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# The Complete Divorce Guide



- Decide if divorce is the right option for you
- Evaluate and choose an attorney
- Divide your assets and debts
- · Protect yourself and your children
- Plan for your future

Brette Sember, JD



### Synopsis

Everything you need to know about getting a divorce! A retired divorce attorney and a widely-published author on the subject, answers hundreds of questions in simple laymanâ ™s termså "everything from living under a separation agreement to dividing assets and debts. Looking at divorce from all anglesà "legal, social, psychological, and financialà "this is a resource that speaks to everyone, from those just starting to contemplate breaking up a marriage, to those trying to renegotiate an unsatisfactory financial settlement. Table of Contents 1. Do You Want or Need a DivorceReasonsDecidingTherapyDomestic ViolenceTelling Your SpouseTrial SeparationWhat Divorce MeansEffectsCostsDivorce vs SeparationDivorce vs AnnulmentCommon Law MarriageNot Wanting a Divorce2. Legal SeparationLegal vs Non-Legal SeparationReasonsAgreementWhat a Legal Separation meansLiving under a Separation AgreementNo-Fault DivorceUndoing Separation3. Family Court Family Court BasicsHow family Court Can HelpFamily Court Vs Divorce CourtAccess Family CourtPrepare Family Court DocumentsFamily Court HearingsWhat Family Court Cannot Do4. First Steps in DivorceProtect Yourself and Your ChildrenTalk to Your ChildrenTell Important PeopleProtect AssetsControl SpendingMarital ResidenceFind an AttorneyEvaluate an AttorneyAfford an AttorneyHandle a Divorce YourselfType of DivorceBegin Process5. Divorce Court ProcessHow Courts WorkApproach Your Divorce CaseGroundsCovenant MarriageServiceRespondingForms and FeesProcedures StreamliningBehave in Court and at TrialTrial ProceduresName ChangesRemoval of Barriers to Remarriage6. Divorce MediationHow Mediation WorksDecide If Mediation Can Work for YouBenefits ofDrawbacks of CostsMediator QualificationsFind a MediatorWhy You Need an AttorneyOther Professionals and MediationCourt-Ordered MediationPreparing for Moving Mediation AlongEnd Result Unsuccessful Mediation7. Trial AlternativesArbitrationCollaborative LawCo-MediationShuttle MediationAttorney-Assisted MediationLong-Distance MediationNegotiating 8. Children and DivorceHelping Your Children Types of CustodyHow Custody Is DeterminedSiblingsSupervised VisitationParenting ClassesCo-ParentingWhere Your Children Will LiveCreate Parenting PlanUCCJEAGrandparent RightsRelocationDeal with the Other ParentUncooperative ParentsHelp Children Cope with Parental ConflictWhen You Canâ ™t Agree Prepare for TrialWork with the Law Guardian Help Kids CopeCooperate and Coordinate Functioning as a Single ParentEmbryos9. Dividing Assets and DebtsMarital Vs Separate AssetsState Laws Prenuptial AgreementsFinding Property Valuing Property Divide Household and Personal Goods Real Estate Businesses Social Security and PensionsInvestmentsPetsDebtNon-Concrete AssetsTax ConsequencesDivide Your Property YourselvesSneaky SpousePrepare for Trial 10. Child SupportCalculatedDuration Other

Expenses That Can Be Court OrderedHow Child Support Is PaidPurpose of Negotiating Tax and Bankruptcy Preparing for Support hearingModifying SupportNot Paying Child Support11. Spousal SupportCalculatedHow Spousal Support Is PaidModifyingLife InsuranceHealth InsuranceTax and Bankruptcy 12. Emotional and Practical Implications of DivorceFriendsFamilyAsking for What You NeedLiving AloneOne Income Long ProcessSelf-esteemDepressionAngerGriefBeing ResponsibleWorking after Divorce13. After DivorceFinalization of DivorceAppealDeal with EmotionsHelp Children AdjustPut Yourself Back Together FinanciallyComply with Court OrdersGather DocumentsName ChangeReligious AnnulmentEnforce Child Support, Alimony, Property DivisionChanges to Parenting Future PlanningAppendices

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