

**BRANCH COUNTY "STANDARD" PARENTING TIME MODEL AND POLICIES**

Parents are strongly encouraged to negotiate parenting time that will meet the needs of their child/ren and their particular circumstances. Parenting time is for the *child/ren*, it is a child/ren's right to have a meaningful relationship with BOTH parents. If the parents are unable to agree, then "standard parenting time" shall be defined as follows:

*< Provisions that do not apply may be crossed off >*

1. **SCHOOL YEAR SCHEDULE.** The "school year" is defined as beginning on the Sunday prior to the first day of school at 6:00 p.m. and ending on the Sunday after the last day of school at 6:00 p.m. During the school week, the parent with whom the minor child/ren do not primarily reside shall have parenting time on alternate weekends beginning on Friday at 6:00 p.m. and ending on Sunday at 6:00 p.m.
2. **SUMMER SCHEDULE.** The "summer" is defined as beginning on the Sunday after the last day of school at 6:00 p.m. and ending on the Sunday prior to the first day of school at 6:00 p.m.

- a.  summer schedule remains the same as school year schedule.
- b.  summer schedule remains, however, each party shall have two (2) week/s of uninterrupted parenting time, with no more than two (2) weeks being consecutive. In even numbered years, the mother shall notify the father by May 1<sup>st</sup> as to which 14-day period she will exercise parenting time and the father shall notify the mother by May 15<sup>th</sup> as to which 14 day period he will exercise parenting time. In odd-numbered years, the father shall notify the moth by May 1<sup>st</sup> as to which 14 day period he will exercise parenting time and the mother shall notify the father by May 15<sup>th</sup> as to which 14 day period she will exercise parenting. Failure of either party to notify the other parent by the above dates does **not** result in forfeiture of that parent's two (2) week parenting time, but just that they do not get the first choice of their weeks.

<u>Even numbered years</u> Mother picks by May 1 <sup>st</sup> Father picks by May 15 <sup>th</sup>	<u>Odd numbered years</u> Father picks by May 1 <sup>st</sup> Mother picks by May 15 <sup>th</sup>
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- c.  Each parent shall have parenting time on a week on/week off basis with the parent with whom the minor child/ren do not primarily reside exercising the first week.
- d.  Each parent shall have one half (1/2) of the summer. In even numbered years, the father shall have the first half (1/2) and the mother shall have the second half (1/2). In odd numbered years, the mother shall have the first half (1/2) and the father shall have the second half (1/2). The alternate weekend schedule shall continue as on the school year schedule such that each parent will continue to have alternate weekend parenting time as set forth above during the other parent's half of the summer vacation period.

<u>Even numbered years</u> Father first half Mother second half	<u>Odd numbered years</u> Mother first half Father second half
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3. **SPRING BREAK SCHEDULE.** Spring break is defined as beginning on the day that school is dismissed at 6:00 p.m. and ending on the Sunday prior to school commencing at 6:00 p.m.
  - a. Spring break shall be alternated. In even numbered years, the father shall have spring break. In odd numbered years, the mother shall have spring break.

<u>Even numbered years</u>	<u>Odd numbered years</u>
Father	Mother

4. **WINTER HOLIDAY BREAK SCHEDULE.** Winter holiday break is defined as beginning on the day that school is dismissed at 6:00 p.m. and ending on the day prior to school commencing at 6:00 p.m. The Winter Break shall be divided into two (2) halves. The 1<sup>st</sup> half of winter holiday break is defined as beginning on the day that school is dismissed at 6:00 p.m. and ending on the day that falls half-way through the winter holiday break . The 2<sup>nd</sup> half of winter holiday break is defined as beginning on the day that falls half-way through the winter holiday break and ending on the day before school commences. Winter holiday break shall be alternated. In even numbered years, the father shall have the first half of the winter holiday break. In odd numbered years, the mother shall have the first half of the winter holiday break.

<u>Even numbered years</u>	<u>Odd numbered years</u>
Father first 1/2	Mother first 1/2

5. **MID WEEK PARENTING TIME.** The  father  mother shall be entitled to spend time with the minor child/ren on Wednesdays from after school to 8:00 p.m. (or 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. if school is not in session).

6. **HOLIDAY/SPECIAL OCCASION PARENTING TIME.** The holidays and special occasions are listed in calendar order and shall be alternated unless otherwise specified.

- a. **Easter.** The father shall have parenting time in even numbered years and mother shall have parenting time in odd numbered years. The Easter holiday shall begin on Easter Sunday at 9:00 a.m. and shall end on Easter Sunday at 8:00 p.m.
- b. **Mother’s Day.** The mother shall have parenting time each year on Mother’s Day beginning at 9:00 a.m. and ending at 8:00 p.m.
- c. **Memorial Day.** The mother shall have parenting time in even numbered years and father shall have parenting time in odd numbered years. The Memorial Day holiday shall begin on the Friday before at 6:00 p.m. and shall end on Memorial Day at 8:00 p.m.
- d. **Father’s Day.** The Father shall have parenting time each year on Father’s Day beginning at 9:00 a.m. and ending at 8:00 p.m.
- e. **Fourth of July/Independence Day.** The father shall have parenting time in even numbered years and mother shall have parenting time in odd numbered years. The Fourth of July/Independence Day holiday shall begin on the day before at 6:00 p.m. and shall end on Fourth of July/Independence Day at 6:00 p.m.
- f. **Labor Day.** The mother shall have parenting time in even numbered years and father shall have parenting time in odd numbered years. The Labor Day holiday shall begin on the Friday before Labor Day at 6:00 p.m. and shall end on Labor Day at 6:00 p.m.
- g. **Halloween.** For elementary school aged children, the father shall have parenting time in even numbered years and mother shall have parenting time in odd numbered years. The Halloween holiday is defined as that day of the week that is designated for “trick-or-treating” in the city/village/town where the child/ren primarily reside. The Halloween holiday shall begin at 4:00 p.m. and shall end on Halloween at 8:00 p.m.
- h. **Thanksgiving.** The mother shall have parenting time in even numbered years and father shall have parenting time in odd numbered years. The Thanksgiving holiday shall begin on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving at 6:00 p.m. and shall end on Sunday at 6:00 p.m.

- i. **Christmas Eve.** The father shall have parenting time in even numbered years and mother shall have parenting time in odd numbered years. The Christmas Eve holiday shall begin on December 23 at 6:00 p.m. and shall end on December 24 at 8:00 p.m.
- j. **Christmas Day.** The mother shall have parenting time in even numbered years and father shall have parenting time in odd numbered years. The Christmas Day holiday shall begin on December 24 at 8:00 p.m. and shall end on December 25 at 8:00 p.m.
- k. **New Year's.** The father shall have parenting time in even numbered years and mother shall have parenting time in odd numbered years. The New Year's holiday shall begin on December 31 at 6:00 p.m. and shall end on January 1 at 8:00 p.m.
- l. **Child/ren's birthday.** Each parent shall have parenting time in alternative years for the child/ren's birthday/s. If the child's birthday occurs on a school day, parenting time shall occur for four (4) hours from 4:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. If the child's birthday occurs on a non-school day, parenting time shall occur for eight (8) hours from 12:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.. If there is more than one (1) child, parenting time shall include all of the children.

Holiday/Special Occasion parenting time shall take precedence over regularly scheduled parenting time. Additionally, if a parent's holiday/special occasion parenting time either precedes or follows her/his regularly scheduled parenting time, then the parenting time shall be one continuous period of parenting time. When the holiday or break schedule concludes, the alternating weekend schedule shall be resumed according to the pre-existing plan, as if it had not been interrupted.

<b>Holiday/Special Occasion</b>	<b>Even numbered years</b>	<b>Odd numbered years</b>
Easter	Father	Mother
Mother's Day	Mother	Mother
Memorial Day	Mother	Father
Father's Day	Father	Father
4 <sup>th</sup> July/Independence Day	Father	Mother
Labor Day	Mother	Father
Halloween	Father	Mother
Thanksgiving	Mother	Father
Christmas Eve	Father	Mother
Christmas Day	Mother	Father
New Year's Day	Father	Mother
Child/ren's Birthday	Mother	Father
Father's Birthday	Father	Father
Mother's Birthday	Mother	Mother

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**THE FOLLOWING ARE GENERAL POLICIES TO WHICH PROVIDE A GUIDELINE  
TO ASSIST THE PARTIES WITH CO-PARENTING**

**THESE POLICIES ARE NOT ENFORCEABLE THROUGH THE FRIEND OF THE COURT**

- 7. **TELEPHONE CONTACT.** The child/ren may be allowed reasonable access to each parent via telephone, email, text, etc., when the child/ren is/are in the care of the other parent. Unless otherwise agreed, reasonable access shall

include a minimum of one contact each week up to a maximum of three contacts each week, but in no event shall interfere with the parenting time of the parent currently enjoying parenting time.

8. **TRANSPORTATION.** Absent court order or agreement of the parties, the parent exercising parenting time shall provide transportation for the minor child/ren for his or her parenting time. For example, if father is exercising his parenting time, he picks the child/ren up and mother picks the child/ren up at the beginning of her parenting time. Pick up and drop off of the children shall be at the home of the parents. A parent may choose to have a properly licensed adult, who is familiar to the child/ren provide transportation for parenting time.
9. **EXTRACURRICULAR AND SPORTING ACTIVITIES.** Extracurricular activities for a child are generally positive and to be encouraged. However, parents should cooperate with each other when enrolling the child/ren in extracurricular and sporting activities to ensure that the activities do not interfere with the ability of the child/ren to enjoy parenting time. Neither parent should enroll the child/ren in excessive activities which serve to interfere with the other's ability to spend time with the child/ren. Both parents may attend the child/ren's extracurricular and sporting activities regardless if it is their parenting time. Each parent is responsible for taking the child/ren to all school sponsored extracurricular and sporting activities which are scheduled during their parenting time.
10. **OUT OF STATE PARENTING TIME.** Unless prohibited by court order, either parent may take the child/ren out of the state or country for vacation during their parenting time. However, neither parent shall exercise parenting time in a foreign country/nation that is not a party to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of the International Child Abduction unless both parties agree in writing with a copy provided to the Friend of the Court as required by MCL 722.27a(9). For a list of countries that are a partner to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, see: [http://travel.state.gov/abduction/resources/congressreport/congressreport\\_1487.html](http://travel.state.gov/abduction/resources/congressreport/congressreport_1487.html).
11. **PICK UP AND DROP OFF TIMES.** Parents are encouraged to communicate with each other in the event they are going to be late or need to return the child/ren early. However, absent prior agreement, in the event of unforeseen circumstances that either parent is late for pick-up, without prior notice, the other parent shall wait thirty (30) minutes. If the child is still home after this time, parenting time shall be allowed, if at a reasonable hour. Otherwise, parenting time for that time period is forfeited unless the parties agree to make up parenting time. Remember, nothing disappoints a child more than to be kept waiting to be picked up, or even worse, never to be picked up at all.
12. **ORDERS WHICH PROVIDE FOR "REASONABLE" PARENTING TIME.** If your court order states that a parent has reasonable parenting time as agreed to between the parents, the parents must mutually agree to a schedule. The parent with primary physical custody should not deny the other parent all access to the child/ren. If the parents cannot agree, upon a schedule, the parties may seek mediation services through the Friend of the Court if both parties agree, and if not, then one of the parents will have to file a motion with the Court to have the schedule determined through a Court order.
13. **PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION.** Prescription medications shall be sent with the child/ren for parenting time and shall be returned with the child. All medication prescribed to the minor child/ren must be given during each parent's parenting time.
14. **CAR SEATS.** Car seats are required by law. An approved infant seat, booster seat or child car seat must be used at all times by law. Each parent shall provide an infant or child care seat if the person transporting the child does not have one available.
15. **NUMBER OF OVERNIGHTS FOR PURPOSES OF CALCULATING CHILD SUPPORT.** The above represents
  - a. 261/104 if the summer is shared;
  - b. 290/75 overnight if summer is not shared; or
  - c. 281/84 overnights if each parent receives 2 weeks of uninterrupted summer parenting time.