

## **CUSTODY-GENERAL RULES OF CONDUCT**

Certain rules of conduct generally applicable to custody matters are set forth below and are binding on both parties, the breach of which could become the subject of contempt proceedings before this Court, or could constitute grounds for amendment of your order. If the general rules conflict with the specific requirements of your order, the order shall prevail.

1. Neither party shall disparage, deride, ridicule or condemn the other party in front of the child(ren), attempt to alienate the affections of the child(ren) from the other party, nor allow third parties to attempt to do any of the foregoing.
2. The parties shall not conduct arguments or heated conversations when they are together in the presence of their child(ren), nor on the phone within the hearing of the child(ren). Also, they shall not involve the child(ren) in any disputes between them, including but not limited to, disputes concerning financial matters.
3. Neither party shall question the child(ren) as to the personal life of the other party except insofar as necessary to insure the personal safety of the child(ren). By this is meant that the child(ren) will not be used as spies on the other party. It is harmful to a child(ren) to be put in the role of “spy”.
4. Neither party shall make extravagant promises to the minor child(ren) for the purposes of ingratiating himself or herself to the minor child(ren) at the expense of the other party; further, any reasonable promise to the child(ren) should be made with the full exception of carrying it out.
5. The parties shall at all times consider the child(ren)’s best interests and act accordingly. The party should understand that the child(ren) is trying desperately to cope with the fact of his/her parents’ have separated and they need help with feeling loved by both parties, rather than interference or censure.
6. The parties should remember that they cannot teach their child(ren) proper moral conduct by indulging in improper conduct themselves. Child(ren) are quick to recognize hypocrisy, and the party who maintains a double standard will lose the respect of his or her child(ren).
7. During the time that a child(ren) is living with a party, that party has the responsibility of imposing and enforcing the rules for day to day living. Consistency between the households as to rules would be ideal, but in the absence of the ability of the parties to agree on rules, each party should encourage the child(ren) to follow the rules of the house when with the other party.
8. Phone calls between the child and the parent not having custody are to be unmonitored and uninterrupted by the parent having custody. In addition, phone calls

should take place away from TV's, radios, music, computers, and/or any other distracting influences on the child. The child should be alone in a quiet place when said phone conversations take place.

9. Appropriate care of the child while in custody of either parent includes proper hygiene and administration of any medicines, creams, and/or ointments necessary for any health maladies from which the child(ren) suffers.

10. Partial custody shall be subject to the following rules:

A. Do not make arrangements directly with the child(ren). Arrangements should be worked out beforehand between the parties without forcing the child(ren) to make choices and run the risk of parental displeasure. Never discuss special events which infringe on the other party's time with the child(ren) until a change in the schedule has been approved by the other party permitting the child(ren)'s participation.

B. Partial custody rights should be exercised at reasonable hours and under circumstances reasonably acceptable to the other party and to the needs and desires of the minor child(ren). Pick-ups and deliveries of the child(ren) should be at the designated times and places.

C. If a party finds himself or herself unable to keep an appointment, he or she should give immediate notice to the other party so as to avoid subjecting the child(ren) to unnecessary apprehension and failure of expectations.

D. The party having custody of the child(ren) should prepare them both physically and mentally for their partial custody visit with the other party by having them available at the time and place mutually agreed upon.

E. If either party or the child(ren) has plans which conflict with a scheduled visit and wish to adjust such partial custody, the parties should make arrangements for an adjustment acceptable to the schedules of everyone involved. Predetermined schedules are not written in stone and both parties should be flexible for the sake of the child(ren).

F. If a party appears for a pick-up under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the visit may be considered forfeited on those grounds.

G. If a party has the child(ren) overnight on a school night, it is that parties' responsibility to insure that the child(ren) arrives at school on time, well-rested, appropriately dressed and fed, and with homework completed.