

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY
LAW FORM 12.903(a)
ANSWER, WAIVER, AND REQUEST FOR COPY OF FINAL JUDGMENT OF DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE
(02/18)**

When should this form be used?

This form should be used when you have been served with a **petition** for **dissolution of marriage** and you do not wish to **contest** it or appear at a **hearing**. If you file this form, you are admitting all of the allegations in the **petition**, saying that you do not need to be notified of or appear at the **final hearing**, and that you would like a copy of the **final judgment** mailed to you.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink, and your signature should be witnessed by a **notary public** or **deputy clerk**. After completing this form, you should sign the form before a notary public. You should **file** the original with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where the petition was filed and keep a copy for your records. The person filing the **petition** in a dissolution of marriage proceeding is also referred to as the **petitioner** and his or her **spouse** as the **respondent**.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.**

SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO. If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by e-mail, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: Certificate of Service (General), Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

What should I do next?

You have 20 days to **answer** after being **served** with your spouse's petition. A copy of this form, along with all of the other forms required with this **answer** and **waiver**, must be mailed, e-mailed, or hand delivered to your spouse.

Where can I look for more information?

Before proceeding, you should read General Information for Self-Represented Litigants found at the beginning of these forms. The words that are in bold underline in these instructions are defined there. For further information, see chapter 61, Florida Statutes.

Parenting Plan and Time-Sharing. By filing this answer and waiver, you are agreeing to any parenting plan and time-sharing requests in the petition. The judge may request a parenting plan recommendation or appoint a guardian ad litem in your case. This means that a neutral person will review your situation and report to the judge concerning parenting issues. The purpose of such intervention is to be sure that the best interests of the child(ren) is (are) being served. For more information, you may consult section 61.13, Florida Statutes.

A parenting course must be completed prior to entry of a final judgment. You should contact the clerk, family law intake staff, or judicial assistant about requirements for parenting courses where you live.

Listed below are some terms with which you should become familiar before completing your answer to the petition. If you do not fully understand any of the terms below or their implications, you should speak with an attorney before going any further.

- Shared Parental Responsibility
- Sole Parental Responsibility
- Supervised Time-Sharing
- No contact
- Parenting Plan
- Parenting Plan Recommendation
- Time-Sharing Schedule

Child Support. By filing this answer and waiver, you are agreeing to any requests for child support in the petition. Both parents are required to provide financial support for their minor or dependent child(ren); however, the court may order one parent to pay child support to the other parent. Florida has adopted guidelines for determining the amount of child support to be paid. These guidelines are based on the combined income of both parents and take into account the financial contributions of both parents and the number of overnights the child(ren) spend with each parent. You must file a Family Law Financial Affidavit, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.902(b) or (c), and your spouse will be required to do the same. From your financial affidavits, you should be able to calculate the amount of child support that should be paid using the Child Support Guidelines Worksheet, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.902(e). Because the child support guidelines take several factors into consideration, change over time, and vary from state to state, your child support obligation may be more or less than that of other people in seemingly similar situations.

Alimony. By filing this answer and waiver, you are agreeing to any requests for alimony in the petition. Alimony may be awarded to a spouse if the judge finds that one spouse has an actual need for it and also finds that the other spouse has the ability to pay. If you want alimony, you must request it in writing in a counterpetition and should not use this form. If you do not request alimony in writing before the final hearing, it is waived (you may not request it later). You may request permanent alimony, bridge-the-gap alimony, durational alimony, , and/or rehabilitative alimony. If alimony is awarded, the judge may order periodic payments, payments in lump sum, or both.

Marital/Nonmarital Assets and Liabilities. Florida law requires an equitable distribution of marital assets and marital liabilities. "Equitable" does not necessarily mean "equal." Many factors, including child support, time-sharing and alimony awards, may lead the court to make an unequal (but still equitable) distribution of assets and liabilities. Nonmarital assets and nonmarital liabilities are those assets and liabilities which the parties agree or the court determines belong to, or are the responsibility of, only one of the parties. By filing this answer and waiver, you are agreeing to any requests in the petition regarding division of assets and liabilities.

Final Judgment. You should receive a copy of the Final Judgment in the mail. If, for some reason you do not, you should contact the clerk's office to request a copy. It is important for you to review a copy of the Final Judgment in your case to see what happened and to know what you must do and what you are entitled to receive.

Nonlawyer. Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of a Disclosure from Nonlawyer, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also must put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SIXTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR
MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No: _____

In re: the Marriage of:

_____,
Petitioner,

and

_____,
Respondent

**ANSWER, WAIVER, AND REQUEST FOR COPY OF FINAL JUDGMENT
OF DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE**

I, *{full legal name}* _____, being sworn, certify that the following information is true:

1. I answer the Petition for Dissolution of Marriage filed in this action and admit all the allegations. By admitting all of the allegations in the petition, I agree to all relief requested in the petition including any requests regarding parenting and time-sharing, child support, alimony, distribution of marital assets and liabilities, and temporary relief.
2. I hereby waive notice of hearing as well as all future notices in connection with the Petition for Dissolution of Marriage, as filed and also waive my appearance at the final hearing.
3. I request that a copy of the Final Judgment of Dissolution of Marriage entered in this case be provided to me at the address below.
4. If this case involves minor child(ren), a completed Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act (UCCJEA) Affidavit, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.902(d), is filed with this answer.
5. A completed Notice of Social Security Number, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.902(j), is filed with this answer.
6. A completed Family Law Financial Affidavit, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.902(b) or (c), _____ is filed with this answer or _____ will be timely filed.

I certify that a copy of this document was _____ mailed _____ faxed and mailed _____ e-mailed _____ hand delivered to the person(s) listed below on {date} _____.

Other party or his/her attorney:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Fax Number: _____

Designated E-mail Address(es): _____

I understand that I am swearing or affirming under oath to the truthfulness of the claims made in this answer and that the punishment for knowingly making a false statement includes fines and/or imprisonment.

Dated: _____

Signature of Respondent

Printed Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

Designated E-mail Address(es): _____

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF _____

Sworn to or affirmed and signed before me on _____ by _____.

NOTARY PUBLIC or DEPUTY CLERK

[Print, type, or stamp commissioned name of notary or deputy clerk.]

_____ Personally known
_____ Produced identification
_____ Type of identification produced _____