

## INSIGHTS + NEWS

## Client Alert: Divorcing During COVID-19

BY CESIRA NEWCOMB • MAY 4, 2020

Sheltering at home causes an enormous strain on marriages, especially for those already on the brink of collapse. Beyond trying to balance home schooling with working from home, widespread closures and the cancellation of most activities not only means parents and children are together around the clock, but spouses are, too. No longer can spouses easily distance themselves from one another.

This new reality has led some people to conclude that divorce is the best option for them, but they are uncertain as to what they could do at this time.

Typically, divorce actions will resolve either by agreement or judgment within 14 months after the divorce filing. While the media has reported the courts are closed to the general public, divorces can still move forward in several ways. The courts are accepting new divorce filings and issuing summonses, so that the 12 to 14 month process can begin. Parents can take the mandatory parenting classes online. Lawyers can advise clients of their rights while the parties participate in virtual mediation sessions with a neutral. Required financial documentation can be exchanged while the lawyers work to negotiate Temporary Orders and Separation Agreements.

The majority of the Probate and Family Courts are accepting stipulations and incorporating them into orders. We have participated in telephonic hearings, successfully obtained emergency orders and continue to guide our clients through the divorce process during this pandemic.

While we socially distance, Bowditch remains ready to assist you during this time, albeit on a remote basis. Our attorneys, paralegals and staff are working remotely to service both existing and new clients via email, telephone, or videoconferencing. If you need help with a divorce, or any other family law matter, reach out to us. Bowditch is here to help.