

SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANT

PETITION FOR DIVORCE UNDER

ARTICLE 103(1) (with minor children)

This form is intended for litigants who:

- ✓ Have minor children and wish to ask the court for a divorce under Louisiana Civil Code Article 103 (1).
- ✓ Do not have a covenant marriage

Information you will Need:

1. The exact date and location (parish) where you were married.
2. The location (parish) where you and your spouse last lived together.
3. The exact date when you and your spouse began living in separate homes.
4. The exact current address of your spouse.
5. The names and dates of birth of all children born of the marriage.

Instructions:

These instructions are meant to guide you through the process of **asking the court for a divorce**. There are multiple types of divorce in Louisiana and these forms address Article 103 only.

This packet of forms is not legal advice and cannot take the place of the advice that a lawyer can give you. It is always best to speak with a lawyer before taking any legal action. **When you represent yourself in court, you must follow all the proper procedures and the law. It is your responsibility to see your case through the whole process.**

1. Be sure you have the correct form.
2. Read all instructions before you begin.
3. Fill in the blanks with 100% accurate information- *any false statement made in court or written in a court document may constitute perjury.*
4. Check all options that pertain to your situation.
5. If you have trouble reading, writing, or understanding what is in this motion, seek help at _____.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILING PETITION FOR ARTICLE 103 (1) DIVORCE WITH MINOR CHILDREN

These instructions are meant to guide you through the process of asking the court for a divorce under Article 103 (1) of the Louisiana Civil Code.

YOU MUST MEET ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS TO USE THESE FORMS.

- You want to divorce your spouse with whom you have children that are under 18 (born or adopted).
- You must live separate and apart from your spouse for at least three hundred sixty five (365) days before filing for divorce.
- You or your spouse must have lived in Louisiana for at least six months and/or lived in Louisiana together when you decided to divorce.
- You must **not** have entered into a covenant marriage.
- Your spouse is not an active member of the United States armed forces or any of its allies.

You will be filing your divorce as a self-represented litigant (SRL), which means without any attorney representing you. As the person suing for divorce you will be called the **Petitioner** and your spouse will be called the **Defendant**. All the forms you need to file for a divorce are attached.

HOW TO COMPLETE THE FORMS

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION CLEARLY! Make sure all of the blanks are filled in on all pages.

- A.** The first form is titled “**PETITION FOR DIVORCE**”. The Petition for Divorce includes an area titled “**VERIFICATION**”. You must sign this Verification in front of a Notary Public.
- B.** Bring your original **Petition for Divorce and Verification**, along with two photocopies, to the Clerk of Court in the parish where you live. Go to the Civil Department and tell the clerk you do not have a lawyer, and that you want to file for divorce. Ask the clerk to **stamp the date** on the copy of the petition you brought to keep for yourself.
- C.** In order to proceed, your spouse needs to be given a **certified** copy of the petition **after it has been filed**. You can deliver it yourself if your spouse signs the **Acceptance of Service OR** you can have the Sheriff deliver (or “serve”) your spouse. An acceptance of service may only be signed after the petition has been filed with the clerk and the defendant has been given a certified copy. Also, the acceptance of service must be signed in front of a notary public. If your spouse cannot or will not sign the Acceptance of Service document, you will need to ask the sheriff to serve him/her.

If you are going to have the Sheriff serve your spouse, let the Clerk’s Office know that you need for your spouse to be personally served by a Sheriff’s deputy. You need to give the clerk an address (home or work) where the sheriff can find your spouse to deliver the divorce papers. If the address is hard to find, give the clerk directions. You will need to check back with the Clerk’s Office to see if your spouse has been served. You may have to pay for this service and the amount varies by location.

- D.** If your spouse signed the **Acceptance of Service**, you should bring the signed and notarized form along with a **MOTION FOR PRELIMINARY DEFAULT** to the Clerk’s Office.

If your spouse has been served by the sheriff, he/she is allowed fifteen (15) days from the date he/she was served to answer the suit. After 15 days, you will need to check with the Clerk’s office to make sure your spouse has not filed an answer

or other pleading. **If your spouse has filed a motion in opposition to the divorce, these forms are no longer applicable and you will need to come to Court.**

If your spouse has **NOT** filed anything in response to the petition you filed, **OR** if your spouse has signed the **Acceptance of Service**, take the form titled **MOTION FOR PRELIMINARY DEFAULT** to the Clerk's office. Be sure to bring two (2) copies of the Motion for Preliminary Default along with the original. You have the option of taking the motion with the record to the Judge/Commissioner's clerk to get the preliminary default signed or asking the clerk to forward it to the Judge/Commissioner. Either way, ask the Clerk to give you a copy **stamped with the date** for you to keep. If you choose to have the clerk forward the motion to the Judge/Commissioner, ask to have the other copy of the Motion for Preliminary Default which is marked with the date that the Judge/Commissioner signed it, sent to you.

- E.** Once your preliminary default has been signed by the Judge/Commissioner complete the form titled **AFFIDAVIT OF FACTS**. You must sign this form in the presence of a Notary Public and it must be signed after your petition is filed but no more than 30 days before the final Judgment is signed. Also, complete the certification by self-represented litigant and sign it. Bring the Affidavit of Facts, the certification by self-represented litigant and the **JUDGMENT OF DIVORCE** to the Clerk's office. Take the complete record to the clerk of the Judge/Commissioner and ask for the Judgment to be signed. Once the Judge/Commissioner has signed your **JUDGMENT OF DIVORCE**, the Clerk's office will **give** you a certified copy of it. You are divorced as of the date of the Judge's/Commissioner's signature at the bottom of the Judgment of Divorce. Keep this certified copy for your records.
- F.** If, when you got married, you chose to use your spouse's name or a combination of you maiden name and your spouse's name and you want to return to using your maiden name or the name of your minor children from a previous marriage, then you should complete the form titled **MOTION TO RESUME USING MAIDEN NAME/NAME OF MINOR CHILDREN**. You may file this at the same time you file the affidavit of facts and the final judgment of divorce for the Judge/Commissioner to sign. Ask that the motion and order be presented to the Judge/Commissioner after s/he signs the judgment of divorce.

24TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT FOR THE PARISH OF JEFFESON

STATE OF LOUISIANA

NO. _____

DIVISION _____

VERSUS

FILED: _____

DEPUTY CLERK

PETITION FOR DIVORCE UNDER CIVIL CODE ARTICLE 103

WITH MINOR CHILDREN

The petition of _____ (*print your name*), a major domiciled in _____ (*Parish where you permanently reside*) Parish with respect represents:

1.

Made defendant is _____, (*print your spouse's name*) a major currently domiciled in _____ Parish/County, State of _____ (*Parish/State where your spouse permanently resides*).

2.

The parties were married on the ____ day of _____, _____, (*date of marriage*) in _____ Parish/County, State of _____ (*location of marriage*). The parties last lived together in _____ Parish/County, State of _____ (*where you last lived together as husband and wife*).

3.

Petitioner and defendant physically separated on the ____ day of _____ (month), _____ (year), and have lived continuously separate and apart since that date without reconciliation.

4.

The defendant is not an active member of the armed forces of the United States of America or any of its allies.

5.

The parties did not contract a covenant marriage.

6.

_____ [NUMBER] children were born, adopted, or legitimated between the Petitioner and Defendant during the course of their marriage.

_____ [NUMBER] of children are minors, namely:

Name	DOB
Name	DOB
Name	DOB
Name	DOB

_____ [NUMBER] children are of the full age of majority, namely:

Name	DOB
Name	DOB
Name	DOB
Name	DOB

7.

Petitioner requests and is entitled to a divorce under the provisions of Louisiana Civil Code Article 103(1), based on the parties having lived separate and apart for more than three hundred sixty five (365) days without reconciliation.

8.

Petitioner believes it is in the best interest of the child(ren) that the Court render judgment awarding custody of the minor children as follows: *(please select one of the following)*

_____ Petitioner requests that the parties be awarded joint custody, with _____ designated as domiciliary parent, and with custodial periods awarded to _____ as follows: _____

_____ Petitioner requests that the parties be awarded joint custody, with _____ designated as domiciliary parent, and with the parties sharing equal time with the minor child(ren) as follows: _____

_____ Petitioner requests that Petitioner be awarded sole custody subject to one of the following by the Respondent: *(please select an additional one of the following)*

_____ Petitioner requests that the Respondent be awarded reasonable visitation as

follows: _____

_____ Petitioner requests that the Respondent be awarded supervised visitation as

follows: _____

_____ Petitioner requests that the Respondent not be awarded any visitation.

9.

Petitioner request that a rule to show cause issue ordering the defendant to appear on a day and time to show why custody of the minor children should not be awarded as requested in Paragraph 8.

10.

*(Please select **one** of the following.)*

_____ Petitioner and Defendant have not acquired community property during the marriage.

_____ Petitioner and Defendant have acquired community property during the marriage.

Petitioner is entitled to a partition of the community property, by order of this court, existing between the parties and Petitioner does hereby reserve Petitioner's right to a partition of the community property.

_____ Petitioner and defendant own property that is part of the community of acquets and gains, consisting principally of _____ . Irreparable injury, loss or damage may otherwise result to petitioner since defendant will dispose of, encumber, or conceal such items of community property and it is thus necessary that a temporary restraining order issue, without bond and without prior notice, and then an injunction issue after hearing, enjoining the defendant from alienating, encumbering, donating, wasting, concealing, or destroying, any items of community property belonging to and in the name of _____ or _____ .

11.

*(please select **one** of the following)*

_____ Petitioner does not have the ability to pre-pay the court costs or to pay the costs as they accrue, and requests that Petitioner be allowed to file *in forma pauperis* under the Code of Civil Procedure Articles 5185-5188. Uniform IFP form provided by the Clerk of Court should be included with the petition.

_____ Petitioner is able to pay and will pay the court costs in addition to any service charge.

_____ Petitioner requests that the Defendant be cast with all costs for said reasons:

_____ Petitioner requests that Defendant share equally in the court costs.

WHEREFORE, petitioner prays that after all legal delays and due proceedings, there be judgment granting petitioner a divorce in accordance with the provisions of Louisiana Civil Code Article 103. That a rule to show cause issue herein ordering the defendant to appear on a day and time to be determined by the court and to show cause why the petitioner should not be awarded custody as requested herein. That all other ancillary relief requested in this petition be granted in due course.

Respectfully submitted,

(SIGNATURE)

(PRINTED FULL NAME)

(STREET ADDRESS)

(CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE)

(TELEPHONE NUMBER)

CLERK OF COURT:

_____ DEFENDANT TO ACCEPT SERVICE (AND SIGN "ACCEPTANCE OF SERVICE")

OR

_____ PLEASE SERVE:

(DEFENDANT'S FULL NAME)

(STREET ADDRESS)

(CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE)

(TELEPHONE NUMBER)

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED that _____, defendant appear on the _____ day of _____, 20__ at ___ o'clock __.m. why custody of the minor child/ren should not be awarded as follows:

Joint custody: (describe the terms you want)

Sole custody: (describe the terms you want)

Gretna, Louisiana this _____ day of _____, 20__.

Judge / Commissioner

24TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT FOR THE PARISH OF JEFFESON

STATE OF LOUISIANA

NO. _____

DIVISION _____

VERSUS

FILED: _____

DEPUTY CLERK

VERIFICATION

STATE OF LOUISIANA

PARISH OF _____

BEFORE ME, the undersigned Notary Public, personally came and appeared:

who, after being duly sworn, did depose and say that he/she is the petitioner in the above entitled matter, and all of the allegations contained in the petition are true and correct to the best of his/her knowledge, information and belief. Furthermore, that there are no existing prior custody decrees involving the mentioned child(ren) in this state or any other state.

AFFIANT

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me, this ____ day of _____, 20__.

NOTARY PUBLIC

24TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT FOR THE PARISH OF JEFFESON

STATE OF LOUISIANA

NO. _____

DIVISION _____

VERSUS

FILED: _____

DEPUTY CLERK

ACCEPTANCE OF SERVICE AND WAIVER OF CITATION AND ALL DELAYS

STATE OF _____ [STATE WHERE SIGNED AND NOTARIZED]

PARISH OF _____ [PARISH WHERE SIGNED AND NOTARIZED]

BEFORE ME, the undersigned notary public, personally came and appeared:

_____, (*Defendant*) who, after being duly sworn, did state

that:

Defendant acknowledges receipt of a **certified** copy of the above-captioned "PETITION FOR DIVORCE UNDER CIVIL CODE ARTICLE 103 WITH CHILDREN" entitled

_____ v. _____ (*Party Names*), filed _____

(*Filing Date*) with the docket number _____ (*Case Number*) on the docket

of the 24th Judicial District Court for the Parish of Jefferson, State of Louisiana.

Defendant expressly and formally acknowledges and accepts service of a **certified** copy of the petition and waives the issuance of formal citation and service of process.

Defendant further waives all legal delays allowed by law, particularly those delays allowed for answering and/or excepting to the pleadings provided in Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure Articles 928, 1001, and 1002.

Defendant further waives notice of trial, and waives Defendant's appearance at trial of this matter.

Defendant acknowledges that by signing here Petitioner will be allowed to go forward with this lawsuit in Defendant's absence, and Defendant understands that

Petitioner intends to do so.

Defendant acknowledges that Defendant may be cast with some or all of the court costs in this proceeding.

Respectfully submitted,

BY:

(Signature)

Defendant

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone Number

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED

before me, on this ____ day of _____, 20__.

NOTARY PUBLIC, No.:

Printed Name:

My Commission Expires:

24TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT FOR THE PARISH OF JEFFESON

STATE OF LOUISIANA

NO. _____

DIVISION _____

VERSUS

FILED: _____

DEPUTY CLERK

MOTION AND ORDER FOR PRELIMINARY DEFAULT

ON MOTION OF petitioner, _____, and on

suggesting to this Honorable Court that:

A verified Petition for Divorce was filed in this matter on the _____ day of _____ (month), 20____ (date the Petition for Divorce was originally filed with the Clerk of Court). Defendant was served on the _____ day of _____, 20____ (date your spouse was served with a copy of the Petition).

OR

Defendant signed the Acceptance of Service which was filed with the Court on the ___ day of _____ (month), 20____ (date you filed the Acceptance of Service document).

No answer or other responsive pleading having been filed, petitioner now moves for entry of Preliminary Default under Code of Civil Procedure Article 1702(E).

Respectfully submitted,

PETITIONER, Self Represented Litigant

(PRINTED FULL NAME)

(STREET ADDRESS)

(CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE)

(TELEPHONE NUMBER)

CLERK'S CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that a review of the record reveals that no answer or other responsive pleadings have been filed in this cause.

Deputy Clerk

Date

ORDER

Considering the above Motion, **IT IS ORDERED** that a Preliminary Default be entered in the above captioned cause.

THUS DONE AND SIGNED this _____ day of _____, 20____
at _____ Louisiana.

DISTRICT JUDGE / COMMISSIONER

24TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT FOR THE PARISH OF JEFFESON

STATE OF LOUISIANA

NO. _____

DIVISION _____

VERSUS

FILED: _____

DEPUTY CLERK

AFFIDAVIT OF FACTS

STATE OF LOUISIANA

PARISH OF _____

BEFORE ME, the undersigned notary public, personally came and appeared:

Petitioner

Who, being duly sworn, did depose and state:

1. That Petitioner is a person of the full age of majority and who is domiciled in _____ Parish, Louisiana;
2. That he/she is the petitioner in the above entitled and numbered action;
3. That the defendant is a major currently domiciled in the Parish/County of _____, State of _____.
4. That petitioner and defendant were married on _____ (date);
5. _____ child(ren) were born of the marriage, namely:
 - (a) _____, d/o/b _____,
 - (b) _____, d/o/b _____,
 - (c) _____, d/o/b _____,
 - (d) _____, d/o/b _____,
 - (e) _____, d/o/b _____,
6. That petitioner and defendant physically separated on _____ (day/month/year) and have remained living separate and apart without

reconciliation since that time;

7. That petitioner desires to obtain a divorce under Civil Code Article 103(1) on the basis of the parties having lived separate and apart without reconciliation for three hundred sixty five days or more;
8. That defendant is not a member of the Armed Forces of the United States of America or any of its allies;
9. That the parties have not contracted a covenant marriage.

(PETITIONER SIGNATURE)

(PRINTED FULL NAME)

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me, on this ____ day of _____
20____.

NOTARY PUBLIC

24th JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT FOR THE PARISH OF JEFFERSON

STATE OF LOUISIANA

NO. _____

DIVISION _____

VERSUS

FILED: _____

DEPUTY CLERK

CERTIFICATION BY SELF REPRESENTED LITIGANT

I, _____, petitioner hereby certify pursuant to code of Civil Procedure Article 1702 E that (circle one) personal/domiciliary service was made on the defendant in this proceeding on the ____ day of _____, 20____.

or

(2) the defendant waived service of process by authentic act executed on the ____ day of _____, 20____ and filed in the record on the ____ day of _____, 20____, and that a preliminary default was entered on the ____ day of _____, 20____.

(Signature)

(Print name)
Self-Represented Litigant

24TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT FOR THE PARISH OF JEFFESON

STATE OF LOUISIANA

NO. _____

DIVISION _____

VERSUS

FILED: _____

DEPUTY CLERK

JUDGMENT OF DIVORCE

This matter was considered pursuant to the provisions of Louisiana Civil Code Article 103(1) and Code of Civil Procedure Article 1702(E). The Court having considered the entire record of this matter and petitioner's affidavit of facts and the law and evidence in favor thereof, renders as follows:

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED ADJUDGED AND DECREED that the preliminary default previously entered herein on the ____ day of _____, 20____, be now confirmed.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND DECREED that there be a judgment in favor of petitioner _____, and against defendant _____, decreeing a divorce between the parties on the basis of the parties having lived separate and apart continuously and without reconciliation for a period of three hundred and sixty five days or more as per Civil Code Article 103(1).

JUDGMENT READ, RENDERED AND SIGNED, this _ day of _____, 20 __, at _____, Louisiana.

DISTRICT JUDGE / COMMISSIONER

Certification of Clerk of Court that all cost has been paid and that no answer as been filed.

JUDGEMENT SUBMITTED BY:

(SIGNATURE)

(PRINTED FULL NAME)

(STREET ADDRESS)

(CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE)

(TELEPHONE NUMBER)

24TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT FOR THE PARISH OF JEFFERSON

STATE OF LOUISIANA

NO. _____

DIVISION _____

VERSUS

FILED: _____

DEPUTY CLERK

**MOTION AND ORDER TO RESUME USING
MAIDEN NAME/MINOR CHILD'S NAME**

ON MOTION OF petitioner, _____, and on suggesting to this Honorable Court that:

A judgment of divorce was granted in this matter on _____, 20____
(date the judgment of divorce was granted) and _____ (circle one)
petitioner / defendant wishes to resume using her maiden name/minor children's name
of _____.

Respectfully Submitted:

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

ORDER

Considering the above Motion, **IT IS ORDERED** that the (circle one) petitioner /
defendant _____ is allowed to resume using her (circle one)
maiden name / minor children's name of _____.

THUS DONE AND SIGNED this ____ day of _____, 20____
at _____ Louisiana.

DISTRICT JUDGE / COMMISSIONER