

Checklist for Contested Divorce-Dane County

- Obtain “Summons and Petition for Divorce” and “Confidential Petition Addendum” (forms available at Dane County Law Library (DCLL) Rm L1007 in the Dane County Courthouse or online at: <https://courts.countyofdane.com/Resources/Forms/family-forms>. Social Security numbers must be placed on the Confidential Petition Addendum form, **not** the Summons and Petition.
- Optional** - If a temporary order hearing is necessary, obtain an “Order to Show Cause for Temporary Order” form.
- File the **original and three photocopies** of the Summons and Petition for Divorce and Confidential Petition Addendum and pay the filing fee in the Clerk of Courts (COC) Rm 1000, Dane County Courthouse.
Optional – If you feel you cannot pay the filing fee, you may apply for a “Petition for Waiver of Filing and Service Fees” in Rm 1000 (form available at DCLL, CCC, COC, or online).
- Optional** -File original and three photocopies of Order to Show Cause for Temporary Order with the CCC if hearing is needed.
- If your case involves minor children, complete an “Application for Child Support Services” (form available at DCLL, CCC, or online). This form should be completed even if child support is not being requested. The completed application should be submitted to the CCC in Room 2000 of the Dane County Courthouse.
- Serve the Summons and Petition and, if applicable, Order to Show for Temporary Order, on the other party (respondent). The Dane County Sheriff’s Civil Process Unit or a private process server (see yellow pages) will serve legal documents for a fee. If your spouse will admit to receiving the forms from you, obtain an “Admission of Service” form (available at DCLL or online) for your spouse to sign.
- Return a copy of the Proof of Service received from the process server, or the Admission of Service, to the CCC or COC. Retain the original document for yourself.
- Optional**-Attend temporary order hearing, if one is requested. Bring the original and a copy of your completed “Financial Disclosure Statement” to your hearing (form available at DCLL or online).
- Complete a “Marital Settlement Agreement” **OR** file a “Request for Status Conference” to have a pretrial hearing before a court commissioner if there is not a total agreement on all divorce issues **after you have tried to settle the issue.**
- File a copy of the Marital Settlement Agreement or Request for Status Conference with the CCC. (Each party should retain a photocopy, with one person also retaining the original). If you are filing for a status conference you must serve a copy on the other party by mail.
- Complete and file a copy of your Financial Disclosure Statement with the CCC (form available from LRC or online). You must provide the other party a copy of your Financial Disclosure Statement. Retain the original for your records.

YOU CANNOT GET A FINAL HEARING DATE UNTIL ALL ABOVE ITEMS ARE COMPLETED

After these steps are completed, the CCC will complete a “Case Status Memo” form or schedule the final hearing. The court will send you notice of the hearing date.

- Prepare the “Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Judgment” (FFCLJ) form, make three photocopies and submit to the court for signature at your hearing (form available at DCLL or online). A photocopy of your completed Marital Settlement Agreement should be attached to the original and each of the three copies of the FFCLJ.
- Prepare the “Divorce/Annulment Worksheet” (Vital Statistics form). Submit this to the Judge’s Clerk or the Court Commissioner at your final hearing. NOTE: This form is not needed on legal separation cases. This form is available at the Dane County Courthouse (DCLL, CCC, COC) and online.
- If not previously submitted, bring the original and a copy of your completed Financial Disclosure Statement and Proof of Service of the Order for Appearance (if applicable) to the hearing.
- Attend the divorce hearing. Be prepared to present your case.

Dane County Law Library (DCLL): Rm L1007, 266-6316
Court Commissioner Center (CCC): Rm 2000
Clerk of Courts (COC): Rm 1000, 266-4311

Dane County Courthouse
215 S Hamilton Street
Madison, WI 53703
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