



PRO SE / SELF-REPRESENTED GUIDE

Custody & Child Support Exhibit Guide

Organize evidence for custody modifications, support changes, or parenting disputes. Document your child's best interests effectively.

Custody and child support matters require you to demonstrate what arrangement serves your child's best interests. Courts look at stability, involvement, and the child's needs. This guide helps you organize evidence showing your relationship with your child, your ability to provide care, and any concerns about the other parent.

Child's Records

- School records and report cards**
Shows child's academic progress and your involvement
- Medical records**
Child's health history, including who takes them to appointments
- Extracurricular activity records**
Sports, lessons, club memberships and your involvement
- Child's schedule**
Daily routines, activities, and care arrangements

Communication Records

- Co-parenting communication logs**
Texts, emails, or app messages about the child
- Visitation logs**
Record of actual time spent vs. scheduled time
- Missed visits documentation**
Dates and circumstances of cancelled or missed parenting time
- Screenshots of concerning messages**
Any threatening or inappropriate communications

Financial Documentation

- Income verification**
Pay stubs, tax returns, or business records (both parents)
- Child-related expenses**
Receipts for childcare, medical, activities, school
- Current child support records**
Payment history from the child support agency
- Daycare or childcare contracts**
Costs and arrangements for childcare

Living Situation Evidence

- Photos of your home**
Child's bedroom, play areas, safety features
- Lease or mortgage documents**
Proof of stable housing
- Household member information**
Who lives in each home (new partners, relatives)

Third-Party Documentation

- Letters from teachers or counselors**
Observations about the child and parental involvement
- Character reference letters**
From people who have observed your parenting
- Professional evaluations**
Custody evaluations, therapy records (if ordered)

COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

1. Speaking negatively about the other parent in front of the child
2. Denying visitation without a court order
3. Failing to document incidents when they happen
4. Bringing up issues unrelated to the child's welfare
5. Not following the current court order while waiting for modification

ORGANIZATION TIPS

- Keep a parenting journal documenting daily involvement and incidents
- Use a co-parenting app that timestamps all communications
- Organize documents chronologically to show patterns over time
- Create a timeline of significant events related to custody
- Save digital evidence in multiple locations (cloud backup)

COURTROOM PREPARATION

- Focus on facts, not emotions or attacks on the other parent
- Be prepared to explain how your proposal benefits the child
- Bring your calendar showing your availability for parenting time
- Know the current custody order inside and out
- Have specific examples ready, not generalizations
- If children are old enough, they may speak with the judge privately

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