

A Maryland Judiciary Production  
*My Laws, My Courts, My Maryland*  
**Divorce (Part 8): Forms You Need to File**

Hello. Welcome to the Maryland Courts video series on divorce. In this nine-part series, you'll learn about the process used by the court to end a marriage.

This video covers the forms the court requires to open and process a divorce case. We'll talk about two types of Complaint forms – one for absolute divorce and one for limited divorce. We'll go over two forms to consider if you want to respond to a divorce case that your spouse has opened. One is called the Answer. The other is a Counter Complaint. We'll also introduce you to financial forms and forms you may need to waive the filing fees. Finally, you'll learn where you can get legal help completing these forms.

This series talks about divorce only. If you would like the court to end your marriage and establish custody of the children you and your spouse have in common, you should also view the *My Laws, My Courts, My Maryland* video series on Child Custody. You will be learning a lot of new terms, so consider using the Tip Sheet and taking notes. Let's get started with a discussion of complaint forms.

**CHAPTER HEADING FULL SCREEN TEXT: COMPLAINT**

If you would like to ask the court to open a divorce case to end your marriage, you have two options. Use the Complaint for Absolute Divorce, or form CC-DR-020, if you or your spouse can prove at least one legal reason, or grounds, for absolute divorce. Use the Complaint for Limited Divorce, or form CC-DR-021, if you do not have grounds for absolute divorce, but want to ask the court for alimony, custody, child support, and use and possession of the family home or other property. If you're not certain about which type of divorce you want, watch Part 2 in this series, Determining a Legal Reason (or Grounds) for Divorce.

If your spouse has opened a divorce case, and you want to respond, you also have two options.

**CHAPTER HEADING FULL SCREEN TEXT: ANSWER AND COUNTER-COMPLAINT**

One option to respond to the divorce case your spouse has opened is called the Answer, or form CC-DC-050. In the Answer, you agree with or disagree with the written statements your spouse included in his or her divorce complaint. The second option is called a Counter-Complaint for Absolute Divorce, or form CC-DR-094. Use this form if you want the court to address issues different from what your spouse requested in his or her complaint.

The court may require other forms as well

**CHAPTER HEADING FULL SCREEN TEXT: OTHER FORMS**

Every divorce case requires you to complete a Civil Domestic Case Information Report, or form CC-DCM-001. Submit it with your complaint or answer.

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If you or your spouse are asking the court to divide your marital property, you must complete a Joint Statement of the Parties Concerning Marital and Non-Marital Property, or form CC-DR-033. If you are asking for a divorce on the grounds of mutual consent, you must complete a settlement agreement. A court clerk or law librarian may be able to point you to a template for a settlement agreement.

At the end of your divorce hearing, you must submit a Division of Vital Statistics, Report of Absolute Divorce or Annulment of Marriage. This allows the court to mail to you a divorce decree or judgment. Get this form from a court clerk.

In some instances, you may be required to complete financial forms.

### **CHAPTER HEADING FULL SCREEN TEXT: FINANCIAL FORMS AND FEE WAIVER FORMS**

Under certain circumstances, you must complete a Financial Statement, or form CC-DR-030. Use this form if your case includes provisions about child support, and you and your spouse have a combined monthly income of less than \$15,000. Use Financial Statement, form CC-DR-031, if your case addresses alimony, property distribution, or child support and your combined monthly income is more than \$15,000.

Finally, if you cannot afford to pay the court filing fees, you may submit a Request for Waiver of Prepayment of Prepaid Costs, form CC-DR-089. You may also want to watch the *My Laws, My Courts, My Maryland* video *Can't Afford Court Filing Fees?*

That's a lot of forms. We know. Fortunately, there is help if you struggle completing these forms.

### **CHAPTER HEADING FULL SCREEN TEXT: SELF-HELP CENTERS**

You can speak to or chat live with lawyers at the Maryland Courts Self-Help Center on most weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. These lawyers cannot represent you in court, but they can give you brief advice on how to complete divorce forms. They may also help you determine which forms you must complete. Call at 410-260-1392. Or chat live at [www.mdcourts.gov/selfhelp](http://www.mdcourts.gov/selfhelp).

### **CHAPTER HEADING FULL SCREEN TEXT: SUMMARY**

Remember, if you want to open a divorce case, you must file either a Complaint for Limited Divorce or a Complaint for Absolute Divorce. If you want to respond to a divorce case opened by your spouse, file an Answer or a Counter-Complaint for Absolute Divorce. Both spouses must complete a Financial Statement. Together, you must complete a Joint Statement of Parties Concerning Marital and Non-Marital Property. If you can't afford to pay the filing fees and court costs, you may submit forms to request a fee waiver. Finally, if you need help with the forms, lawyers at the Maryland Courts Self-Help Center are available most weekdays until 8 p.m. at 410-260-1392.

Thanks for watching. On behalf of the Maryland Courts, we hope this information about the forms required in a divorce case has been helpful.

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