

CHRONOLOGY OF A DIVORCE ACTION

Day #1

TIME LINE

14 Months

JURISDICTION

MARRIAGE¹ CERTIFICATE

PROBATE & FAMILY COURT

1. COMPLAINT

- A. FILE²
- B. DOCKET NUMBER³
- C. SERVICE & SUMMONS⁴
- D. RESPONSIVE PLEADING

2. INITIAL COURT APPEARANCE⁵

- A. FAMILY SERVICES
- B. FINANCIAL STATEMENT
- C. TEMPORARY ORDERS
 - 1. CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINES
 - 2. HEALTH INSURANCE
 - 3. CUSTODY/VISITATION⁶
 - 4. ALIMONY
 - a. NEED
 - b. ABILITY TO MEET NEEDS
 - 5. PARENT EDUCATION CLASS⁷

3. DISCOVERY

A. RULE 410 PRODUCTION

- B. DISCOVERY DEVICES
 - 1. INTERROGATORIES
 - 2. REQUEST FOR DOCUMENTS
 - 3. DEPOSITIONS
 - 4. SUBPOENAS
 - 5. BUSINESS VALUATION

4. PRE-TRIAL

- A. MEMORANDUM
- B. OFFER OF PROOF
- C. SETTLEMENT/TRIAL

5. TRIAL

- A. EVIDENCE (21 FACTORS)⁸
- B. FINDINGS OF FACT
- C. PROPOSED JUDGMENT

- JUDGMENT/ORDER⁹
- MODIFICATION¹⁰
- ENFORCEMENT



1. Certified Copy • 2. Grounds/Reasons For • 3. One Judge Throughout • 4. Triggers Automatic Asset Restraining Order (Rule 411) • 5. Time Standards Begin • 6. Now Called "Parenting Plan" • 7. You Can't Get Divorced Without the Certificate • 8. M.G.L. Ch. 208, Section 34 • 9. Waiting Period - 90 Days • 10. "One Bite at the Apple" - Change in Circumstances