

COMMON PLEAS COURT OF MERCER COUNTY, OHIO
STANDING ORDER 2 [SO 2]
STANDARD VISITATION SCHEDULE / PARENTING TIME ALLOCATION
(Revised August 1, 2008)

Children clearly profit by continued meaningful exposure to both parents. Children need the continuing and regular involvement of both parents to feel loved. No specific schedule will satisfy the change in needs of both children and parents over the years. Critical to the success of any schedule is that each parent be flexible to the changing needs of a child.

Please remember, companionship is a dual right. It involves each parent's right to share in the life of the child, and the child's right to know both parents and to enjoy their companionship. If both parents remember the child's interests, parenting time will be happier and more beneficial for all.

If a child indicates a strong opposition to being with the non-residential parent, it shall be the responsibility of both parents to appropriately deal with the situation by calmly discussing with the child his or her reasons, and to work together to alleviate these misgivings without confrontation or argument. It is the absolute affirmative duty of each parent or foster an environment which avoids such problems, and to make certain that the children enjoy companionship with both parents.

If there is a willful denial of companionship by either parent, the Court may make a finding of contempt, and order appropriate sanctions, which may include incarceration, fine, and attorney fees. Further, a parent's interference with the parenting time of the other parent may be considered a change of circumstances allowing the Court to modify the allocation of parental rights and responsibilities.

It is recognized that each situation and each child is different, and it is preferred that parents tailor the parenting schedule to meet the specific needs of their children. In the event they cannot, the Court has established the following minimum standard guidelines for parenting time. In all cases in which the parties incorporate these guidelines into a shared parenting plan, the person who is not designated the legal custodian for school purposes shall have the same parenting time schedule as the non-residential parent, as set out below:

Unless the Court orders a special visitation schedule, the following schedule shall be the standard visitation with parties who live within a reasonable distance from each other. Where the parties do not live within a reasonable traveling distance of each other, a special schedule will be established in each case.

Parenting time between non-residential parents and children should be not less than:

1. **Alternate weekends beginning Friday at 7:00 p.m. and ending Sunday at 7:00 p.m., however, the beginning and ending times may be varied to accommodate the work schedule of the parties.**
2. **The non-residential parent shall have parenting time on Wednesday, 5:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.**

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3. Holiday visitation shall be as follows:

EVEN YEARS

MOTHER	FATHER
<p><u>Martin Luther King Day</u> Friday evening to Monday evening</p> <p><u>Memorial Day</u> Friday evening to Monday evening</p>	<p><u>President's Day</u> Friday evening to Monday evening</p> <p><u>Easter</u> Thursday evening to Sunday evening</p>
<p><u>Labor Day</u> Friday evening to Monday evening</p>	<p><u>4th of July</u> If the 4th falls on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, the time shall commence at 6:00 p.m. on July 3 until 9:00 a.m. on July 5. If the 4th falls on Sunday or Monday the time shall commence on Friday night at 6:00 p.m. and conclude July 5 at 9:00 a.m.</p> <p>If the 4th falls on Friday or Saturday, parenting time shall commence at 6:00 p.m. on July 3rd and conclude Sunday at 6:00 p.m.</p>
	<p><u>Thanksgiving Day</u> Wednesday evening to Sunday evening</p>
<p><u>Christmas</u> December 22 or the beginning of the Christmas school holiday (whichever is earlier) at 6:00 p.m. until 12:00 noon on December 25</p>	<p><u>Christmas & New Year's Vacation</u> 12:00 noon on December 25 for the remainder of the Christmas holiday until 6:00 p.m. on the evening before school resumes (whether the children are of school age or not).</p>

During ODD YEARS the above holiday schedule shall be reversed.

Christmas and other holidays may be modified by agreement of the parties to suit individual family schedules.

When the holiday parenting time of a parent falls on a Monday following that parent's regular weekend parenting time, then the parenting time will be continuous, i.e., the child(ren) will stay overnight on Sunday and return to the other parent on Monday at 7:00 p.m.

When a conflict occurs between the holiday parenting time and the alternate weekend/Monday parenting time, the holiday parenting time will take precedence.

The child shall spend Mother's Day in the companionship of the mother commencing at 9:00 a.m. on Mother's Day and concluding at 7:00 p.m. on Mother's Day.

The child shall spend Father's Day in the companionship of the father commencing at 9:00 a.m. on Father's Day and concluding at 7:00 p.m. on Father's Day.

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4. **Child(ren) birthdays:** The **child's birthday** shall be celebrated in **even years with mother** and in **odd years with father**. In the event that the child will be with the parent not exercising parenting time, this time shall be from 5:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., unless it is a weekend, in which event it shall be from 9:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. All siblings shall be included during this birthday celebration parenting time.

5. **Vacations:** Each parent should have extended parenting time with the child(ren) for a period of four (4) weeks during the summer, if the child(ren) are of school age. If the child(ren) are not of school age, the four-week vacation period may be scheduled at any time during the year. No more than two of the four weeks may be taken consecutively, unless otherwise agreed by the parties. *Neither parent may schedule vacation parenting time which conflicts with the other parent's holiday parenting time.*

Each parent must give the other parent not less than thirty (30) days prior written notice of the dates he/she intends to exercise parenting vacation time. When vacation notices conflict, the first notice received prevails.

6. **Telephone contact/E-mail:** Neither parent shall interfere with telephone, mail or e-mail contact between the children and the other parent. Long-distance calls from an out-of-town parent shall be at that parent's expense.

Each parent is entitled to reasonable (no more than once a day) phone contact with the child(ren) when the child(ren) are with the other parent for more than 24 hours.

Both parents shall provide each other with their address and phone number. If parents remove the child(ren) from their residence overnight for holiday/vacation parenting time or any other purpose, the parents shall provide each other with an emergency telephone number where the child(ren) can be reached.

7. **Late Pick-Up:** The residential parent shall have the children ready for pick-up at the start of all parenting time. The children and the residential parent have no duty to wait for the non-residential parent to arrive for parenting time more than thirty (30) minutes, unless notified. The non-residential parent who arrives more than thirty (30) minutes without prior notification for a particular parenting time forfeits that parenting time, unless the residential parent agrees otherwise.

8. **Drop-Off:** The non-residential parent will not return the children early from parenting time unless the parents agree to a different drop-off time in advance. The residential parent or other adult well-known to the children must be present when the children are returned from parenting time.

9. **Canceling Non-Residential Parenting Time:** Except in emergency situations, the non-residential parent must give at least 24 hours advance notice when canceling any parenting time. Failure to exercise as scheduled visitation is a waiver of that specific visitation period.

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10. **Medical Treatment and Emergencies:** If the children become seriously ill or injured, each parent shall notify the other parent as soon as practicable. If the children become ill or injured during their time with the non-residential parent, said parent shall contact the residential parent to secure treatment unless the situation is a medical emergency.
11. **Transportation:** The receiving parent has the responsibility for transportation of the children for parenting time with them and may use another adult well-known to the children for pickup up or dropping off the children when necessary. Any person transporting the children may not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and must be a licensed, insured driver. All child restraint and seat-belt laws must be observed by the drive. Car seats should be exchanged when required.
12. **School Work:** Parents shall provide time for children to study and complete homework assignments, even if the completion of work interferes with the parent's plans for the children. The residential parent is responsible for providing the non-residential parent all of the school assignments and books. Summer school which is necessary for a child must be attended, regardless of which parent has the child during the summer school period.
13. **Extracurricular Activities:** Regardless of where the children are living, their continued participation in extracurricular activities, school-related or otherwise, should not be interrupted. It shall be the responsibility of the parent with whom the children are residing at the time to discuss the scheduling of such activities with the children and to provide transportation to the activities. Each parent shall provide the other parent with notice of all extracurricular activities, complete with schedules and the name, address and telephone number of the activity leader, if available.
14. **Makeup of Non-Residential Parenting Time:** Parenting time which cannot take place because of serious illness of the child(ren) will be made up at the same time the following week.
15. **Exchange of child(ren) clothing/personal property:** Neither parent shall restrict the child(ren) from taking those personal items which facilitate personal comfort and enjoyment to the home of the other parent. This includes sufficient clothing and outerwear appropriate for the season. In the case of infants this shall include bottles, formula, diapers, and any other necessary supplies or equipment.
16. **Access to Records:** The non-residential parent shall have access to the same records, same school activities and to any day-care center which the children attend on the same basis that said records or access is legally permitted to the residential parent, unless a restrictive order has been obtained from the Court. If is the responsibility of the parent obtaining a restrictive order to serve it on the appropriate organization.