

**OCEANA COUNTY
FRIEND OF THE COURT
100 STATE STREET STE M-10
HART, MI 49420**

**REASONABLE
PARENTING TIME
POLICY**

Michigan law recognized that it is in the best interest of the child(ren) that parenting time occur in a frequency, duration, and type reasonably calculated to promote a strong relationship between the child(ren) and the parent. Ideally, parents develop their own parenting time schedules that take into consideration the unique circumstances of their family. The following policy and procedures have been developed for those situations when parents cannot reach an agreement, and a parenting time schedule is not otherwise addressed through an order.

These policies have been developed based upon the assumption that the parents lived together with the child(ren) for an extended period of time and that there is a normal degree of familiarity between the non-custodial parent and the child(ren). A parenting time schedule will have to be considered on a case-by-case basis when this is not the situation, or, if there has been an extended absence by the non-custodial parent.

Parenting time and child support are separate issues and are not dependent upon each other. As a rule, parenting time should continue whether support is being paid or not, and likewise, support must be paid whether or not parenting time is occurring.

PARENTING TIME SCHEDULE

Children Age 0 to 18 Months

Parenting time shall occur every Wednesday from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., and, every Sunday from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Children Age 19 to 48 Months

Parenting time shall occur alternating weekends beginning from 9:00 a.m. Saturday morning until 6:00 p.m. Sunday evening, and, every Wednesday from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Children Age 49 Months and Older

Parenting time shall occur alternating weekends from 6:00 p.m. Friday evening until 6:00 p.m. Sunday evening, and, every Wednesday from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

HOLIDAY PARENTING TIME SCHEDULE

MEMORIAL DAY weekend beginning 6:00 p.m. the Friday of the weekend and ending 6:00 p.m. Memorial Day.

LABOR DAY weekend beginning 6:00 p.m. the Friday of the weekend and ending 6:00 p.m. Labor Day.

HALLOWEEN beginning 5:00 p.m. and ending 8:30 p.m. October 31st.

CHILD(REN)'S BIRTHDAY: Birthday parenting time in the summer and on weekends shall be from 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. If the child's Birthday falls on a school day, birthday parenting time shall be from 6:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. If the Child's Birthday falls on a holiday, the holiday takes precedence over the Birthday.

The father shall have parenting time in years ending in an even number and the mother shall have parenting time in years ending in an odd number for the following holidays:

EASTER weekend beginning 6:00 p.m. the Friday (Good Friday) of the weekend and ending 6:00 p.m. Easter. Unless, the child(ren) is/are school age and Good Friday is not a school day, in which case parenting time will commence 6:00 p.m. the Thursday prior to Easter weekend and end 6:00 p.m. Easter. Note, the holiday coincides with the Spring Break holiday parenting time for purposes of convenience in relevant years.

FOURTH OF JULY beginning 6:00 p.m. on July 3rd and ending 9:00 a.m. July 5th.

THANKSGIVING weekend beginning 6:00 p.m. the Wednesday evening before Thanksgiving and ending 6:00 p.m. the Sunday evening following Thanksgiving.

MOTHER'S DAY AND FATHER'S DAY

The child(ren) shall be with the mother the entire weekend of Mother's Day and with the Father the entire weekend of Father's Day from 6:00 p.m. Friday until 6:00 p.m. Sunday.

HOLIDAY PARENTING TIME TO TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER OTHER SCHEDULED TIME

Whenever a more specific holiday parenting time is scheduled, it shall take precedence over any regularly scheduled parenting time. When the holiday schedule concludes, the alternating weekend schedule shall be resumed according to the pre-existing plan as if it had not been interrupted.

SPRING AND WINTER (CHRISTMAS BREAK) PARENTING TIME SCHEDULE

SPRING BREAK

The father shall have parenting time in years ending in an even number and the mother shall have parenting time in years ending in an odd number for the Spring break. Spring break parenting time shall occur during the spring break of the school district in which the child(ren) resides from 6:00 p.m. the day school is scheduled to recess until 6:00 p.m., the day before school is scheduled to resume.

WINTER (CHRISTMAS) BREAK

In years ending in an odd number, the father shall have parenting time from 6:00 p.m. on the date that the school district in which the child(ren) resides recesses for winter break until 9:00 p.m. December 24 and the mother shall have parenting time from 9:00 p.m. December 24 until 6:00 p.m. the day before school resumes again in

the school district in which the child(ren) resides. Thereafter the normal parenting time schedule shall resume.

In years ending in an even number, the mother shall have parenting time from 6:00 p.m. on the date that the school district in which the child(ren) reside recesses for winter break until 9:00 p.m. December 24 and the father shall have parenting time from 9:00p.m. December 24 until 6:00 p.m. the day before school resumes again in the school district in which the child(ren) resides. Thereafter the normal parenting time schedule shall resume.

TABLE FOR PARENTING TIME SCHEDULE

HOLIDAY OR BREAK	EVEN YEARS	ODD YEARS
Easter	Father	Mother
Spring Break	Father	Mother
Mother's Day	Mother	Mother
Memorial Day	Mother	Father
Father's Day	Father	Father
Fourth of July	Father	Mother
Labor Day	Mother	Father
Halloween	Mother	Father
Thanksgiving	Father	Mother
Winter Break	Mother	Father
Child(ren)'s Birthday	Father	Mother

SUMMER BREAK PARENTING TIME SCHEDULE & SUMMER SCHOOL POLICY

In scheduling the summer break parenting time schedule, the age of child(ren) as of June 1st shall determine which of the following schedules shall be observed.

Children Age 0 to 18 Months

The regular parenting time schedule will be observed throughout all months until the child(ren) passes the age of 18 months.

Children Age 19 to 48 Months

The non-custodial parent shall have parenting time for a total of three weeks in one-week blocks of time.

- The first one-week block of parenting time shall commence at 6:00 p.m. on the first Friday following the date that the public school district recesses for summer break until 7 days later on Friday at 6:00 p.m. in which the child(ren) resides. In the event there are one or more children that are all enrolled in a private school, the last date of the private school shall be used. In the event there are two or more children that are enrolled in separate schools, the school releasing students last shall be used.

- The second one-week block of parenting time shall commence at 6:00 p.m. on the first Friday following the Fourth of July until 7 days later on Friday at 6:00 p.m.

- The third one-week block of parenting time shall commence at 6:00 p.m. on the first Friday of August until 7 days later on Friday at 6:00. p.m.

Children Age 49 Months and Older

The non- custodial parent shall have parenting time for a total of six weeks in two-week block s of time.

- The first two-week block of parenting time shall commence at 6:00 p.m. on the first Friday following the date that the school district recesses for summer break, until 14 days later on Friday at 6:00., in which the child(ren) resides. In the event there are one or more children that are all enrolled in a private school, the last date of the private school shall be used. In the event there are two or more children that are enrolled in separate schools, the school releasing students last shall be used.
- The second two-week block of parenting time shall commence at 6:00 p.m. on the first Friday following the Fourth of July until 14 days later on Friday at 6:00 p.m.
- The third two-week block of parenting time shall commence at 6:00 p.m. on the first Friday of August until 14 days later on Friday at 6:00 p.m.

SUMMER SCHOOL POLICY

In the event summer school is anticipated for any minor child who is subject of the Reasonable Parenting time policy of the Court, the following guidelines shall be adopted:

1. That the custodial parent shall notify the non-custodial parent of the intent to enroll the child in summer school no later than May 1st of that year.
2. That is shall be determined and confirmed by a representative of the school that summer school is an academic necessity for the child.
3. That if the parties live in the same school district, or if the non-custodial parent lives within thirty (30) miles of the summer school location, the non-custodial parent shall be entitled to enjoy parenting time as scheduled, but will transport or make suitable arrangements for the transportation of the child to and from summer school.
4. That if the non-custodial parent lives more than thirty (30) miles from the proposed summer school location, she/he shall choose one of the following three options:
 - a. She/he shall exercise parenting time as scheduled and arrange for summer school locally
 - b. She/he shall exercise parenting time as scheduled and arrange for transportation to the proposed summer school location; or
 - c. She/he shall re-arrange summer parenting time schedule, allowing for make-up parenting time for any time missed, but shall allow the minor child(ren) to stay with the custodial parent for the time period covered by summer school.
5. That the non-custodial parent shall be allowed make-up parenting time for any lost parenting time as determined appropriate by the Oceana County Friend of the Court.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

CLOTHING

Each parent shall be responsible for providing adequate clothing for the child(ren) sufficient for the weather and events in which the child(ren) engages. When occasional need or cost issues favor having only one item, such as seasonal clothing, snow boots or swim wear, these items should be transported back and forth with the child(ren). Any clothing that is with the child(ren) at the beginning of parenting time be returned clean, with the child(ren).

NECESSITIES OF CHILD(REN)

That unless otherwise agreed or ordered by the Court, the party who is in the current possession of the minor child(ren), pursuant to custody or parenting time arrangements, shall be responsible for the provisions of day to day necessities of the minor child(ren), including but not limited to: food or meals (at appropriate times), toiletries (toothbrush, soap, etc.), and infant or baby items (diapers, bottles, etc.).

TRANSPORTATION

Unless otherwise agreed to by the parties or ordered by the court, at such time as the payer of child support shall have a child support arrearage equal to or greater than the equivalent of 1 month of child support, the parent who is exercising parenting time shall be responsible for all transportation and/or transportation costs associated with parenting time.

Unless otherwise agreed to by the parties, or ordered by the Court, at such time as the payer of child support shall have a child support arrearage that is less than 1 month of child support Transportation and/or transportation costs for the purposes of parenting time shall be equally divided between the parents.

The parent who is receiving the minor child(ren) for parenting time shall be responsible for the pick up of the minor child(ren) at the commencement of parenting time.

The parent who is receiving the minor child(ren) at the conclusion of parenting time shall be responsible for the transportation of the minor child(ren).

The transporting parent shall be present at the exchange.

The minor child(ren) shall be picked up at the commencement of parenting time and returned at the conclusion of parenting time, to the child's(ren's) primary residence.

Transportation for the purposes of parenting time shall be provided by a properly licensed individual, who has a properly licensed, insured and registered vehicle. All legally required restraints, seat belts and/or car seats shall be utilized during transportation.

CONTAMINATION OF PARENTING TIME

Neither parent shall use the parenting time exchange as an opportunity to exchange bills, discuss support issues, discuss parenting time, or to behave disrespectfully toward the other parent.

CHILD(REN)'S MEDICAL NEEDS

A parent shall provide all necessary medications and doctor's written instructions to the parent exercising parenting time. The parent exercising parenting time shall administer all medication according to the doctor's written instructions. If the child(ren) requires medical attention during parenting time, the non-custodial parent shall obtain treatment for the child(ren) and notify the custodial parent immediately.

In the event special equipment is necessary for the child(ren)'s health. The parent exercising parenting time shall make arrangements to learn the use of the equipment and arrange for the equipment's transfer. When a parent has supervised parenting time, the supervisor shall receive adequate training and instructions concerning any special needs the child(ren) may have and receive all necessary medication and doctor's written instructions.

Parents need to discuss the general health care needs of the child(ren) and to advise each other of illness and treatment requirements. It is imperative that all knowledge of medical treatment be shared, for example, in situation where follow up treatment may have to be provided by the parent who did not take the child(ren) initially to the doctor.

SICK CHILD

When a child(ren) is sick, the non-custodial parent shall still have the opportunity to have the child, unless a licensed physician recommends, in writing, that he/she not go for parenting time. Regarding hospitalized child(ren), the custodial parent shall immediately notify the non-custodial parent of any time a child is hospitalized. The non-custodial parent shall be entitled to any hospital visitation as the standard policy of the hospital. Missed parenting time due to a doctor's request or hospitalization is not subject to make-up.

PREPARING A CHILD(REN) FOR PARENTING TIME

The custodial parent should offer encouragement to prepare the child(ren) emotionally for the parenting time. Neither parent should use the parenting time as an occasion to cause concern or anxiety to the child(ren). The custodial parent should use all reasonable means to ensure that the parenting time occurs provided that no excessive force is used. In general, the following **ARE NOT** appropriate reasons for denying parenting time.

- ❖ The child(ren) has a minor illness.
- ❖ The child(ren) had to go somewhere else
- ❖ The child(ren) was not home.
- ❖ The non-custodial party is behind in support
- ❖ The custodial parent did not want the child(ren) to go.
- ❖ The weather was bad.
- ❖ The child(ren) had no clothes to wear
- ❖ The child(ren) refused to go

- ❖ The other party failed to meet preconditions unilaterally established by the party allegedly denying parenting time.
- ❖ Religious reasons.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The parties shall cooperate with each other when enrolling the child(ren) in extracurricular activities to ensure that the activities do not interfere with the ability of the child(ren) to exercise parenting time. Neither the custodial parent nor the non-custodial parent should enroll the child(ren) in excessive activities that serve to interfere with the other's ability to spend time with the child(ren)

Parents shall keep one another apprised of all the child(ren)'s activities so the other parent has the opportunity to attend or participate in the activity, even if the activity occurs when the non-custodial parent does not otherwise have scheduled parenting time.

TIME FOR PARENTING TIME EXCHANGE

Neither parent shall do anything to inconvenience the other in the exchange of the child(ren). Arriving late by no more than thirty (30) minutes may be acceptable in exceptional circumstances, but should never become the norm. A parent should be late, only when a legitimate, unavoidable, reason exists for being late. A parent who anticipates being late shall contact the other parent as soon as possible.

Additionally, a parent shall not be early for parenting time as this may cause undue disruption for the child(ren) and the other parent.

The non-custodial parent shall notify the custodial parent twenty-four (24) hours in advance if he/she is unable to take advantage of specified parenting time.

FOUR-HOUR RULE REGARDING DAY CARE (RIGHT OF FIRST REFUSAL)

The Four-Hour Rule (Right of First Refusal) may be implemented upon specific order of the Court. The Friend of the Court shall review and determine if implementation of the Four-Hour Rule is in the best interests of the child(ren). This provision may only be considered when the custodial or non-custodial parent is unable to care for their child(ren) during their parenting time, for a period of time in excess of four hours, and are required to find and provide alternate child care. The other parent shall first be contacted and offered that time with the minor child(ren). This provision shall be deemed to be in addition to any previously ordered parenting time, and not in lieu of same.

PERSONAL PROTECTION ORDERS

If the parties have a Personal Protection Order, parenting time exchanges shall occur (if permitted by the order) in a manner which ensures the order is not violated. In order to provide appropriate safety when a PPO is in place, all

exchanges shall occur in a public place, at a designated neutral exchange site. If the parties are unable to determine a neutral exchange site, the Friend of the Court shall make the determination.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

At no time shall the parent indulge excessively in alcoholic beverages, nor shall the parent take any drugs or controlled substances without said drugs or controlled substances having been prescribed by a licensed physician.

INHERENT RIGHTS OF THE CHILD(REN)

The minor child(ren) of the parties has an inherent right to the affection and love of both parents and to a relationship with them. Neither parent shall take any action that might estrange the minor child(ren) from the other parent or tend to discredit, cause disrespect to, or diminish the quality of the relationship with the other parent.

OMISSIONS AND OVERSIGHTS

In the event a matter or situation arises that is not otherwise provided for in this policy, the office of the Oceana County Friend of the Court shall have authority to render a decision. The personnel of the Friend of the Court office, in reaching a decision, shall rely on the Michigan Parenting Time Guideline, as published by the Michigan Supreme Court, and/or, the usual past practices of the Oceana County Circuit Court


APPROVED AND ADOPTED

DATE: 4-18-17



Honorable H. Kevin Drake
Chief Administrative Judge
27th Judicial Circuit Court

DATE: 4-10-17



Honorable Bradley G. Lambrix
Presiding Family Court Judge
27th Judicial Circuit Court