

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SIXTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
DEKALB COUNTY, ILLINOIS**

Guidelines for Custody and Visitation

Each parent shall:

1. Refrain from discussing the conduct of the other parent with or in the presence of the children, except in a laudatory or complimentary way. Do not poison the child's mind with the negative comment about the other spouse or their extended family or friends. Refrain from trying to buy the child's love through gifts or special favors.
2. Refrain from discussions of finance, as it relates to the other spouse, with or in the presence of the children, particularly with the regard to amount, manner of transmission of payment.
3. Pay all sums ordered, whether for child support or other reasons, IN FULL and ON TIME. The payor will not receive credit for presents, clothes, etc., unless based on a valid Court Order. Pay as ordered, that is weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, etc. since a variation may create arrearages.
4. Refrain from interfering with visitation, regardless of whether support payments are current. Interference is at the risk of the custodian and may be subject to punishment as contempt of Court unless good cause can be shown. Continued unwarranted interference could result in a change of custody.
5. Prepare the children for visitation and for return to the custodial parent both physically and mentally. Pick-up and return should be on time unless special arrangements have been made. Rules of common courtesy should prevail. Appropriate clothing and personal needs as well as favorite toys, medication, together with instructions, and information for emergencies should be sent with the children. Request special clothing in advance.
6. Refrain from consumption of alcohol or controlled substances, other than prescription medication taken pursuant to medical direction, during visitation and within 24 hours prior to visitation.
7. Exercise his or her visitation privileges each and every time and make the time spent meaningful. Shared, or worse, unshared, television viewing for extended periods of time is not in the best interest of the child/parent relationship. It is neither necessary nor suggested that excessive sums of money be spent on the children. Time spent talking, reading, attending community events and cultural activities, as well as sporting events and the like, all contribute immensely to the memories and strong bond sought by your children. Many such activities are free.
8. Notify each other promptly of any delays or changes in plans that will affect the other parent or their plans. Reasonable efforts should be made to have telephone contact available so that changes can be communicated. It is not necessary, however, to account for every moment of time or every place visited. Repeated late arrivals or repeated failure of the custodial parent to be available to receive the children back on time could result in court action to change visitation arrangements.
9. Refrain from questioning your children about the activities of your former spouse or from making extravagant promises to them, whether or not you can or will keep those promises. Keep in mind their daily standard of living and don't create confusion for them as to why one standard applies with one parent and a vastly different one with the other. A Court might consider making adjustments in support levels to equalize those standards.
10. Cooperate with the other parent in an adult, non-aggressive, reasonable and courteous way. There will be need for changes in visitation schedules due to illness or special events in your respective families. Flexibility is in the best interest of the children and unfortunately, unreasonableness on a given day may well receive the same response when the positions are reversed. Notice is the key word. Last minute changes are rude and disruptive to the family and the children. If changes cannot be made, don't blame the other parent to the children.
11. Do not argue with a former spouse, particularly in the presence of the children. Pick-up and return of the children should be a pleasant experience, looked forward to by all. It can be a time for the parents to exchange information about the children's health, school or church activities, extra curricular activities or other important matters.
12. Refrain from removing the children from the State of Illinois or from failing to advise your spouse of their location. Violation of this rule could result in prosecution for a Class IV Felony.

Failure to obey these rules may result in court action leading to the imposition of fines and/or confinement in the DeKalb County Jail, together with related attorney's fees and costs.

Effective: 4/21/94