

## **ST. CLAIR COUNTY FRIEND OF COURT LONG DISTANCE PARENTING GUIDELINE**

Michigan Law establishes that minor children have a right to a relationship with both parents. It is the responsibility of the Friend of Court to recommend a parenting time schedule reflecting what it considers to be in the best interest of the minor child(ren).

The following is a typical long distance parenting time schedule. Long distance parenting time schedules are usually applied when parties reside more than 200 miles apart. This is a guideline and is not an order of the Court. Any deviation from the schedule is permissible if the parties agree. It is strongly recommended that parents develop their own arrangements that will consider the unique circumstances of their family, which can be modified from time to time. The Friend of Court may also recommend deviation from the following schedule. A deviation is made on a case by case basis and is based on many factors, including, the past parent-child(ren) relationship; the age and developmental needs of the child(ren); the location of each parent's residence and consideration of any special circumstances. Please keep the interest of your child(ren) in mind when scheduling parenting time. The following is the St. Clair County Standard Long Distance Parenting Time Schedule unless otherwise Court ordered. When the long-distance parenting time schedule is ordered, the non-custodial parent is entitled to the following parenting time: It should be noted if the child is not of school age, the school vacation schedule of the district where the child resides will be followed:

**EASTER/SPRING BREAK** will be alternated in its entirety. Father shall have the entire break in all even-numbered years and mother shall have the entire break in all odd-numbered years.

**CHRISTMAS/WINTER BREAK** will be alternated in its entirety. Father will have the entire break in all even-numbered years and mother will have the entire break in all odd-numbered years.

**SUMMER/SCHOOL BREAK:** The non-custodial parent will have summer parenting time for a period consisting of five (5) consecutive weeks during the summer school break. In the even-numbered years, the summer break will begin the first Sunday after school has concluded for five (5) consecutive weeks. In odd-numbered years, the summer parenting time will occur in the second half of the break but the child(ren) must be returned to the custodial parent five (5) days prior to the beginning of the school year.

**TRANSPORTATION:** Generally, transportation costs will be shared in accordance with the uninsured medical percentages in the current support order. However, the Friend of Court may review the assigned percentages and exceptions may be recommended. Transportation arrangements should be made well in advance (at least 30 days) of the parenting time. If air travel is considered, the airline rules for child(ren) traveling unaccompanied must be followed.

**TELEPHONE CONTACT:** The non-custodial parent will be allowed telephone contact with the child(ren), at their expense, provided the calls are made at age appropriate times and are for the purpose of maintaining the relationship between parent and child(ren).

The custodial parent will allow parenting time whenever the non-custodial parent is in the geographical area where the child(ren) resides or whenever the child(ren) is in the geographical area where the non-custodial parent resides, upon reasonable advance notice.

**PARENTING TIME COMPLAINTS:** Complaints can be submitted via the Friend of the Court website @ [www.stclaircounty.org/Offices/379](http://www.stclaircounty.org/Offices/379) or in writing to the Friend of the Court office. All complaints must include the specific dates denied, reason given for denial, whether you went to the exchange point to pick up the child(ren) and if you were on time. You must specify the requested information or your complaint may be returned to you.

**PARENTING TIME CONCERNS:** Both parties are encouraged to refer to the Friend of the Court website when concerns arise regarding parenting time, custody, moving out of state, moving more than 100 miles, child support and/or medical. The Friend of the Court handbook is readily available for reference and/or information. The website also offers all Friend of the Court forms, motions and instruction sheets. [www.stclaircounty.org/Offices/116](http://www.stclaircounty.org/Offices/116)

**\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT SHOULD BE REPORTED TO PROTECTIVE SERVICES (810) 966-2000.\*\*\***

**\*\*\*THE FRIEND OF THE COURT CANNOT ENFORCE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE PARENTS, NOT REFLECTED IN A COURT ORDER.\*\*\***