

DIVORCE TIMELINE

Process | Key Steps | Typical Timeframes



Timeframes are estimates and can vary based on the complexity of your case and court availability.



Petition for Dissolution

Approximately 2 weeks to complete once all necessary information and documents are received



Service of Petition on Spouse (Respondent)

Either via mail or personal service. Can take 1-3 weeks.



Answer

Respondent has 30 days to serve a response (answer) to petition.



Default

Respondent does NOT provide an answer/response. This is not common



LOWER CONFLICT

Spouses generally get along and agree on most issues.

1



Informal Discovery

Parties exchange documents to determine the value of property, debts, and assets.

1-2 months

2



Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Attempts to come to an agreement through mediation, early neutral evaluation, or negotiations between attorneys.

1-2 months

3



Settlement

Attorneys negotiate final details and draft Marital Termination Agreement (MTA).

1-2 months

4



Finalization

All parties sign the MTA and it is filed with the Court. The Judge will either sign off on the agreement or schedule a hearing to finalize.

1-3 months

5



Wrap Up

Attorneys draft any post-dissolution documents as noted in the MTA, which may include documents to divide retirement plans or transfer property.

2-3 months



TOTAL TIME

6 MONTHS TO 15 MONTHS



Motion for Temporary Relief

A request to the Court to issue a temporary order while the divorce is pending. Usually related to parenting time, finances, child support, or spousal maintenance.

Can happen at any time, but usually occurs earlier in the case when a final agreement or trial may be 9+ months away.



HIGHER CONFLICT

Spouses don't agree on much or anything.

1



Formal Discovery

Parties exchange written questions and requests for documents to gather detailed information about income, property, debts, and other assets.

2-3 months

2



Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Attempts to come to an agreement through mediation, early neutral evaluation, or negotiations between attorneys.

2-4 months

3



Prepare for Trial

Trial dates are scheduled, experts may be hired, and reports, exhibits, witnesses, and trial preparation are finalized. Settlement discussions continue during this time. Timing depends on the Court's availability.

3-9 months

4



Trial

1-3 days, for trial plus an additional 30 days for post-trial documents completed by attorneys.

1-3 days

5



Judge's Order

90 days after submitting post-trial documents

~ 3 months

6



Wrap Up

Attorneys draft any post-dissolution documents as noted in the MTA, which may include documents to divide retirement plans or transfer property.

2-3 months



TOTAL TIME

15 MONTHS TO 24 MONTHS