

# Special Instructions For Travis County Divorces

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## Travis County Offices

**Civil Courthouse**, 1000 Guadalupe Street  
854-9020

**District Clerk's Office**, Courthouse  
Room 302 (3rd floor) and Room 103 (1st floor)  
854-4369

**Law Library Self-Help Center**, Courthouse  
Room 118 (1st floor), next to the cafeteria  
854-9019

**Domestic Relations Office**, 1010 Lavaca  
Across the street from the Courthouse  
854-9696

## Where do I file for Divorce?

File your *Original Petition for Divorce* in the District Clerk's Office, Room 302, (3<sup>rd</sup> floor).

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## What is the *Standing Order*?

A copy of the *Travis County Standing Order Regarding Children, Property and Conduct of Parties* **must** be attached to your Petition. This order applies to both you and your spouse. **READ IT CAREFULLY!** A copy of this order should be included in your divorce packet.

## When does the court hear uncontested divorce cases?

Monday through Friday 8:30 - 9:20 a.m. and 1:30 - 2:20 p.m. **Uncontested Docket** is held in a different courtroom each week. Ask for its location at the Information Booth (1<sup>st</sup> floor).

## Where do I file my Decree of Divorce after it's signed by the Judge?

The District Clerk's Office, Room 103 (1<sup>st</sup> floor).

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## How do I set up my child support account?

Complete the yellow *Request to Establish an Account* form. This form is available at the District Clerk's Office, Room 302 (3<sup>rd</sup> floor), or the Domestic Relations Office, 1010 Lavaca, across the street from the Courthouse.

## Do you need help?

If your divorce is **uncontested** (agreed or default) you may qualify for **FREE** help from the Travis County Law Library Reference Attorney.

## Who can meet with the Reference Attorney?

You can meet with the Reference Attorney if your case is:

- A simple divorce; **and**
  - Agreed (you and your spouse agree on all issues) or default (your spouse does not respond after being served); **and**
  - A Travis County case; **and**
  - Neither you nor your spouse has a lawyer.
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## How can the Reference Attorney help?

The Reference Attorney can:

- Review your paperwork before you go to court,
  - Help you complete your paperwork correctly, and
  - Explain the steps in an uncontested divorce.
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## How do I make an appointment?

Go to the Self-Help Center, Room 118 (1<sup>st</sup> floor of Courthouse), or call 854-9019.

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## How much does it cost?

An appointment with the Reference Attorney is free.

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## Can the Reference Attorney represent me or give me legal advice?

No. For legal representation or legal advice you should hire an attorney. The Lawyer Referral Service (472-8303) can help you find a private attorney. If you are low income, you may qualify for free help from Legal Aid (374-2700). Regardless of income, you may obtain free legal advice at the Free Evening Legal Clinics. These and other community resources are listed on the back.

**TRAVIS COUNTY DISTRICT CLERK'S  
FILE NO. 121,012  
(LOCAL RULES AND GENERAL ORDERS)**

**TRAVIS COUNTY STANDING ORDER REGARDING CHILDREN, PROPERTY AND  
CONDUCT OF THE PARTIES**

No party to this lawsuit has requested this order. Rather, this order is a standing order of the Travis County District Courts that applies in every divorce suit and every suit affecting the parent-child relationship filed in Travis County. The District Courts of Travis County have adopted this order because the parties and their children should be protected and their property preserved while the lawsuit is pending before the court. Therefore, it is ORDERED:

1. **NO DISRUPTION OF CHILDREN.** Both parties are ORDERED to refrain from doing the following acts concerning any children who are subjects of this case:

- 1.1 Removing the children from the State of Texas, acting directly or in concert with others, without the written agreement of both parties or an order of this Court.
- 1.2 Disrupting or withdrawing the children from the school or day-care facility where the children are presently enrolled, without the written agreement of both parents or an order of this Court.
- 1.3 Hiding or secreting the children from the other parent or changing the children's current place of abode, without the written agreement of both parents or an order of this Court.
- 1.4 Disturbing the peace of the children.

2. **CONDUCT OF THE PARTIES DURING THE CASE.** Both parties are ORDERED to refrain from doing the following acts:

- 2.1 Using vulgar, profane, obscene, or indecent language, or a coarse or offensive manner, to communicate with the other party, whether in person, by telephone, or in writing.
- 2.2 Threatening the other party in person, by telephone, or in writing to take unlawful action against any person.
- 2.3 Placing one or more telephone calls, at an unreasonable hour, in an offensive or repetitious manner, without a legitimate purpose of communication, or anonymously.
- 2.4 Opening or diverting mail addressed to the other party.

3. **PRESERVATION OF PROPERTY AND USE OF FUNDS DURING DIVORCE CASE.** If this is a divorce case, both parties to the marriage are ORDERED to refrain from doing the following acts:

- 3.1 Destroying, removing, concealing, encumbering, transferring, or otherwise harming or reducing the value of the property of one or both of the parties.

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*Christine Rodriguez*  
DISTRICT CLERK  
TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS

- 3.2 Misrepresenting or refusing to disclose to the other party or to the Court, on proper request, the existence, amount, or location of any property of one or both of the parties.
  - 3.3 Damaging or destroying the tangible property of one or both of the parties, including any document that represents or embodies anything of value.
  - 3.4 Tampering with the tangible property of one or both of the parties, including any document that represents or embodies anything of value, and causing pecuniary loss to the other party.
  - 3.5 Selling, transferring, assigning, mortgaging, encumbering, or in any other manner alienating any of the property of either party, whether personal property or real estate property, and whether separate or community, except as specifically authorized by this order.
  - 3.6 Incurring any indebtedness, other than legal expenses in connection with this suit, except as specifically authorized by this order.
  - 3.7 Making withdrawals from any checking or savings account in any financial institution for any purpose, except as specifically authorized by this order.
  - 3.8 Spending any sum of cash in either party's possession or subject to either party's control for any purpose, except as specifically authorized by this order.
  - 3.9 Withdrawing or borrowing in any manner for any purpose from any retirement, profit-sharing, pension, death, or other employee benefit plan or employee savings plan or from any individual retirement account or Keogh account, except as specifically authorized by this order.
  - 3.10 Signing or endorsing the other party's name on any negotiable instrument, check, or draft, such as tax refunds, insurance payments, and dividends, or attempting to negotiate any negotiable instrument payable to the other party without the personal signature of the other party.
  - 3.11 Taking any action to terminate or limit credit or charge cards in the name of the other party.
  - 3.12 Entering, operating, or exercising control over the motor vehicle in the possession of the other party.
  - 3.13 Discontinuing or reducing the withholding for federal income taxes on wages or salary while this suit is pending.
  - 3.14 Terminating or in any manner affecting the service of water, electricity, gas, telephone, cable television, or other contractual services, such as security, pest control, landscaping, or yard maintenance at the other party's residence or in any manner attempting to withdraw any deposits for service in connection with such services.
4. **PERSONAL AND BUSINESS RECORDS IN DIVORCE CASE.** If this is a divorce case, both parties to the marriage are ORDERED to refrain from doing the following acts:
- 4.1 Concealing or destroying any family records, property records, financial records, business records or any records of income, debts, or other obligations.
  - 4.2 Falsifying any writing or record relating to the property of either party.
  - 4.3 "Records" include e-mail or other digital or electronic data, whether stored on a computer hard drive, diskette or other electronic storage device.

5. **INSURANCE IN DIVORCE CASE.** If this is a divorce case, both parties to the marriage are ORDERED to refrain from doing the following acts:

- 5.1 Withdrawing or borrowing in any manner all or any part of the cash surrender value of life insurance policies on the life of either party, except as specifically authorized by this order.
- 5.2 Changing or in any manner altering the beneficiary designation on any life insurance on the life of either party or the parties' children.
- 5.3 Canceling, altering, or in any manner affecting any casualty, automobile, or health insurance policies insuring the parties' property of persons including the parties' minor children.

6. **SPECIFIC AUTHORIZATIONS IN DIVORCE CASE.** If this is a divorce case, both parties to the marriage are specifically authorized to do the following:

- 6.1 To engage in acts reasonable and necessary to the conduct of that party's usual business and occupation.
- 6.2 To make expenditures and incur indebtedness for reasonable attorney's fees and expenses in connection with this suit.
- 6.3 To make expenditures and incur indebtedness for reasonable and necessary living expenses for food, clothing, shelter, transportation and medical care.
- 6.4 To make withdrawals from accounts in financial institutions only for the purposes authorized by this order.

7. **SERVICE AND APPLICATION OF THIS ORDER.**

7.1 The Petitioner shall attach a copy of this order to the original petition and to each copy of the petition. At the time the petition is filed, if the Petitioner has failed to attach a copy of this order to the petition and any copy of the petition, the Clerk shall ensure that a copy of this order is attached to the petition and every copy of the petition presented.

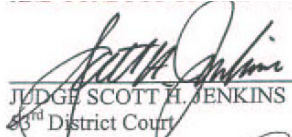
7.2 This order is effective upon the filing of the original petition and shall remain in full force and effect as a temporary restraining order for fourteen days after the date of the filing of the original petition. If no party contests this order by presenting evidence at a hearing on or before fourteen days after the date of the filing of the original petition, this order shall continue in full force and effect as a temporary injunction until further order of the court. This entire order will terminate and will no longer be effective once the court signs a final order.

8. **EFFECT OF OTHER COURT ORDERS.** If any part of this order is different from any part of a protective order that has already been entered or is later entered, the protective order provisions prevail. Any part of this order not changed by some later order remains in full force and effect until the court signs a final decree.

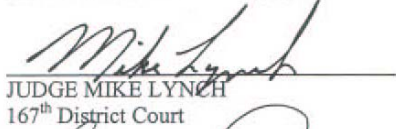
9. **PARTIES ENCOURAGED TO MEDIATE.** The parties are encouraged to settle their disputes amicably without court intervention. The parties are encouraged to use alternative

dispute resolution methods, such as mediation, to resolve the conflicts that may arise in this lawsuit.

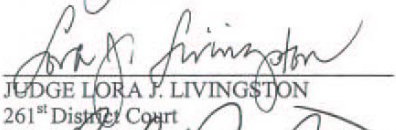
**THIS TRAVIS COUNTY STANDING ORDER REGARDING CHILDREN, PROPERTY AND CONDUCT OF THE PARTIES SHALL BECOME EFFECTIVE ON JANUARY 1, 2005.**

  
JUDGE SCOTT H. JENKINS  
83<sup>rd</sup> District Court

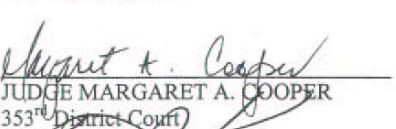
  
JUDGE DARLENE BYRNE  
126<sup>th</sup> District Court

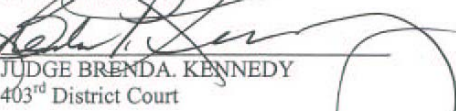
  
JUDGE MIKE LYNCH  
167<sup>th</sup> District Court

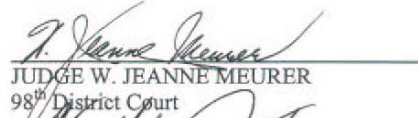
  
JUDGE SUZANNE COVINGTON  
201<sup>st</sup> District Court

  
JUDGE LORA J. LIVINGSTON  
261<sup>st</sup> District Court

  
JUDGE BOB PERKINS  
331<sup>st</sup> District Court

  
JUDGE MARGARET A. COOPER  
353<sup>rd</sup> District Court

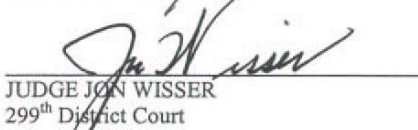
  
JUDGE BRENDA. KENNEDY  
403<sup>rd</sup> District Court

  
JUDGE W. JEANNE MEURER  
98<sup>th</sup> District Court

  
JUDGE WILFORD FLOWERS  
147<sup>th</sup> District Court

  
JUDGE PAUL DAVIS  
200<sup>th</sup> District Court

  
JUDGE JOHN K. DIETZ  
250<sup>th</sup> District Court

  
JUDGE JON WISSNER  
299<sup>th</sup> District Court

  
JUDGE PATRICK KEEL  
345<sup>th</sup> District Court

  
JUDGE JULIE KOCUREK  
390<sup>th</sup> District Court