

## Parenting Plan Checklist

Pursuant to Utah Code Annotated §30-3-10.8, any party requesting joint legal or physical custody, or any other type of shared parenting arrangement, is required to file and serve a proposed parenting plan at the time of filing their original petition, answer or counterclaim.

The Parenting Plan will describe which parent is responsible for decisions in several key areas, how disputes between parents will be resolved, the child's schedule with each parent, and what happens if a parent relocates.

Following is a checklist to consider when drafting a Parenting Plan:

- a) **Timesharing**  
Describe the regular schedule. Address any exceptions for holidays, special occasions, and visits with extended family.
- b) **Decision Making**  
Describe how decisions will be made in significant areas such as the child's health, education, religious instruction, and welfare. Describe how disputes will be resolved. Select a dispute resolution process such as mediation, counseling, or arbitration, and outline a procedure to implement the process.
- c) **Communication**  
Decide how often information will be exchanged between parents, how often it should be exchanged, and what will be included.
- d) **Education or Activity Decisions and Costs**  
Address any special educational needs or costs such as school tuition, registration, fees, and testing.
- e) **Healthcare Decisions and Costs**  
Address any special health needs and costs including therapy, orthodontics, etc.
- f) **Religion**  
Address any potential conflicts in the religious training for the child. Be specific about what the child is expected to participate in.
- g) **Legal and Physical Custody**  
Define these terms to ensure they are fully understood by both parties.
- h) **Relocation**  
Define what happens if either parent wants to move.

i) Utah Law Requirements

Regardless of any allocation of decision-making in the parenting plan, Utah law provides that either parent may make emergency decisions affecting the health or safety of the children. Also, each parent may make decisions regarding the day-to-day care and control of the child while the child is residing with that parent. Utah law specifies that if a parent fails to comply with the provisions of a parenting plan or child support order, the other parent's obligations under the plan or support order are not affected.