

Form FOC 87

MOTION REGARDING CUSTODY

Use this form if:

- you have a pending case for custody, divorce, separate maintenance, family support or paternity;
or
- you are a party who has a custody order through a judgment of custody, divorce, separate maintenance, or family support order, or an order of filiation.

You cannot use this form:

- to start a custody case; or
- if you are a third party and want to intervene to get custody of the child(ren) in a pending case for custody, divorce, separate maintenance, family support, or paternity; or
- to change domicile of the child(ren) to another state or more than 100 miles away. If you want to change custody and domicile, you must use this form and form FOC 115, Motion to Change Domicile.

MOTION CHECKLIST

Use the following checklist to make sure you have done all the steps that are needed.

DID YOU . . .

1. Fill out all requested information on the form? YES ☐
2. Complete and attach MC 416, Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Enforcement Act Affidavit? YES ☐
3. Make all necessary copies? YES ☐
4. Pay the fees to the clerk? YES ☐
5. Mail (serve) a copy of the motion and MC 416 on the other party and on any other custodian/guardian after the judge and hearing date were assigned to your case by the clerk? YES ☐
6. Return to the clerk's office after you mailed the motion and notice of hearing and MC 416 to the other party and completed the certificate of mailing? YES ☐
7. Keep one copy of the motion and notice of hearing and MC 416 forms for yourself? YES ☐
8. Give two copies of the completed form to the clerk of the court? YES ☐

If you cannot answer "yes" to all the above steps, a hearing on your motion may be delayed or your motion may be dismissed.

By using this form packet you are representing yourself in a court action regarding custody. In order to receive the action you seek, you must follow the instructions in this packet. If you fail to do even one of the required steps, the order you get from the court may not give you the custody you want.

If you have any questions about any steps in the process, refer to pages 3 through 5 of this booklet for details.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING FORM FOC 87
FILING A MOTION AND SERVING A MOTION**

»» FILING A MOTION

1. Fill out the Motion form.

Use the instructions on page 6. Be careful not to make mistakes.

Before filling out the “Notice of Hearing” part of the form, contact the friend of the court office to find out whom to contact about getting a hearing date. Then contact the person or office as directed by the friend of the court office. Fill in the form with the information you get about the hearing date, location of hearing, and name of the judge or referee who will be hearing the motion.

Make at least five copies of the form after you have filled it out.

2. Fill out MC 416, Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Enforcement Act Affidavit.

3. File the Motion form and MC 416 with the county clerk.

Take the original and five copies of the form and MC 416 to the county clerk in the county where your case is located.

You must pay a \$100.00 fee at the time of filing. If you can’t afford to pay the fees, ask the county clerk for an Affidavit and Order, Suspension of Fees/Costs (form MC 20 not included in this packet) to fill out.

The county clerk will write the name of the judge assigned to your case on your form. The clerk will keep the original and one copy of the motion, MC 416 and any attachments for the court file and the friend of the court. Then the clerk will return four copies and remaining attachments to you. Do not lose them.

What you should have when you leave the clerk’s office:

- One copy of FOC 87 and MC 416 (with any attachments) - for you
- One copy of FOC 87 and MC 416 (with any attachments) - for the other party
- One copy of FOC 87 - for proof of service to the court
- One copy of FOC 87 - for proof of service to the friend of the court

»» SERVING THE MOTION ON THE OTHER PARTY OR PARTIES

1. Serve the Motion, MC 416 and Notice of Hearing on the other party.

The other parent, or other party (if there is a custodian or guardian other than a parent) must be served with (notified of) the motion and hearing date at least 9 days before the hearing date.

NOTE: Serve the papers by mailing them to the other party by first-class mail.

What you need for service:

One copy of FOC 87 and MC 416 (with any attachments) - for the other party

Two copies of FOC 87 - for proof of service

Any additional copies of FOC 87 and MC 416 (with any attachments) - for another custodian or guardian if there is someone other than the other parent who has care or custody of the child(ren).

Mail one copy with attachments and MC 416 to the other party. If there is a custodian or guardian, mail one copy with attachments and MC 416 to them. Then fill out the Certificate of Mailing on the front of the remaining three copies. Keep one copy of the forms and attachments for your own records.

2. Return to the county clerk.

Once you have mailed the motion and notice of hearing and MC 416 and filled out the Certificate of Mailing on the remaining three copies of FOC 87, return to the county clerk's office with two copies. Remember to keep one copy for your own records. The county clerk will deliver one copy to the friend of the court.

3. Response from other party.

If you receive a response to your motion from the other party, make sure you read it before you attend the hearing. Think about what you want to say on your behalf.

4. Attend the hearing.

You must attend the hearing on the motion.

»» INFORMATION ABOUT ATTENDING THE HEARING

Bring the original and five copies of the Order Regarding Custody (form FOC 89) and, as needed, the Uniform Child Support Order (form FOC 10/52) with you to the hearing. Also bring all supporting papers you have and any witnesses who are willing to testify.

1. Because you are representing yourself, you are expected to conduct yourself as an attorney would and to follow the same general rules an attorney would.
2. Make a list of information you think is important for the referee or judge to know. The information should relate to the reasons stated in your motion. You can use this list as a reminder to bring up the points you think are important.
3. If you think you need to order someone to attend this hearing, follow the procedure in MCR 2.506 or consult with an attorney.
4. Go to the judge's courtroom or referee's hearing room on the scheduled day and time. Dress neatly. Arrive 10 or 15 minutes early. Be prepared to spend most of the morning or afternoon in court. Bring any witnesses with you.

5. If you are responsible for preparing the order, bring all copies of your order form.
6. Go into the courtroom or referee hearing room and tell the referee or clerk (sitting near the judge's bench) your name, that you are there for a hearing, and you are representing yourself. Do not interrupt any hearing in progress. Then take a seat in the back of the courtroom and wait for your case to be called.
7. When your case is called, be prepared to state:
 - 1) your name.
 - 2) that you are representing yourself.
 - 3) that you need a custody order or a change in a custody order.
 - 4) the facts or reasons for your request (bring papers such as reports that support your facts or reasons including income information such as pay stubs, W-2 forms, income tax forms, etc.).
 - 5) why you believe this order would be in the best interests of the child(ren).
 - 6) whether you have witnesses in court who are willing to testify.

Answer the judge's or referee's questions clearly and directly. If the judge or referee wants to hear from the other witnesses, ask them to tell the court what they saw or know regarding your situation.

8. If the other party is in court, he or she will have a chance to speak also. When the other party talks, take notes. Do not interrupt the other party. After the other party speaks, you will have another chance to talk. Taking notes will help you with this.
9. After the judge or referee makes a decision, follow the instructions on the packet for FOC 89, "Order Regarding Custody and Parenting Time." As needed, follow the instructions for the packet for FOC 10/52, "Uniform Child Support Order," to complete that part of the order. You are responsible for preparing the order even if you do not get what you are asking for.

NOTE: If your hearing is held before a referee and you do not agree with the referee's decision, you have 21 days from the date of mailing of the referee's recommendation to file an objection and request a de novo hearing before the judge. Use the packet FOC 68, "Objection to Referee's Recommended Order."

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING "MOTION REGARDING CUSTODY"

Please print neatly. After filling in the form, you will need to make at least five copies of the form.

Items A through J must be completed before your motion can be filed with the court. Please read the instructions for each item. Then fill in the correct information for that item on the form.

(A) Before you fill in the Case No., get your court papers for custody, divorce, separate maintenance, family support or paternity and copy the Case No. from those court papers onto this form.

(B) Also use your court papers to fill in the "Plaintiff" and "Defendant" boxes and, if applicable, the "Third Party" box. Copy the names from these court papers onto this form. For example, if your name is in the box that says "plaintiff," then you should write your name in the "plaintiff" box on this motion form.

You are the "moving party." Once you have written the names where they belong, you must check the box "moving party" in the same box as your name.

(C) Check only one box. If you have a judgment or order for custody, divorce, separate maintenance, family support, or paternity, read it carefully to find out if there is any information in it about custody. If there is information about custody, check box a. If there is no information about custody, check box b.

(D) Check this box only if you checked box a. in **(C)** above. Read your court papers for custody, divorce, separate maintenance, family support, or paternity to find out who was ordered to have custody. Write this information here along with the name(s) of the child(ren).

(E) State who the child(ren) are living with now, the address or location where the child(ren) are living, and the date the child(ren) started living there even if it is different than what was ordered.

(F) State the circumstances that require a custody order or a change in custody. Explain in as much detail as possible what has happened. If you need more space, use a separate sheet of paper. Print this information as neatly as you can. You will need four copies of this sheet to attach to four copies of this form.

(G) State the causes that require a custody order or a change in custody. The judge or referee will review these causes using factors from the Child Custody Act to determine the best interests of the child. Explain in as much detail as possible what the causes are. If you need more space, use a separate sheet of paper. Print this information as neatly as you can. You will need four copies of this sheet to attach to four copies of this form.

(H) Check this box if you and the other party agree about custody. Explain in as much detail as possible what you agreed to including support and parenting time. If you need more space, use a separate sheet of paper. Print this information as neatly as you can. You will need four copies of this sheet to attach to four copies of this form.

(I) You need to explain in as much detail as possible what you want the court to order. If you checked **(H)** above, you only need to write "Same as 7. above." If you need more space, use a separate sheet of paper. You need to include information about support and parenting time as well. Print this information as neatly as you can. You will need four copies of this sheet to attach to four copies of this form.

(J) Write in today's date and sign your name. Now contact the friend of the court office in your county to find out how to get a hearing date. See page 3 of this booklet for details.

(K) Once you get a hearing scheduled, fill in the full name of the judge or referee who will be hearing this motion, the date of the hearing, the time of the hearing (include whether it is a.m. or p.m.), and the place of the hearing.

- Now go to the county clerk's office with the original and five copies of this form and the four copies of each separate sheet. The clerk will attach one copy of each separate sheet to four of the copies. The clerk will return four copies to you. Read page 3 of this booklet for details on mailing this form to the other party.

(L) On the date you mail one copy (and the separate sheets) to the other party, write in the date and sign your name on the remaining three copies.

- Return to the county clerk with two copies. See page 4 of this booklet for details.

You must read this booklet for directions on the legal process.