

A VERY
SPECIAL REPORT
INCLUDING BONUS CHECKLIST

TOP 10 MISTAKES that could hurt your FAMILY LAW CASE and your children

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INTRODUCTION

Who is behind this report and why should I listen?

I want to thank you for requesting this special report. I think this information will help you in your desire to obtain the best possible settlement or judgment in your divorce case. More importantly, it will help you guide your behavior during and after your divorce, which has a great influence on the emotional adjustment of your children.

Hello, my name is Tonya Page and I am a Missouri Family Law Attorney in St. Louis. Many people often ask me what family law means. Generally, family law cases include, but are not limited to:

1. Dissolutions of marriage (divorce)
2. Maintenance (alimony)
3. Division of assets and debts in high net worth cases
4. Complex custody litigation
5. Relocation
6. Motions to Modify Custody and Support
7. Paternity actions
8. Guardianships
9. Grandparent visitation
10. Orders of protection
11. Litigation of pre-nuptial and post-nuptial agreements
12. Post-judgment enforcement
13. Contempt proceedings

I only handle family law cases. I do this because I am devoted to helping those going through the most traumatic times in their lives. In addition, focusing on one practice area allows me to provide the best possible personal service to my clients.

So if you have a traffic ticket or a DWI, I can't help you.

While each case is different, and past results cannot be used to predict future results, I can tell you that I have been privileged to help my clients achieve their goals by relentlessly pursuing the best outcome possible within the law.

I have written this report so parents contemplating divorce or separation from their spouse, have guidance to help maximize the potential for the success of their case and to minimize the impact on their children. Divorce can be one of the biggest decisions in your life, and hiring the right attorney can have a big impact on the way your case is handled.



This is why I have included a list of questions you should ask before hiring an attorney to handle your case. There are a lot of books you could buy or internet sites that you can visit which have great information. But, I wanted to have this valuable information right now, for free, to read in the comfort of your own home or office.

Family Law is one of the most challenging, yet rewarding areas in the practice of law. I actively handle every aspect of the litigation process from client intake through trial. I have handled family law cases all over the State of Missouri, including St. Louis County, St. Louis City, St. Charles County, Boone County, Greene County, Taney County, Franklin County, and Jefferson County. I have also handled appeals in the area of family law and have lectured on family law issues to other attorneys.

I am a member of the Missouri Bar (Family Law Section), BAMSL (Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis), Lawyers Association, and serve on the Executive Board for Lawyers for Kids. In addition, I am an active volunteer for Attorneys for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri and serve as a mentor for the Missouri Bar to new attorneys.

I enjoy what I do a lot. I do not simply “handle” cases. I set a limit on the number of cases I accept so that every client receives the personal and proper attention he or she deserves. I take great pride in representing real people with real problems on an individual basis.

Why A Free Special Report?

If you are at the point where you are contemplating divorcing or separating from your spouse, then likely you are not getting along and there may have been arguments and even domestic violence. In the heat of divorce litigation, it is easy to get caught up in the animosity towards your spouse and lose sight of the fact that the parents are getting divorced and not the children.

How you act and what you say in front of your children can affect your divorce case and more importantly, your children’s emotional state. Your conduct can make a big difference on how the Judge views you as a parent in determining what the custody and visitation schedule should be. Additionally, your conduct can directly impact the way your children feel about you and your spouse. Even after you are divorced, you both are still the parents of your children and will have to co-parent after the divorce is over. This report will hopefully help you avoid mistakes that parents going through a divorce commonly make.

While you may not need an attorney to represent you in every family law situation, you should at least have some basic facts at your disposal to help you decide whether or not you need professional legal representation and to know the questions to ask before you hire an attorney.

Most attorneys require you to make an appointment to get the information that you have here. Some others pressure you to sign a contract before they will answer basic questions. I believe you should have this information right now, and without any pressure.

Even if I do not or cannot accept your case, I want you to be educated about the process and common mistakes that parents going through a divorce often make.



Please, do not take the contents of this report as a substitute for legal advice. Each case is different with subtle complexities and nuances. It's beyond the scope of this document to take every possible consideration into account. I am not in the position to give you legal advice until I have accepted your case in writing and have had the chance to learn all the facts pertinent to your specific situation.

I hope you find this special report helpful and informative! If you have any questions going forward after you have read this report, please feel free to call me on my cell phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at (314)504-0584. If I am unavailable, leave a message, and you will get a return phone call within a couple hours.

Top 10 Mistakes to Avoid in a Divorce or Custody Proceeding

Mistake Number 1

Preventing your spouse from seeing your children.

One of the factors the courts consider when determining custody is which parent is more likely to promote frequent and meaningful contact with the other parent. If you deny the other parent custody before or during the divorce proceedings, this can have a negative impact on the outcome of your case and on your children. Of course, if there are safety concerns, such as violence, drinking or drug abuse, unsupervised visitation between the children and your spouse may not be appropriate. It is extremely important to talk to an attorney regarding these issues before making any decisions that could impact your case.

Mistake Number 2

Using your children as a weapon against the other parent in the divorce proceedings.

You may be very angry at your spouse or even feel that you hate him or her. However, it is important to remember that they are the parent of your children, and that you will have to

co-parent after the divorce is over. Never use your children as a pawn to try to gain a financial advantage in a case.

Mistake Number 3

Introducing your children to your new boyfriend or girlfriend while your case is pending.

Not only could this be detrimental to the outcome of your case, but it can be detrimental to your children if done too early in a relationship or too often. Your children are already having to deal with their emotions regarding their parents separating and need time to adjust. Children should not be introduced to your new boyfriend or girlfriend until your new relationship is stable.

Mistake Number 4

Using the children as “spies” to report to you about the other parent or using the children as messengers to deliver messages, support or information.

It is human nature to want to know what your soon-to-be ex-spouse is up to, especially as it relates to your children. However, playing 20 questions with your kids when they return from a visit with the other parent can have a negative impact on your relationship with your children and cause your children to withdraw from you or the other parent. If you and your spouse are not able to communicate in person or over the phone without getting into an argument, try other modes of communication, such as email.

Mistake Number 5

Listening in or taping phone calls between your children and the other parent.

Not only can this type of behavior break the trust your children have in you, taping a phone conversation that you are not a party to is also illegal.

Mistake Number 6

Criticizing the other parent in front of your children.

Although you may have negative feelings toward your spouse or ex-spouse, it is critical that you not “bad-mouth” the other parent in front of your children. It can be harmful to your children emotionally and may cause them to act out or withdraw from you or the other parent. Your children need to respect both parents and criticizing the other parent in front of your children will teach the children that they do not have to respect the other parent. If both parents are criticizing the other in front of the children, then the children may lose respect and act out toward both parents.



Mistake Number 7

Arguing or confronting the other parent while dropping off or picking up the other children or at any time the children are present.



Many people will say that they are leaving their spouse because it is not good for the children to be in a household where their parents are arguing all the time. The same is true during and after a divorce. Try to avoid arguing with the other parent at all times when the children are present. If you and your spouse or ex-spouse have a hard time speaking without arguing or seem to get into a confrontation every time you are around them, your attorney can recommend alternative arrangements for pick up and drop off of the children, including using a custody exchange center.

Talk to a family law attorney about what resources for divorcing parents, such as custody exchange centers, are available in your county.

Mistake Number 8

Moving your children out of the city or state in which you live immediately before or during your divorce case.

In some states, moving your children without court permission is a crime. Even where it is not a crime, moving the children away from the other parent without the other parent's permission or the court's permission can have a negative impact on your case and ultimately result in you losing custody of your children. If you are married or going through a divorce proceeding and wish to relocate with your children, consult an experienced family law attorney handling relocation cases to advise you on how to proceed.

Mistake Number 9

Bringing your children to court or to your lawyer's office.

Even if your children are young, remember, children are smart and pick up on everything you do, including the tone of conversations. Divorce and custody litigation can be adversarial, and it is best to avoid involving your children. During your case, the Court may appoint a Guardian ad litem to represent the best interest of your children. If a Guardian ad litem is appointed, then the Guardian ad litem will meet with the children and interview them, if appropriate. If your children are represented by a Guardian ad litem, it is unethical for your attorney to talk to your children.

Mistake Number 10

Trying to "buy" your children's affection.

Spending unusual amounts of money on the children or buying them lavish gifts can be viewed as an attempt to buy their affection or bribe them. You may have heard the terms "Disneyland

Dad” or “Disneyland Mom.” These terms are often used to refer to a parent who always takes the kids to do holiday type activities during every visit or buys them expensive toys or clothes every time they see them. Spending quality time with your children is more important than buying them material things. Not only can this be bad for your case, but your children may come to expect these things, and when you stop this behavior after a divorce, the children may resent you. It is important to continue to be a parent in all aspects, including being involved in your children’s education and discipline, not just fun.

Special Bonus List of Questions to Ask Before You Hire a Family Law Attorney

How do you know if you have found the right attorney?

Here is a list of 16 vital questions you must ask any attorney you meet with before you hire them.

1. Ask if they have information like this report or a website. If not, why not?
2. The most important qualification an attorney can have is experience dealing with the type of case you have. The real estate attorney does not practice family law full-time and vice versa. Ask the attorney how much experience he/she has handling family law cases.
3. Does the attorney have any personal feelings about the positions he/she would have to take if they represented you?
4. Will the attorney you meet with be handling your case on a day-to-day basis or will it be handed off to an assistant?
5. Can the attorney be reached outside of normal office hours. If so how?
6. How quickly does the attorney return your calls on average?
7. If the attorney appears in court on my behalf, when am I notified as to the outcome of the proceedings? If so how-by phone, in writing, e-mail etc.
8. How often will I receive updates about the status of my case?
9. What types of cases does the attorney typically handle?
10. Will I have to call my attorney to get updates or do they have a schedule to keep me regularly informed automatically?
11. How many cases does each attorney in the firm handle?
12. Are you trial attorneys? What percentage of your cases go to trial vs. settle?
13. When was your last divorce trial?
14. What was the last case they handled? What was the result?
15. Why is your case with their time and effort?

16. Can you recommend an attorney I can get a second opinion from? If your attorney cannot give you the name of another attorney are they truly confident in their own abilities?

17. What are your fees? What retainer do you require? How is billing handled?

18. What other expenses can I expect?

19. Do you think we can work together?

20. How much do you know about the Judge who will decide my case if it goes to trial? What experience do you have in my county and in front of the Judge who my case is assigned?

I hope you have found this report helpful.

Good luck!

**If you are involved in any type of family law matter or have any questions,
please call:**

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