OTTAWA COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION

STANDARD ORDER COMPANIONSHIP SCHEDULE (DR-3)

Companionship is a time for children to be with the non-residential parent. It is vitally important that the child(ren) have a continuing and regular involvement with that parent. It is helpful to schedule activities and to teach the child(ren) skills during visitation. Assisting the child(ren) in finding friends within the neighborhood is beneficial in creating a home-like atmosphere for the child(ren).

It is important that each parent be flexible, willing to change times and/or dates by mutual cooperation and agreement based upon the changing needs of the child(ren) as he or she grows older, in addition to the parent's own schedules and interests.

Liberal visiting arrangements are encouraged, as contact with both parents is important to the child(ren). Specific items in the Judgment Entry take precedence over this schedule. Changes or modifications may be made by the Court if the need for such is shown.

COMPANIONSHIP SHALL TAKE PLACE AT SUCH TIMES AND PLACES AS THE PARTIES MAY AGREE.

This shall not normally be less than the following: (When there are children in multiple age categories, the age group of the oldest child shall be used for all children, unless one of the children is over the age of 16, in which case the age group for the eldest child under the age of 16 shall be used for all children 15 years or younger.

The court shall give due consideration to the established bond between parents and child before implementing any parenting order. Once the court is satisfied that there is an appropriate bond, the parenting time shall be as the parties agree, but not less than the following: (Parents are encouraged to agree to parenting time as their schedules may allow in the children's best interest.)

In the event that a parent is unable to utilize parenting time on scheduled days and times due to employment or other ongoing non-modifiable commitments, the Court shall take notice of this condition and will order alternate arrangements to correlate with the scheduled time.

(Birth to 12 months) – Parenting time shall be Tuesday and Thursday from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., and Saturday from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

(12 months to 3 years) – Parenting time shall be Tuesday and Thursday from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., and Friday from 6:00 p.m. to Saturday at 6:00 p.m.

(3 to 5 years) – Parenting time shall be on alternate weekends from Friday at 6:00 p.m. to Sunday at 6:00 p.m., in addition to a midweek each week from Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. to Thursday at 8:00 a.m. or the beginning of daycare, whichever comes first.

(5-14 years) – Parenting time shall be on alternate weekends from Thursday at 6:00 p.m. to

Monday at 8:00 a.m. or the beginning of school, whichever comes first, in addition to a midweek on off-weeks only from Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. to Thursday at 8:00 a.m. or the beginning of school, whichever comes first.

(14-18 years) – Parenting time shall be on alternate weekends from Friday at 6:00 p.m. to Monday at 8:00 a.m. or the beginning of school, whichever comes first.

HOLIDAYS (for all ages)

Unless otherwise agreed, holiday times are as follows:

Holiday	Even-Numbered Years	Odd-Numbered Years
Easter	Father	Mother
Memorial Day	Mother	Father
July 4th	Father	Mother
Labor Day	Mother	Father
Trick or Treat	Mother	Father
Thanksgiving	Father	Mother
Christmas Eve	Mother	Father
Christmas Day	Father	Mother
New Year's Eve/Day	Mother	Father

If the parties cannot agree on hours for holidays, they shall occur as follows:

Easter	Saturday at 6:00 p.m. to Sunday at 6:00 p.m.
Memorial Day	Sunday at 6:00 p.m. to Monday at 6:00 p.m.
July 4th	July 3rd at 6:00 p.m. to July 5th at 8:00 a.m.
Labor Day	Sunday at 6:00 p.m. to Monday at 6:00 p.m.
Thanksgiving	Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. to Friday at 8:00 a.m.
Christmas Eve	December 23rd at 6:00 p.m. to December 25th at 8:00 a.m.
Christmas Day & Vacation	December 25th at 8:00 a.m. to December 27th at 6:00 p.m.
New Year's Eve/Day	December 31st at 6:00 p.m. to January 2nd at 8:00 a.m.

Holidays will take priority over any other visitation except child's birthdays.
Parenting time that falls upon the child's birthday does not need to be made up.

In addition to the holiday schedule above, the Christmas/New Year's holiday vacation (typically governed by the local district in which the child(ren) attend school) shall be split such that the parent exercising visitation on Christmas Day will have the child(ren) for the first half of the scheduled school break/vacation, except for the Christmas Eve visitation period scheduled with the other parent, and the other parent (parent scheduled for the New Year's Eve/Day holiday) will have the second half of the school break/vacation.

The annual spring break, if it is scheduled, shall be rotated on an annual basis such that mother shall exercise visitation and companionship with the child(ren) in the odd numbered years and the father shall exercise visitation and companionship in the even numbered years.

For Halloween trick-or-treat, the schedule above shall be followed. However, parents are encouraged to make accommodations, in the event that trick or treat falls on different dates or times in each parent's community, for the child(ren) to participate in both celebrations.

For scheduled three-day-weekends, when school is not in session on a Monday or Friday immediately following or preceding a weekend, (i.e. Martin Luther King Day, Veterans' Day), the party in possession of the child(ren) during that weekend shall have their parenting time extended from the night that school ends until 6pm on the day prior to school resuming.

Summer break (as defined by the break from school in the district in which the child(ren) attend), shall be split equally between the parties. Visitation shall be week on/week off with exchanges on Sunday at 6:00 p.m., or as the parties otherwise agree. Both parents are expected to grant consideration to the child(ren)'s summer job or activity schedules when possible.

VACATIONS

Each parent shall be entitled to a planned vacation each school year, defined as a planned and scheduled trip or excursion with the children. Each parent shall provide at least 30 days' notice prior to exercising said vacation and shall provide an itinerary to the other parent. Each parent, while planning their vacation, shall take into account the child's school schedule and academic calendar. Should the vacation period involve missing at least two days of school, consent of both parents shall be required. In the event that both parents choose the same time period the non-residential parent's choice shall prevail.

DAYS OF SPECIAL MEANING

A child's birthday shall be spent with the Mother in the even-numbered years and the Father in the odd-numbered years. The non-residential parent shall provide a one-week notice of his or her intent if that parent does NOT intend to have companionship for a birthday.

Mother's Day and mother's birthday shall be spent with Mother and Father's Day and father's birthday shall be spent with Father, regardless of which parent is entitled to that day under normal circumstances. If the parties cannot agree on times, they shall be from 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

Parents shall cooperate to schedule parenting time for events such as, but not limited to, sibling birthdays, weddings, funerals, religious celebrations, etc. Both parents are expected to accommodate such requests in good faith. Reasonable notification to the other parent shall be provided as soon as the requesting parent becomes aware of the event.

PROMPTNESS

Each parent shall be prompt for pickup and return of the child(ren), and the residential parent shall ready the child(ren) emotionally and physically for companionship with the non-residential parent. The residential parent has no duty to wait for the non-residential parent to pick up the child(ren) longer than thirty (30) minutes, unless the non-residential parent has notified the residential parent that (s)he will be late, and the residential parent agrees to remain available after the thirty-minute waiting period. A parent who is more than thirty (30) minutes late loses the companionship period. A parent who has a pattern of lateness is subject to penalties under the law.

ACTUAL VISITATION

Visitation and companionship is intended to mean ***actual*** visitation with the non-residential parent and child(ren), and ***does not*** ordinarily mean the non-residential parent picking up the child(ren) and leaving them with a non-family member.

TRANSPORTATION

The parent who is coming into possession of the child(ren) shall be responsible for picking up the child(ren) at all exchanges. If the parent is unavailable, an adult well-known to the child(ren) may serve this purpose. All child restraint laws shall be followed, along with all applicable motor vehicle laws, including requirements for licensing, insurance and sobriety.

CHILD'S MEALS AND ACTIVITIES

The parent coming into possession of the child(ren) is responsible for ensuring that the child(ren) have access to all meals during his/her parenting time. Likewise, both parents shall ensure that the child(ren)'s homework is completed and ready to be turned in during that parents' parenting time and assist or find someone to assist when needed.

WELLNESS

The parents have a duty to communicate with each other about all issues pertaining to wellness of the child(ren), including, but not limited to, child illnesses, injuries, diagnoses, medications taken or prescribed to the child, and shall do so as soon as reasonably practicable, but no later than the beginning of the other parent's parenting time.

CANCELLATION OF PARENTING TIME

If a non-residential parent is unable to exercise parenting time, said parent shall give the residential parent advance notice of at least twenty-four (24) hours when practical. A parent who does not exercise companionship forfeits that time.

CHILDRENS' RESPONSE TO COMPANIONSHIP

If a child indicates strong opposition to being with the other parent, it is the responsibility of each parent to appropriately deal with the situation, by calmly talking with the child as to the child's best interests, and particularly to avoid confrontation or unpleasant scenes. If the matter is not settled, either parents should seek immediate assistance of a mental health professional, a mediator, or file a motion with the court. As uncomfortable as this issue may be for a parent, this issue should not go unresolved.

Children of divorce grow up to be as normal and healthy as children whose parents are not divorced if the parents communicate well; if both parents continue regular contact with their child(ren) when dealing with the other parent. It is normal when parents first separate that a child may have a strong emotional reaction at companionship times saying good-bye to one parent. Parents need to know that the emotional response is quite natural, and that each parent needs to calmly reassure the child that he or she will see the other parent soon. Parents should understand that this response by the child does not mean that the child does not love the other parent, or wishes not to spend time with the other parent.

The length of the adjustment time will vary.

The residential parent shall encourage free communications between the children and the non-residential parent, and both parties shall encourage the children to love, honor and obey the other parent and refrain from criticizing or making disparaging comments about the other parent.

Parenting time shall not be cancelled or altered due to child's opposition and shall not be unilaterally modified by one parent without mutual consent.

RETURNING THE CHILD(REN) AFTER COMPANIONSHIP

The non-residential parent shall not return the child(ren) before the end of the companionship period stated (not early, not late, not on a different day), unless the parents agree in advance. The residential parent or other responsible adult well-known to the child(ren) shall be present when the child(ren) is/are returned.

CLOTHING

The residential parent is responsible for providing sufficient appropriate clean clothing for every companionship period, based on the lifestyle of the residential parent and child. If the planned companionship activities require special or unusual clothing needs, the non-residential parent must notify the residential parent at least two days in advance of the companionship period. If the child does not have the type of clothing requested, the residential parent is under no obligation to comply with the request. All clothing sent by the residential parent MUST be returned immediately after the companionship period. In general, the child(ren) may take that clothing which makes them comfortable during the visitation period.

SCHOOLWORK

A parent must provide time for the child(ren) to study, complete homework assignments, papers or other school-assigned projects, even if the completion of this work interferes with the parent's plans with the child(ren). If the schoolwork is assigned by the school prior to the companionship time, the residential parent should inform the other parent of the work to be done and it must be completed before the assigned due date/time.

Both parents are expected to take initiative to remain informed of the child's school progress and assignments and the parents must cooperate to ensure that the assignments are timely completed.

ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER

Each parent must, unless the Court orders otherwise, keep the other informed of his or her current address and telephone number, and an alternate telephone number in the event of an emergency.

MOVING/RELOCATION

If either parent intends to move to a residence other than the residence specified in the visitation order or decree of the court, that parent shall file a Notice of Intent to Relocate. See R.C. 3109.051(G)(1).

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

The parent in possession of the child(ren) has an obligation to ensure that the child(ren) is/are in attendance at all of the child(ren)'s activities.

Scheduled companionship periods shall not be delayed or denied because a child has other scheduled activities (work, lessons, sports, etc.). It is the responsibility of the parents to discuss activities important to the child in advance, including time, dates, and transportation needs, so that the child is not deprived of activities. Both parents are encouraged to attend all their child's activities. Each parent is entitled by law to equal access to the student activities of their child, unless limited by Court order.

Both parents shall work together to ensure that children are timely transported to any activities, including school, church and other activities that may occur during parenting time.

APPEARANCE OF CHILDREN

The non-residential parent shall not allow the child(ren) to alter his/her/their physical appearance, including haircuts/styles, hair color, tattoos, body piercings, etc. without the consent of the residential parent.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENTS, NOT THE CHILDREN, TO MAKE ALL COMPANIONSHIP ARRANGEMENTS.

Neither parent should communicate with a child about the issue of companionship, or future events or 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 companionship times, dates or activities. If the parents have temporary difficulty communicating about either companionship or the needs of their child(ren), parents should not enlist the child to resolve the parents' inability to talk to each other.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENT AND CHILD

Each parent has the right to talk over the telephone, or by video, zoom, facetime or other similar means, with the children as often as the parents agree.

If the parents do not agree, then the non-residential parent shall have privileges no less than twice per week. Telephone or video calls, if preferred, shall be during the normal hours the child is awake and unless the parties agree otherwise, between 7:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. If the child is unavailable for conversation, each parent shall take the responsibility of seeing that a child timely returns the call. A child is permitted to call a parent at any time which does not conflict with the rules of the school or either parent's home. During extended periods of vacation visitation and companionship with the non-residential parent, the residential parent shall have telephone privileges twice per week and the remaining above-cited rules shall be applicable to the residential parent. The calling party shall bear the expense, if any, and the parties shall alternate placing the call.

NOMENCLATURE OF STEP-PARENT/ SIGNIFICANT OTHER

A parent should not require or encourage, nor permit any other person to suggest, encourage or require, a child to refer to any person other than the child's parents as "mom" or "dad," etc.

MEDICAL RECORDS/CONSULTATIONS

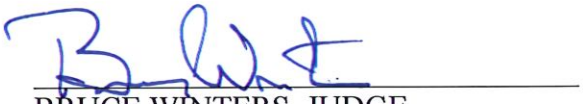
Both parents are entitled to equal access to their child(ren)'s records, unless limited by Court order. The residential parent shall, upon request by the non-residential parent, immediately comply with whatever action is required, including the signing of a full release, to provide access to any medical, dental, hospital, surgical, optometric or mental health records of the minor child(ren). If either parent is required to sign a release so that the other parent may obtain records, that parent shall do so without delay. Neither parent may engage in any action or omission that will obstruct, delay or prevent the transmission of records to the other party.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

In the event a dispute shall arise between the parties concerning any provision of this schedule, the parties shall attempt to discuss and resolve any such dispute between themselves. If they are unable to do so, then (a) either or both parties may file a request of the Court to set the matter for mediation; or (b) move the Court to resolve the dispute.

PENALTIES FOR PARENT WHO WILLFULLY FAILS TO COMPLY WITH THE COMPANIONSHIP SCHEDULE

A parent who willfully fails to comply with this companionship schedule may be found in contempt of Court, which may include a fine and/or jail sentence. The Court may also assess attorney fees and court costs, order the appointment of a Guardian ad Litem and payment of the Guardian ad Litem fees. The Court may order the reimbursement of transportation costs, and make-up companionship, in addition to any other remedy available by law.



BRUCE WINTERS, JUDGE