

Notice: What if I don't know where someone lives?

The law requires proper **notice** to necessary parties (such as the other parent) before a Judge can consider your request.

- If a party lives in another county or city in Virginia, the Clerk's Office will mail notice to the appropriate sheriff's office so that they may serve process on their residents. The sheriff's office will return service to Chesterfield J&DR District Court and the Clerk's Office will update your file.
- If a party lives out-of-state, the Clerk's Office will mail notice via certified U.S. mail; however, if you have filed a show cause on an out-of-state party, you may need the sheriff's office in that foreign jurisdiction to serve notice. You are responsible for finding the address of the appropriate sheriff's office, providing the information to the Clerk's Office, and for paying the cost of out-of-state service.
- Sometimes a Judge will allow notice to be published in a newspaper or online via the Court's website. You may be financially responsible for any costs. Online publications may be found at the Court's website at <http://www.chesterfield.gov/jdrcourt>.
- You may also notice the other party using a certificate of mailing.

Important Numbers

Chesterfield Community Services Board	804.275.0005
Chesterfield Dept. of Social Services (DSS)	804.748-1100
Chesterfield Mental Health	804.748.1227
Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children (CASA)	804.744.1755
Court Service Unit (CSU)/Intake	804.748.1372
CPS After Hours	1.800.552.7096
Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE)	1.800.468.8894
Legal Aid	804.648.1012
Mediation Coordinator	804.706.2678
Virginia Dept. of Social Services (VDSS)	804.692-1900



Helpful online resources

<http://selfhelp.vacourts.gov/>

and

<https://virginia.freelegalanswers.org/>

CUSTODY, VISITATION, AND SUPPORT

I've filed for
Custody,
Visitation, or
Child
Support....
Now What?

Chesterfield Juvenile
and Domestic Relations
District Court



7000 Lucy Corr Boulevard
Chesterfield, VA 23832
804.748.1379 (Phone)
804.717.6043 (Fax)
<http://www.chesterfield.gov/jdrcourt/>

Within 30 days

- **The Clerk's Office** completes your physical and electronic court file, ensures your written request (motion or petition) is scheduled on the correct docket, refers your request for available services such as an interpreter or mediation, and creates appropriate notices and summons for delivery by the Sheriff's Office.
- **The Court's Mediation Coordinator** will contact you if your request is appropriate for mediation. If you reach an agreement in mediation, you will not need to appear for your court date, and the Clerk's Office will mail you a copy of your Order.
- **The Sheriff's Office** reviews the notices and summons to all necessary parties, schedules them for delivery, and completes a report of all attempts to provide a copy of the notices to the parties. See reverse for more information about notice to opposing parties.
- If you file an **expedited hearing request**, you will be contacted as soon as possible once the judge has reviewed your request.



Within 60-90 days

- **The Court (Judge)** will hold a brief hearing if all parties received proper notice to determine whether an agreement has been reached, offer mediation again, hear the dispute if time allows (15 minutes is scheduled), or schedule another hearing in order to allow more time for everyone to be heard (a "contested" hearing). If another hearing is scheduled then the Court may appoint a **GAL (Guardian ad litem)** to represent your child's interests, require attendance of a parent education seminar, and mandate completion of a mental health and/or substance abuse assessment.
- Completion of a **Parenting Education Seminar** is required by law when there is dispute regarding custody, visitation or support. For a list of qualified courses see <http://webdev.courts.state.va.us/cgi-bin/parented/providers.cgi/g?041J>
- **GAL's** are paid by the Commonwealth of Virginia. However, the Judge may determine that you must reimburse the Commonwealth for the fee paid to the GAL after considering the validity of the request, your income, and other factors.



Within 30-90 days of your First Hearing

- **The Court** will schedule a hearing for up to two hours if you are unable to come to an agreement. Continuances are rarely permitted. Everyone, lawyers and parties, are expected to be prepared to present information in support of or in response to the written requests (petition or motion) scheduled to be addressed by the Court. It is your responsibility to provide the Court with information which may come from a person testifying under oath or from some other means, such as documents (electronic or paper). If a GAL was appointed, then you will be requested to complete a form about your individual financial circumstances. After the information is presented by the parties and GAL, the Judge will state his or her decision and explain the reasons for the decision. This decision will also be stated in a written Order. You will receive a copy either at the conclusion of the hearing, or later, by mail.
- **An appeal of the Court's final decision** must be requested, or "noted", within ten days from the date the Order is signed. A bond, or guarantee of receipt of payment, may be required for appeals of support decisions.

