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What Happens to My Family Law Case During the COVID-19 Crisis?

April 21, 2020

by Kelly A. Scott

We are now in the sixth week of the COVID-19 restrictions in the Court system. Our family law group here at Pullman & Comley, LLC continues to be inundated by questions and concerns about the impact this crisis is having on family law cases. Although the Courts have in many ways ground to a halt when it comes to family law matters (other than for the most emergent of issues), our attorneys and paralegals are working every day to keep cases active and moving forward.

Each of our team members is equipped to work remotely, and some of us are going to the office on certain designated days as part of the firm's COVID-19 protocol. We have conducted mediations, client meetings, expert meetings and other activities via videoconferencing. We are continuing to initiate new cases, settle others and move even more along through discovery, remote depositions and expert disclosures. Our paralegals are trained in taking oaths remotely, which has enabled us to file financial affidavits and other items requiring a sworn signature without delay, as if all is operating in the normal course of business.

Simply put, there is much that can, and is, being done on family law matters during this unprecedented time. All new cases, and most filed in the past 5+ years, are initiated through electronic filing. Through e-filing we can commence actions and file pleadings and motions without physically appearing in Court. Recently, the Courts have announced that they will begin approving and ordering temporary agreements in family matters. This means that as we are negotiating *pendente lite* agreements, whether about a parenting protocol if a parent or child is diagnosed with COVID-19, or providing for financial support to a non-earning spouse, or about any other issue that can be resolved by agreement, there is now a mechanism by which those agreements can be made enforceable court orders.

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Most importantly, we remain available to our clients, past, present and future, for every question or need they have about their cases, as we all navigate this evolving landscape together. If you need us, we are just a phone call, e-mail or video conference away.

Pullman & Comley attorneys are actively monitoring the legal implications of COVID-19 for businesses, municipalities, educational institutions and individuals. Please visit <https://www.pullcom.com/newsroom-publications-FOCUS-Responding-to-COVID-19> for our latest advisories.

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