

# **Definitions of Divorce and Parentage Terminology**

## **Allocation of Parental Responsibility**

The court process of determining how the parents will make significant decisions and care for a child. This used to be known as “custody” before January 1, 2016.

## **Child Support**

Money paid by the supporting parent to help support a child or children.

## **Irreconcilable Differences**

When a couple cannot agree about things in their marriage and don't think they can ever come to an agreement. This is the only reason you can use to get a divorce in Illinois.

## **Maintenance**

Money the court orders one spouse to pay the other spouse or ex-spouse. This used to be called “alimony.”

## **Non-Supporting Parent**

The parent who receives child support. This used to be known as the “custodial parent” before January 1, 2016. In court orders entered in 2016 or later, a “custodial parent” may be designated for purposes of other state or federal laws that require a custodian, and for the purposes of school enrollment. Otherwise the law does not use the term “custodial parent” anymore.

## **Parentage**

The legal relationship between a child and his or her parents, and/or the establishment of this relationship.

## **Parenting Plan**

An agreement between parents that outlines how the parents will make decisions about the child and how much time the child will spend with each parent, among other things.

## **Parenting Time**

The time that both parents spend with their minor children. Parenting time does not need to be equal. Parenting time is one of the parental responsibilities that can be allocated in an allocation of parental responsibilities case. This used to be known as “visitation” before January 1, 2016.

## **Significant Decision Making Responsibility**

The responsibility to make important decisions for a child in the areas of education, extracurricular activities, medical care and religion. The court can allocate decision-making responsibility to either or both parents in each of those areas.

## **Supporting Parent**

The parent who is ordered to pay child support. This used to be known as the “non-custodial parent” before January 1, 2016

## **Uncontested Divorce**

A case in which your spouse is not going to fight over whether there should be a divorce or over any other issue that a judge might need to decide, such as allocation of parental responsibility or maintenance.