

DIVORCE & COVID-19

*KEEPING IT TOGETHER AND
MOVING FORWARD*



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These are ***unprecedented times for all us***. There are a lot of questions that we are having a difficult time getting answered . . .

How can I move forward with my divorce?

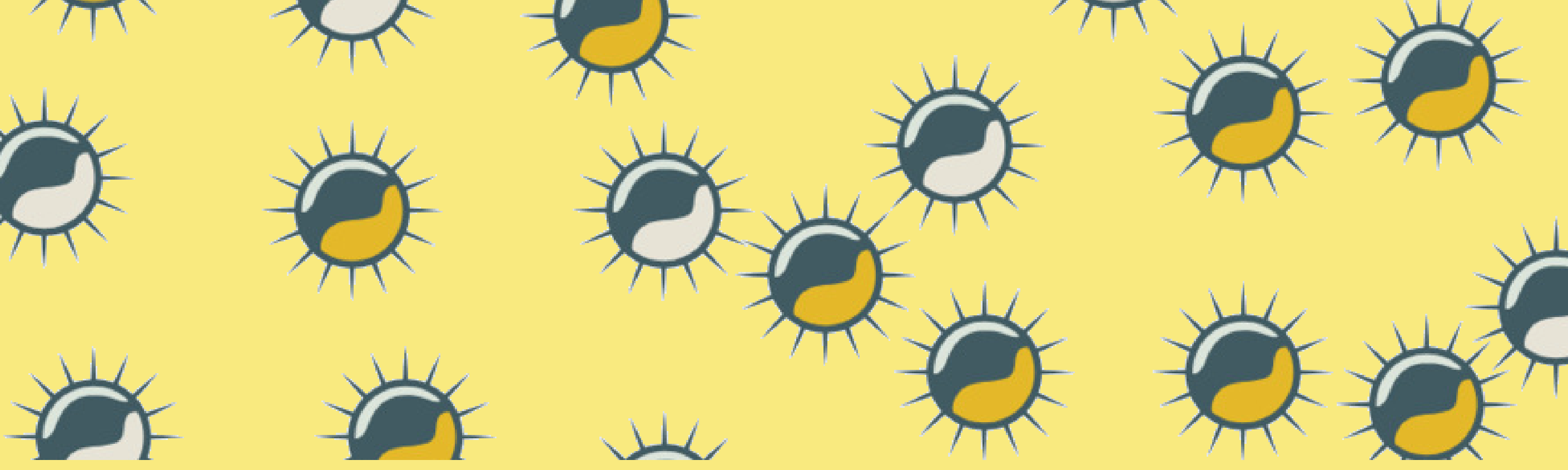
What do I do with my kids if my former spouse is sick?

What do I do if am being abused or know someone who is being abused?

The family law attorneys at Drury Pullen, A Professional Law Corporation are here to help you and your family get through these challenging times.

We are here to answer questions, help keep your spirits up, provide up-to-date resources and information and help you make decisions about your family law needs.

This E-Book is not intended as a solicitation or legal advice but as a resource. If you have an attorney, he or she is the best person to keep you informed. Give them a call!



Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. In California, everyone is required to stay home except to get food, care for a relative or friend, get necessary health care, or go to an essential job. If you go out, keep at least a 6 feet of distance from other people.

What can you do? Stay Home! Avoid people outside of your household. Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Wear a mask in public places. Regularly review Center for Disease Control guidelines. Be honest and open about illness and exposure.

Call your doctor if you are sick or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. Lean on your ex-spouse or co-parent as a resource.

How does COVID-19 Impact the Timing of Your Divorce?

Sheltering at Home does **not** mean that your divorce or related family law issues come to screeching halt.

All of the California Superior Courts are operating under Governor Newsom's orders but each court is operating differently. Consult your local superior court website for the latest information about court closure or contact your attorney. Keep in mind that the courts are open for certain criminal matters and emergencies such as domestic violence and other emergency matters.

What can you do now to keep your divorce on track and moving forward?

How do you stay safe at home? What resources are available to you? How can you engage your child who is not going to school? We try to answer some of these questions in this E-Book!



Keep the Momentum...

Part One

You likely have some extra time on your hands right now. There are a lot of things that you can be doing if you are in the middle of a divorce or planning to file in the near future. Begin with doing some online research about divorce in your state/county.

If you have an attorney, ask him or her for a "task list" or what I like to refer to as "divorce homework." Your attorney will be thrilled that you are taking time to be proactive in the process. Your attorney is your best resource right now and can be very helpful with keeping the momentum in your divorce case.

If you are in California, feel free to contact the attorneys at Drury Pullen, APLC for assistance or contact your local bar association for a referral. Our resource page has information of finding attorneys in your area.

Keep the Momentum...

Part Two

If you are on speaking terms with your ex, open a dialog about how you can work together to reduce overall expenses at this time.

Are there ways that you can continue to temporarily share certain expenses even though they will not be shared when the divorce is over? Maintaining joint car or health insurance might be an option? If you and your ex are still living together, can you continue to do so a little while longer? Be creative!

Begin gathering relevant information for your divorce. This includes documents that substantiate your income and expenses such as tax returns, W-2's and 1099's, and bank statements. It is a good idea to collect five years of income and expense data for your divorce so that you can establish income and spending patterns. If that seems overwhelming, start with one year and work your way through as many years as you can.



Keep the Momentum...

Part Two, continued

You can also use the extra time you have to gather information and documents regarding your assets and debts. Start by making a comprehensive list of your assets & debts. For each item on your list, collect the supporting documents (deeds, loan statements, purchase documents, pink slips, bank and credit card statements, etc.)

Don't forget your retirement accounts and life insurance documents!

You can visit the www.drurypullenlaw.com homepage and download "Divorce Homework: Assets and Debts" and "Divorce Homework: Income and Expenses" to get started.

Plan for settlement and your future! Talk to a Certified Divorce Financial Planner or Certified Public Accountant! Like many attorneys, financial planners are making their services available remotely. Take advantage of their services.



Keep the Momentum...

Part Three

*Since the courts are closed,
determine if your divorce can
continue to move forward with a
virtual mediation.*

Many attorneys are turning to remote offices to continue to service their clients.

With an experienced mediator, mediation is a great way to keep the process moving forward. Attorneys are negotiators by nature, we are here to be creative and help you move your matter forward.

Most importantly, SET GOALS! Now is the perfect time to think about what you want and can expect from your divorce.

If you are in California, Drury Pullen, APLC can help! Give us a call to discuss keeping your matter moving forward. If you are looking for an attorney in your area, we suggest trying to find a Certified Family Law Specialist (see Resources, page 15).

Social Distancing & Custody

Creating social distancing plans can be difficult when your children go back and forth between two households. Divorced or separated parents may find it more challenging to agree on the best measures to keep children safe.

If you need a modified custody plan, try to work with the other parent to reach agreements that are in your child's best interest. If that fails, contact a local family law attorney to look into whether or not you can obtain an emergency temporary order from your local court.

At this time, there is no reason to believe that social distancing and "stay at home" orders have any direct impact on your custody orders. Absent a true emergency, such as one which would put your child at risk if you sent him or her to the other parent's home, you should expect to follow your current custody arrangement.



When Home isn't Safe...*you need to seek help immediately.*

Though the courts may be temporarily closed for non-urgent matters due to COVID-19, they are open for emergencies such as dealing with domestic violence. It is hard enough to get out of an abusive home. Now, with shelter-in-place and stay-at-home orders, home could become an even more contentious place. If you or someone in your household is being abused, please seek help right away. You are not alone. **Reach out to a private attorney, local law enforcement or a non-profit for help with obtaining a restraining order.**

IF YOU ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER CALL 911
YOUR LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT CAN HELP

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO CALL 911 REACH OUT TO A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER AND ASK FOR HELP

If you suspect that a family member, friend or neighbor is being abused, get involved! If you SEE, HEAR or SENSE that someone you know needs help you should not hesitate to call 911.

Domestic Violence Resources if You or a Loved One Needs Help

CALL 911 IF YOU ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER
IF YOU ARE NOT IN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, CALL
THE CALIFORNIA OR NATIONAL HOTLINE AND THEY
WILL DIRECT YOU TO YOUR LOCAL RESOURCES

National and State Resources

National Domestic Violence Hotline (call this number from any location)

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

Text "LOVEIS" to 22522

California Partnership to End
Domestic Violence

916-444-7163 or visit www.cpedv.org

Santa Barbara County Resources

Legal Aid Foundation

805-963-6754

www.lafsbc.org/services

Domestic Violence Solutions
(Santa Barbara County)

24-Hour Hotline 805-964-5245

www.dvsolutions.org

Santa Barbara County District Attorney
Victim/Witness Advocate 805-568-2400

Private family law attorneys are also available to help you obtain a restraining order.

Take care of your **MENTAL HEALTH**



It is especially important that we all take care of our mental health, especially now. Here are some ideas for staying mentally strong.

Check in with family and friends daily

Meditate or write in a journal daily

Spend quality time with your children

Take breaks from the news and social media

Keep relationships with therapists and counselors

Get fresh air while social distancing (6 feet)

Exercise regularly and get plenty of sleep

Play with your dog or pet

Try to keep established routines as best you can

Make a music playlist and share with friends

**IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU LOVE NEEDS
IMMEDIATE HELP CALL 911**

Got Kids?

The Stay at Home orders present new challenges to parents (and kids)!

The internet is filled with terrific information about co-parenting, home-schooling, arts & crafts, keeping the peace in your family and much more. Each age group has its own set of challenges. Take the time to look online for ideas that fit your child's needs and interests.

Below are a few ideas!

Virtual Museums & Field Trips:

<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner?hl=en>

Go on a Virtual Dive: [https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/vr/?](https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/vr/?fbclid=IwAR1KXu6PCuOY5F-Vj5jI1AYSZLU1Zne81iTPKu8K5ZG54g1-7vCvAIUd9bc)

[fbclid=IwAR1KXu6PCuOY5F-](https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/vr/?fbclid=IwAR1KXu6PCuOY5F-Vj5jI1AYSZLU1Zne81iTPKu8K5ZG54g1-7vCvAIUd9bc)

[Vj5jI1AYSZLU1Zne81iTPKu8K5ZG54g1-7vCvAIUd9bc](https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/vr/?fbclid=IwAR1KXu6PCuOY5F-Vj5jI1AYSZLU1Zne81iTPKu8K5ZG54g1-7vCvAIUd9bc)

More virtual activities and online resources here:

<https://www.livescience.com/coronavirus-kids-activities.html>



Here are some healthy parenting tips from the [World Health Organization](#):

1

One-on-One Time

2

Keep It Positive

3

Structure Up

4

**Bad Behavior?
Catch it early & redirect it.**

5

**Keep Calm and
Manage Stress**

6

Talk about COVID-19

Keeping Your Home Clean and Sanitized



Designate one person to be your errand runner



Wipe handles and carts



Wash hands with soap for 20 seconds



Disinfect everything you touch



Wash your hands for 20 seconds after every delivery



Wash clothing regularly on the warmest setting



Don't allow guests over right now



If you are sick, ask someone to take care of your pet while you recover



If someone in your home gets sick, consult your doctor **FIRST** unless it is an emergency

Places to Find Information and Resources

- www.who.int - Latest global news and "situationdashboard" by country about COVID-19
- www.covid19.ca.gov - Detailed information about California's coronavirus response
- www.labor.ca.gov - Detailed information and resources for California employers and workers
- California Association of Realtors COVID Relief Hotline (213) 351-8480 - One-to-one assistance with respect to applying for various relief mechanisms in place at federal and state levels
- Disaster Distress Helpline - (800) 985-5990 Use this resource if you or someone you know needs help with depression or anxiety

Resources Specific to Santa Barbara County

- www.countyofsb.org/phd/ - Here you will find the latest local Santa Barbara County news related to the coronavirus
- Santa Barbara Foodbank- resource to feed your family <https://foodbanksbc.org/>
- If you or someone you know is being abused, refer to the resources on pages 9- 10 in this e-book

Looking for an Attorney?

Find a family law specialist by visiting <https://www.acfls.org/attorney-search/>

If you are dealing with an emergency custody or domestic violence situation, we are available to secure emergency court orders on your behalf.

We are also here for non-emergencies and are ready to help you move your existing matter forward or get started on addressing a new legal issue.

Although Family Courts across California remain closed for non-emergency matters, our family law attorneys remain hard at work preparing requests to modify support due to unforeseen circumstances, as well as preparing marital agreements, and negotiating resolutions to issues through settlement teleconferences when waiting to be heard in Court is not an option. We are analyzing the rapidly changing landscape concerning family law issues to best position our clients for success in their matters.

Our attorneys are also experienced in virtual mediations to advance cases during the “Stay-At-Home” Order.

This E-Book is not intended as a solicitation or legal advice but as a general resource and is not intended to cover all the issues related to the topics discussed. This material does not create an attorney-client relationship between you and Drury Pullen, APLC. If you have an attorney, he or she is the best person to keep you informed. Give them a call!



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We are available to assist you.

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