

## Negotiating Parenting Time During the Coronavirus Pandemic: A Checklist

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During this unprecedented coronavirus health emergency, divorced parents everywhere are wondering how to handle custody and parenting time exchanges. While tensions are high, it is important to put animosity aside and work together for the health and safety of one another and the children. As experienced family lawyers, we encourage our clients to practice patience and cooperation. This pandemic will end, and working together will lead to the best outcomes for all concerned.

The following Checklist for those divorced parents no longer living under the same roof may be useful during this particularly stressful time:

1. **Work together:** Find ways to work together. Be cooperative and flexible; be honest about this situation and the hardships and risks it poses, but stick to the facts. If you are asked to change a parenting exchange or to reschedule some other activity previously scheduled, be cooperative and flexible. Working together to reach common interests in this unprecedented emergency will benefit everyone concerned.

2.

**Be flexible:** Work together to agree on a schedule that your family can live with during this time. Arrange make up time, if frequent parenting time exchanges are not possible or practical. Consider grouping days so there is less “back and forth” when possible.

3.

**Be creative:** In the event that engaging in “normal” parenting time is not possible, consider frequent Facetime and telephone calls with the other parent.

4.

**Be honest:** No one has imagined or experienced a pandemic such as coronavirus. Be honest with one another about what is best for your children. Because schools are closed, parents are navigating homeschooling and working from home. Help each other out when possible and attempt to create individual space or time for everyone involved to help alleviate tension.

5.

**Court Orders still rule:** It is important to remember that, even during these times, Court Orders and your Matrimonial Settlement Agreements are in full force and effect. If you and your (former) spouse cannot agree, all parties should continue to follow the terms of the Order or your Agreement.

At Wilentz, we recognize that our clients benefit from our guidance and support before, during, and after their divorces are finalized. Understanding that emotions can be particularly heightened during this time, we are available to answer your questions.

Please contact [Jenna N. Shapiro](#) or any other member of our [Family Law team](#) if you need help with navigating parenting time during this pandemic, or another problem in your divorce.

### Attorney

- Jenna N. Shapiro

**Practice**

- Family Law