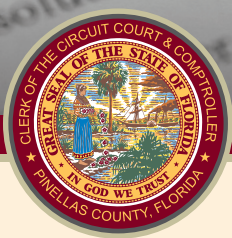


DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE: DIVORCE

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A divorce can be filed by a married person or persons to end the marital relationship. Along with restoring the parties to single status, the court can issue orders for custody and visitation of the minor children of the marriage, child support, spousal support, and division of property assets and debts.

KEN BURKE, CPA
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
AND COMPTROLLER
PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

DIVORCE

In the state of Florida, there are two methods for filing a divorce.

A Simplified Divorce May Be Appropriate When:

- You or your spouse have been a resident of Florida for at least the past six months.
- You and your spouse are both able to appear at the Clerk of the Court's office together to file the divorce forms and to attend the final hearing.
- You have no children together, born before or during the marriage or by adoption, and the partner, to their knowledge, is not pregnant.
- You and your spouse agree on the division of property, assets and debts.

A General Divorce May Be Appropriate When:

- You have been a resident of Florida for at least the past six months.
- Your spouse lives out of state or his/her whereabouts is unknown.
- There is a minor child under age 18 or dependent child of the marriage, or the partner is pregnant.
- You disagree on division of property, assets and debts.
- There is a need for spousal support (alimony).

PLEASE NOTE: *In a General Divorce case, Service Of Family Law Summonses, along with copies of the papers you are filing upon the respondent, will be required.*

If you are unable to locate the respondent, you will be required to have the respondent served by constructive service (service by publication). The service will be published in the newspaper of your choice for 30 calendar days and you will be billed.

YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO HIRE AN ATTORNEY to file for a divorce; however, attorney consultation may help answer questions concerning filing forms or legal rights.

FORMS FOR FILING A SIMPLIFIED or GENERAL DIVORCE ARE AVAILABLE in the Clerk's office and the Clerk's Self Help Centers for a fee they may also **obtained online** from the Florida Courts website, www.flcourts.org, at no charge. For more information, please call Civil Court Records at (727) 464-7000.

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Persons with disabilities requiring reasonable accommodations to use the services provided should call (727) 464-4062 (TDD or Voice). Call 24 hours prior to coming to the courthouse.

6/15

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