unless this Court orders otherwise each parent must keep the other parent informed of his or her current telephone number and a telephone number where the child(ren) may be reached.
6. **Transportation:** In the event that the parents are unable to reach an agreement regarding transportation, the parent receiving the child(ren) shall arrange transportation. For example, if the parents are following the Basic Order of this Court, the non-residential parent will pick up the children from the residential parent's home on Friday evenings. Likewise on Sunday evenings the residential parent will pick up the children from the non-residential parent's home. In the event that either party moves and thereby increases the distance that existed between the parties at the time of the last court order by more than 25 miles, that party must provide all of the transportation or file a motion to have the transportation duties reviewed. Until such hearing, the moving parent shall provide all the transportation.
7. **Grace Period:** The transporting parent for parenting time shall have a grace period of fifteen minutes for pick up and delivery if both parties live within thirty miles of each other. If the one way distance to be traveled is more than thirty miles, the grace period shall be thirty minutes. In the event the non-residential parent exceeds the grace period, that period of parenting time is forfeited unless prior notification and arrangements have been made and excepting cases where the non-residential parent lives in excess of thirty miles away and suffers an unavoidable breakdown, or delay en route and the non-residential parent promptly notifies the residential parent by telephone of the delay. Repeated violations by either parent shall be cause for granting a modification of the parenting order.
8. **Clothing and Supplies for Children:** The residential parent shall send with the child(ren) on parenting time sufficient clothing and outerwear appropriate for the season and for any known, planned activities. For the weekend, this shall consist of a minimum of a coat and shoes appropriate for the weather, two extra sets of play clothes, one dress outfit and underwear, in addition to the clothes the children

are wearing at the time of the start of the weekend. In the case of infants, the residential parent shall send with the child(ren) sufficient bottles, formula and diapers and shall inform the non-residential parent of the child's sleeping and eating schedules. The non-residential parent shall return all items that are sent with the child(ren) at the end of his or her parenting time.

9. **Child(ren)'s Activities:** Scheduled periods of parenting time shall not be delayed or denied because a child has other activities (with friends, work, lessons, sports, etc.). It is the responsibility of the parents to discuss extra-curricular activities of the child(ren) in advance, including time, dates and transportation needs, so that the child(ren) are not deprived of activities and maintaining friends. Each parent shall provide the other with copies of any written material (i.e. activity schedules, maps, instructions) that are distributed in connection with the child(ren)'s activities. The parent who has the child(ren) during the time of scheduled activities is responsible for transportation, attendance and/or other arrangements. Both parents are encouraged to attend all their child(ren)'s activities.

CONCLUSION

Parents are encouraged to allow for flexibility in the foregoing schedule to best suit the changing needs of the child(ren) and the employment schedules of the parents. HOWEVER, absent an order of this Court, the foregoing schedule shall be followed absent a clear, mutual understanding between parents to deviate. Any modification shall be in writing if feasible.

Experts uniformly agree that the absence of conflict between parents is more critical to a child's welfare than the amount of time either parent spends with the child.