

**FAMILY LAW SELF-HELP PROGRAM FOR CHARLOTTE COUNTY
RESPONDENT – PATERNITY
ANSWER TO PETITION FOR PATERNITY AND RELATED RELIEF**

Self-represented individuals are provided this checklist as part of the Family Law Self-Help program for Charlotte County. This covers the basic procedural requirements for filing the type of RESPONSE noted above. It is not intended to replace actual LEGAL ADVICE, which you must receive only by a licensed attorney. This checklist should help you maneuver your case through the legal process with no unnecessary delays – each document includes specific instructions (DO NOT FILE THE INSTRUCTION PAGES).

Each of the forms should be kept separated to better organize your efforts and to ensure all forms/instructions are included. You may schedule an appointment with a Family Law Case Manager staff to have your documents notarized and copied at no cost.

- General Information for Self-Represented Litigants

COMPLETE AND FILE:

- Notice of Related Cases [Form 12.900(h)]
- Answer to Petition to Determine Paternity and for Related Relief [Form 12.983(b)]
- Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Enforcement Act (UCCJEA) Affidavit [Form 12.902(d)]
- Financial Affidavit (short form) [Form 12.902(b)]. Used when annual income is under \$50,000.
OR: Financial Affidavit (long form) [Form 12.902(c)]. Used when annual income of \$50,000 or more.
- Notice of Social Security Number [Form 12.902(J)]
- Notice of Current Address [Form 12.915]
Parties use this form to keep each other and the Court aware of any address changes to avoid missing important notices or correspondence regarding the case.
- Certificate of Compliance with Mandatory Disclosure [Form 12.932]
(DUE WITHIN 45 DAYS OF SERVICE, unless waived by both Parties...actual documents (tax returns, pay stubs, etc.) should not be filed in the court file, but provided directly to the other Party.
- Parenting Plan [Form 12.995(a)]. May be filed as proposed by one Party, or as an agreed plan if both Parties sign.
OR: Supervised/Safety Focused Parenting Plan [Form 12.995(b)]. Used in cases when Child(ren) cannot be safely alone with the other parent.
OR: Relocation/Long Distance Parenting Plan [Form 12.995(c)]
Used when planning to relocate more than 50 miles from the current principal place of residence.

REQUIRED CLASS:

- Parent Education and Family Stabilization Course Completion
Standing Orders provide contact information for enrollment. Each parent MUST attend either in-person or online class.

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After the RESPONDENT is served, the following additional documents may be necessary. All forms may be download from WWW.FLCOURTS.ORG, or may be requested from the Family Law Self-Help program, by submitting a blue request form (FLSH-Charlotte Form 2) to the Administrative Office of the Courts.

- Motion for Scientific Paternity Testing [Form 12.983(e)]
and: Order on Motion for Scientific Paternity Testing [Form 12.983(f)]
Either Party may file this motion/order to determine biological paternity. Responsibility for the costs of such laboratory testing will be determined by agreement of the Parties or as ordered by the Judge.
- Child Support Guidelines Worksheet [Form 12.902(e)]
Either Party may file this worksheet after both financial affidavits have been filed.
- Motion for Deviate from Child Support Guidelines [Form 12.943]
Used only when you want the Court to order more/less child support than recommended on the worksheet.
- Motion for Default [Form 12.922(a)] and Default [Form 12.922(b)]
This may be filed if the Respondent has failed to file any papers within 20 days of being served, to permit a final hearing/trial to be scheduled.
- Notice for Trial [Form 12.924)]
This is filed when a DEFAULT has been entered, or when no agreement can be reached (after formal mediation), or when requesting a final hearing for entry of final judgment after settlement is reached.
- Final Judgment of Paternity [Form 12.983(g)]
Parties may submit this as a “proposed” order if all issues have been agreed and properly filed. A final hearing should be set, using the Notice of Trial form.

Many of the forms noted on this page may require you to seek legal guidance from a licensed attorney.