

**POLICY 3A**  
**WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMON PLEAS COURT**  
**GENERAL DIVISION**  
**2015 STANDARD PARENTING TIME POLICY**  
**Effective for Orders issued beginning May 1, 2015.**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Law of Ohio requires a Court in a divorce, dissolution, spousal support or child support proceeding to "make any just and reasonable order regarding the rights of a non-residential parent of a child to parent his or her child.

Each parent needs the frequent and predictable pattern of parenting time to avoid being overwhelmed by the day-to-day duties as a single parent, and that most importantly, a child(ren) needs the continuing and regular involvement with the non-residential parent to feel loved by that parent.

No specific schedule will satisfy the changing needs of each parent and child(ren) over the years. We know that critical to the success of putting any schedule in practice is that each parent be flexible, willing to change times and/or dates, by mutual cooperation and agreement, based on the changing needs of a child(ren) as (s)he grows older, in addition to the parents' own schedules and interests.

If you are experiencing major or continuing problems in putting your parenting time order or agreement into practice, the court expects that you make your best effort to resolve the problem by contacting the other parent first, and trying to work out the differences between you. If your effort has not been successful, then you may wish to file an action with the Court and request a Court mediator to assist in resolving the issues.

Those experienced in dealing with families know that maintaining a healthy parent-parent relationship and child-parent relationship is often difficult even when parents and children live in the same home. When parents live in separate homes, the ability to maintain healthy family relationships may be aggravated when parents have to agree on times and dates, arrange competing (work) schedules, provide transportation, and accommodate each other's and their child(ren)'s emergencies, changing priorities and needs. When parents live a considerable distance from each other, there may be additional aggravations of transportation and telephone expenses, diminished time for one parent with the child(ren), and increased responsibilities for the other parent, which may impact on a healthy child-parent relationship.

The Court has established a specific order of parenting for parents living separately for the following reasons:

1. To provide direction to both parents when disagreements occur about dividing their child(ren)'s time between them. Otherwise, a minor problem may easily turn into stressful, expensive and lengthy litigation.

2. To provide a minimum standard of time for the non-residential parent to have with their child(ren), and a basis for negotiating changes, without the parents incurring expenses for court costs and attorney fees.
3. To provide a statement of rights and responsibilities between the parents regarding implementation of the parenting schedule.

If the parents do not resolve their problems with each other, the result may be the loss for a child of the companionship, love and support from a parent.

No specific schedule will always satisfy the child's needs, as well as those of each parent, over the years. We know that critical to the success of putting any schedule in practice is that each parent is flexible, willing to change times by mutual cooperation and agreement, based on the changing needs of their child as he or she grows older.

Research regarding children of separated parents indicates "children profit by continued exposure to both parents. The future condition of the divorced family is predicted by the ability of the parents to communicate effectively on parenting matters and to allow for each to influence and direct the child's development. Continued contact between the child and both parents predicts the child's successful adaptation to divorce. (Wallerstein & Kelly, "Surviving the Break-Up, 1980).

If you are experiencing serious or continuing problems in working out a time-sharing arrangement with the child(ren)'s other parent, THE COURT EXPECTS THAT YOU WILL MAKE YOUR VERY BEST EFFORT TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM BY CONTACTING THE OTHER PARENT FIRST AND TRYING TO WORK OUT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN YOU.

It is normal that problems will from time to time arise. You may seek the assistance of a family counselor or you may wish to file a motion with the Court to try and resolve your differences with the other parent. If you file with the Court you may request Mediation or the Court may schedule Mediation on the Court's own motion.

If the Court Order or Decree was filed after May 1, 2015 and indicates that the "Standard Order for Parenting Time" is the Order for parenting time, Policy 3A shall apply.

PARENTING TIME SHALL TAKE PLACE AT SUCH TIMES AND PLACES AS THE PARTIES CAN AGREE (these are the most important words). However, if the parties are not able to reach an agreement then the ORDER OF THE COURT IS AS FOLLOWS:

### 3.01A - EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy shall apply to any Court Order or Decree filed on or after May 1, 2015, which states that the "Standard Order for Parenting Time" applies.

### **3.02A - RULES APPLICABLE TO BOTH LOCAL AND LONG DISTANCE PARENTING TIME**

#### **A. Additional Parenting Time:**

For parents who are unable to agree on a parenting schedule, the parenting time shall be as set forth in this rule unless otherwise ordered by the Court. Additional parenting time other than as set forth herein may occur at such other times as the parties can agree.

#### **B. Canceling Non-Residential Parenting Time:**

Except in emergency situations, the non-residential parent must give at least 48 hours advance notice when canceling any parenting time. Parenting time cancelled by the non-residential parent is not entitled to be made up unless the parties agree otherwise.

#### **C. Drop-Off:**

A non-residential parent shall not return the child before the end of the parenting time nor return the child late unless the parties agree in advance. The residential parent or other adult well-known to the child must be present when the child is returned from parenting time; if the child is of such an age that the child requires supervision.

#### **D. Grace Period:**

The residential parent has no duty to wait more than 20 minutes for the non-residential parent to arrive for parenting time. The non-residential parent who is more than 20 minutes late for parenting time shall forfeit that time at the discretion of the residential parent.

#### **E. School and Daycare Information:**

Both parents shall be entitled to communicate with and have access to any and all records concerning the child kept by the child's school or day care. The residential parent shall arrange for the appropriate school or daycare officials to release any and all information concerning the child to the non-residential parent. Both parents shall execute any authorizations or releases necessary to release the records to the other. The residential parent shall list at the school and daycare the non-custodial parent as a "parent" of the child.

The residential parent shall promptly provide a copy of the child's school calendar, report cards, any reports concerning the status or progress of the child, and any other important information to the non-residential parent. The non-residential parent shall have the right to participate in parent-teacher conferences, school trips, school programs, other school events and student activities relating to the child to the same extent and under the same terms and conditions by which access is provided to the residential parent.

The non-residential parent shall be notified in advance of the taking of the child's school pictures and be provided a copy of an order form so that the non-residential parent may have the opportunity to purchase pictures.

The non-residential parent shall not remove the child from the school or daycare premises

except during periods of time to which the non-residential parent is otherwise entitled pursuant to the Court's order or by written agreement of the parents.

The residential parent shall provide a copy of this order or any written agreement to the school or daycare.

**F. Medical Treatment, Emergencies and Related Information:**

Both parents shall have access to all medical, dental, optometry, psychiatric and psychological records of the minor child and may talk to or consult with any treating physician or other care providers for the child. Both parents shall provide to the other the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of any medical and other care providers who are treating the child, and shall execute any authorizations or releases necessary to release these records and documents to each other. Both parents shall notify the other of any medical related appointments prior to said appointment and shall keep the other informed of any significant health problems of the child.

If the child becomes seriously ill or injured requiring medical care, each parent shall notify the other parent as soon as possible. If the child is with the non-residential parent, said parent shall make every effort to contact and obtain authorization for treatment from the residential parent prior to treatment. The non-residential parent shall retain the authority to consent to any necessary emergency medical treatment for the child.

**G. Medications:**

Regularly prescribed medications and any over the counter medications that the child is taking, along with directions and dosage schedule, shall be sent with the child in the original prescription containers during parenting time and returned to the residential parent at the end of the parenting time.

**H. Telephone and Mail:**

The residential and non-residential parent may have reasonable telephone contact with the child, not to exceed once a day, unless otherwise agreed by the parents, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. If the child is not available, the child shall return the telephone call within a 24 hour period. Both parents shall encourage free communications between the child and the other parent, and shall not do anything to restrict reasonable communication by telephone or mail. A child's telephone call shall not be monitored or recorded. Any mail between the child and either parent shall be provided immediately to the child, shall be strictly confidential and shall not be opened or read by the other parent.

**I. Cooperation:**

Both parents shall refrain from criticizing the other parent or arguing with the other parent in the presence of the child and shall not permit others to do the same. Both parents shall refrain from criticizing the other parent through public displays on social media sites.

**J. Exchange of Phone Numbers:**

Each parent must, unless this Court Orders otherwise, keep the other parent informed at all times of his/her current address and a telephone number for the parent as well as a telephone number where the child may be reached if that is different from the parent's phone

**K. Scheduling Between Parents:**

It is the responsibility of the parents, not the child, to make all parenting time arrangements. Neither parent shall use nor plan through the child to arrange future parenting time or other activities which conflict with the other parent's allotted times. It is not the responsibility of a child to mediate or become involved in parental differences over times, dates or activities.

**L. Clothing and Supplies for Child :**

The residential parent shall send with the child sufficient clean clothing and outerwear appropriate for the season and for any known activities. In the case of infants, the residential parent shall send with the child sufficient bottles, formula, diapers and related changing supplies, and shall inform the non-residential parent of the child's sleeping and eating schedules. The non-residential parent shall return all clothing and unused items at the end of his or her parenting time.

**M. Moving:**

If either parent intends to move to a different residence, said moving parent shall notify the other in writing within seven days of the move by providing a new address and telephone number.

The residential parent is also required to notify the Court by filing a Notice of Intent to Relocate with this Court on the Court's standard form within seven days of the move.

**N. Change of Distance between Parents:**

If after the original court order, the distance between the parents' residences changes, the following policy will control:

If distance between parents is now less than 150 miles, the Local Parenting Time Guidelines will automatically become the order of the Court.

If distance between parents is now greater than 150, miles the Long Distance Parenting Time Guidelines will automatically become the order of the Court.

**LOCAL PARENTING TIME GUIDELINES**  
**(For parents who live less than 150 miles apart)**

**3.03A - CHILD 0 - 2 MONTHS**

For infants younger than two (2) months of age, the non-residential parent may spend time with the

infant in the residential parent's home three (3) days per week, for two (2) hours per visit. If the parties cannot agree as to days and times, the visit shall be each Sunday from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and each Tuesday and Thursday evening, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

**3.04A - CHILD 2 MONTHS TO 1 YEAR**

The non-residential parent may spend time with the child away from the residential parent's residence every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., and one day each weekend, alternating between Saturday and Sunday, from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

**3.05A - CHILD AGE 1 TO 18 YEARS**

**A. Weekends:**

The non-residential parent shall have parenting time on alternating weekends beginning Friday at 6:00 p.m. and ending Sunday at 8:00 p.m.

**B. Weekdays:**

The non-residential parent shall have parenting time every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. (or other day or time by agreement). If the child is in school or daycare, the non-residential parent may choose to pick the child up from school or daycare at the end of the normal day to begin the visit. Once the child reaches seventh grade, the non-residential parent may keep the child overnight and return the child to school or the residential parent's home the next morning.

**C. Odd Numbered Year Holidays and Events:**

Residential parent will have the child for parenting time as follows:

**Martin Luther King Day:** From 6:00 p.m. night before the holiday to 8:00 p.m. day of the holiday.

**Spring Break:** From 6:00 p.m. on the last day of school to 8:00 p.m. on the last day of the break. Parties shall follow the calendar of the residential parent's school district regardless of whether the child is of school age.

**July 4<sup>th</sup>:** From 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

**Columbus Day:** From 6:00 p.m. night before the holiday to 8:00 p.m. day of holiday.

**Veterans Day:** From 6:00 p.m. night before the holiday to 8:00 p.m. day of holiday.

**Christmas:** From 6:00 p.m. the last day of school before the break until December 25<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m. Parties shall follow the calendar of the residential parent's school district regardless of whether the child is of school age.

**Non-Residential parent will have the child on:**

**President's Day:** From 6:00 p.m. night before the holiday to 8:00 p.m. day of holiday.

**Memorial Day:** From 6:00 p.m. night before the holiday to 8:00 p.m. day of holiday.

**Labor Day:** From 6:00 p.m. night before the holiday to 8:00 p.m. day of holiday.

**Halloween (12 & under ONLY):** 5:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

**Thanksgiving:** From Wednesday night at 6:00 p.m. to Sunday at 8:00 p.m.

**Christmas:** From December 25<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. the day before school commences in January. Parties shall follow the calendar of the residential parent's school district regardless of whether the child is of school age.

**D. Even Numbered Year Holiday:**

The parenting time for the odd-number year holidays will be reversed between the parents.

**E. Mother's Day:**

Mother's Day shall be spent with the mother from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. regardless of which parent is entitled to the weekend.

**F. Father's Day:**

Father's Day shall be spent with the father from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. regardless of which parent is entitled to the weekend.

**G. Child's Birthday:**

Child's birthday shall be spent with the residential parent in the even-numbered years, and shall be spent with the non-residential in the odd-numbered years, from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. for a child not in school and 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. for a child in school.

**H. Summer Vacations:**

**1) Child age 1 but under 5 years of age:**

The non-residential parent may have extended parenting time for two (2) one-week periods each summer. One week is defined as 7 days, which shall include the vacationing parent's regular weekend.

**2) Child 5 years of age and older:**

Summer weeks shall be alternated between the parents each Sunday at 8:00 p.m.,

beginning the first Sunday after school ends and ending at 8:00 p.m. the Sunday before school starts. The residential parent shall have the first week in the summer of the even numbered years and the non-residential parent shall have the first week in the summer of the odd numbered years.

Each year, upon 30 days advance notice to the other parent, each parent may extend one vacation week to two consecutive weeks for one extended out of town vacation, provided the other parent is accorded a makeup week. The residential parent shall have first choice of the second week in even numbered years and the non-residential parent shall have the first choice in odd numbered years. If the parties cannot agree on the makeup week, it shall be the week either before or after the two week vacation at the election of the parent entitled to the make-up week.

### **3.06A - ADDITIONAL RULES APPLICABLE TO LOCAL PARENTING TIME**

#### **A. Conflicting Schedules:**

In the event of any conflict between parenting time schedules, the following is the order of precedence:

- (1) Birthdays
- (2) Mother / Father's Day
- (3) Holidays
- (4) Vacation periods or extended parenting times
- (5) Weekends and midweek days

#### **B. Illness:**

If a child is so severely ill that traveling between the parent's homes is not feasible, any parenting time that is missed due to the illness of a child shall be made up the following week. The residential parent shall promptly notify the non-residential parent of the child's illness prior to the exercise of parenting time.

#### **C. Transportation:**

The non-residential parent shall be responsible for transportation of the child to and from his/her home for parenting time and may use another responsible person well-known to the child for picking up or dropping off when necessary. Any person transporting the child shall not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and must be a licensed, insured driver. Car seats shall be exchanged when required.

#### **D. School Work:**

A parent must provide time for the child to study and complete homework assignments, papers or other school assigned projects. The residential parent must inform the other parent of the work to be done, and it must be completed during the parenting time period. Summer school, if required by the home school, must be attended, regardless of which parent the child is with during the summer school period.

**E. Child's Activities:**

Scheduled periods of parenting time shall not be delayed or denied because a child has extracurricular activities or a job. It is the responsibility of the parents to discuss extracurricular activities of the child in advance. A child shall not be enrolled in more than one activity at a time without the agreement of both parents if it is going to interfere with the other parent's parenting time. The parent who has the child during the time of scheduled activities is responsible for transportation, attendance and/or other arrangements, if the parents reside in the same county, except that the non-residential parent may require the child to miss activities for up to 2 weeks in the summer during a planned vacation. Both parents are encouraged to attend all their child's activities.

**LONG DISTANCE PARENTING TIME GUIDELINES**  
(For parents who live more than 150 miles apart)

**3.07A - CHILD 0 - 2 MONTHS**

For infants younger than two (2) months of age, the non-residential parent may spend time with the infant in the residential parent's home each Sunday from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**3.08A - CHILD 2 MONTHS TO 1 YEAR**

The non-residential parent may spend time with the child away from the residential parent's residence each weekend, alternating between Saturday and Sunday, from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

**3.09A - CHILD AGE 1 TO 18 YEARS**

**A. Spring Break**

Every year the non-residential parent shall have parenting time from the day school ends for break at 6:00 p.m., through and including last day of vacation at 8:00 p.m.

**B. Summer Break**

The non-residential parent shall have 6 weeks of parenting time beginning the second Saturday at 9:00 a.m. after school is out until the Sunday at the end of the sixth week ending no later than 8:00 p.m. These dates may be changed by agreement of both parents.

**C. Thanksgiving:**

In odd-numbered years only, the non-residential parent shall have parenting time from the day school ends for break at 6:00 p.m. until the day before school recommences at 8:00 p.m.

**D. Christmas:**

**In even numbered years:**

The non-residential parent shall have parenting time from the day school ends for break at 6:00

p.m., through and including December 26 at 8:00 p.m.

In odd numbered years:

The non-residential parent shall have parenting time from December 26 at 10:00 a.m. through and including the day before school recommences from break at 8:00 p.m.

E. For Spring Break, Summer Break, Thanksgiving and Christmas the parties shall follow the calendar of the residential parent's school district regardless of whether the child is of school age.

F. **Additional Time:**

Excluding the residential parent's summer break time, the non-residential parent may have parenting time on the third weekend each month, if the traveling time for the child does not exceed three (3) hours one-way from home to home. The residential parent must have at least one week advance notice. The times shall be 6:00 p.m. on Friday, through 8:00 p.m. on Sunday. The parents may agree to a different weekend or times.

G. **Mother's Day and Father's Day:**

Mother's Day and Father's Day may be spent with the appropriate parent, if the parent chooses to spend the day with the child from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. One week's advance notice to the residential parent is necessary.

**3.10A - ADDITIONAL RULES TO LONG DISTANCE PARENTING TIME**

A. **Summer School:**

If during the non-residential parent's summer break the child must attend summer school in order for the child to pass to the next grade, the child must attend school at the location of the non-residential parent's home after receipt of written notice from the residential parent. The non-residential parent must make arrangements with both schools and be certain that documentation of completion is received by the child's school in the residential parent's community. If attending summer school at the non-residential parent's home is not a possibility, summer parenting time shall be adjusted in duration so the child can attend summer school at the home of the residential parent.

B. **Transportation:**

The non-residential parent shall pay or provide for the transportation to the non-residential parent's residence and the residential parent shall pay or provide for the transportation home to the residential parent's residence. Any responsible adult with a valid driver's license and well known to the child may be used by either parent to provide transportation.