



## Harbor Family Law

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### DO's

1. DO try to work cooperatively. Though your history may be difficult, emotional or acrimonious, try your best to put it aside. Please keep in mind that the concerns we face are largely unprecedented, and each of us (your co-parent included) are working through daily concerns related to COVID-19 without any prior guidance or experience.
2. DO make good-faith attempts and efforts to reach a consensus with your co-parent and compromise as much as possible.
3. DO try to empathize. For many reasons, this is a very scary time. Try to place yourself in the shoes of your co-parent. Many of the same fears you may have for the health, safety, and stability of your family and children are likely very similar to those of your co-parent. Remember that.
4. DO memorialize any changes or adjustments to residential schedules and custody arrangements in some form of written or recorded communication. This can include, but is not limited to: co-parenting APPs such as OurFamilyWizard or TalkingParents, e-mail, text, written correspondence, or if necessary, through the assistance of attorneys.
5. DO keep communication open regarding your child or children's medical needs and status. Keep both your co-parent, and your child's medical providers, informed of any health issues related to your child or children. This is especially important if any household member may have come in contact with COVID-19 or are exhibiting symptoms of the same.
6. DO communicate with your co-parent about any changes to employment and childcare schedules, or any other change to your schedule which may impact you, your children, or you co-parent. Try to do so in a timely manner.
7. DO have a discussion with your children and extended family about how continued exposure to the public may impact not only custodial schedules, but also other aspects of daily life. Remember, this is something that impacts and

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affects us all, and the decisions we make today will impact ourselves and others tomorrow.

8. DO maintain open communication with your attorney. Especially when in doubt, discuss your situation with your attorney before making any major decisions. Your attorney is there to help you navigate this situation and provide you the information needed for you to make the best decisions possible for yourself, and by extension your children.
9. DO maintain appropriate practices to keep yourself safe and healthy.
10. DO keep yourself apprised as to all actions and directives from local, state and federal governments.

### **DON'T's**

1. DO NOT make any assumptions about the status of your co-parent's household, their parenting choices, or the possibility of exposure in their home to COVID-19.
2. DO NOT make unilateral decisions or proclamations regarding visitation, residential schedule, or custody matters.
3. DO NOT make threats with regard to withholding your children or seeking court action.
4. DO NOT engage in unnecessary conflict. To a large extent, we are all operating on information and directives that are continuing to change. While having a plan in place will help to minimize concerns, conflict over unnecessary things (for instance, Spring Break custody arrangements next year) will only increase anxiety and stress, and serve to make this situation more difficult than needed.
5. DO NOT take unnecessary risks with your health, the health of your children, or the health of your co-parent and the people in your respective homes. If you or your co-parent has an elderly or immunocompromised individual living with you, be mindful about whether insisting on visitation in the short-term is worth the significant risk it may pose. Please also be mindful that while the elderly and immunocompromised may be the most at-risk among us, COVID-19 puts all of us at risk.
6. DO NOT panic. While this is undoubtedly a scary and uncertain time, we will come through this and life will carry on. Problems that arise because of this outbreak can and will be solved in the weeks and months that follow.