



**Citizens' Guide to Court Procedure**  
**Court of Common Pleas Family Division**  
**Child Custody**

**Disclaimer: Court staff is not permitted to provide legal advice. To receive legal advice, you should contact a licensed attorney. The phone number for the Philadelphia Bar Association Legal Referral and Information Service is 215-238-6333. Nothing in this publication is meant to be construed as legal advice.**

1. The Domestic Relations Section of the Family Division handles child custody matters.
2. All documents are filed at Clerk of Family Court, 1133 Chestnut Street, First Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107. The hours of operation are Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm.
3. After a complaint is filed, the matter is scheduled for a pretrial conference before a hearing officer. At the conference, the hearing officer attempts to negotiate an agreement between the parties. If an agreement cannot be reached, the matter is scheduled for a hearing before master.
4. Once a final child custody order is entered, the parties must abide by the order, or may be held in contempt of court for deliberately and intentionally failing to follow the order. At any time after the issuance of the final order for child custody, a petition to modify may be filed by any party.
5. Certified or exemplified copies are obtained from the Clerk of Family Court at 1133 Chestnut Street, First Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107. The hours of operation are Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm.
6. Requests for continuances must be made in writing no later than ten calendar days before the date of the conference or hearing. For conferences, the request must be submitted to the hearing officer. For hearings the request must be submitted to the judge or master.

**Fees and Miscellaneous Costs:**

First Filing: Custody, Partial Custody or Visitation.....	\$ 70.80
Respondent's First Responsive Filing.....	\$ 36.74
Subsequent Custody Petitions or Motions.....	\$ 4 2.68
Custody Certifications.....	\$ 41.58
Home Investigation.....	\$200.00
Psychological Evaluation.....	\$200.00