

CHECKLIST FOR ENFORCING OR CHANGING (MODIFYING) A FAMILY COURT JUDGMENT IN OZAUKEE COUNTY

Read through these instructions completely before you start this process to be sure you have all the forms and information you need

Be sure to keep a copy of everything you file with the court for your records

1. Obtain the forms you need from the Clerk of Courts office or website at www.wicourts.gov, or the Family Law Assistance Center. Be sure to review the forms carefully to be sure you select the proper forms.
2. Fill in the forms carefully and completely. This is important – take your time and be sure everything is complete. If your signature needs to be notarized, do not sign the form(s) until you take them to the Clerk of Court's counter for filing. If you need a date for a hearing, leave that section blank for now.
3. Take your forms to the Clerk of Court's counter for filing. If you need a date for a hearing, the clerk will get one for you. You can also have your signature notarized there, if necessary. Pay any filing fee, or fill in the form to request a waiver of fees, if you qualify for that.
4. You will get copies of your forms back from the Clerk of Courts. You must serve these forms on the other person. There is a specific process you must follow; please refer to the Service Packet available from the Clerk of Courts for those forms and instructions. File the Affidavit (or Certificate) of Service, or the Admission of Service, with the Clerk of Courts after you have had the other party served. You may also need to serve the Child Support Agency (CSA). See the Service Packet for more information.
5. Complete a Financial Disclosure Statement (FDS) if your request involves financial issues.
6. Attend any hearing that is scheduled. Bring the original and three copies of your FDS and of any other documents you want the court to see (one for the other party, one for the child support agency if they are involved, and one for yourself).
7. If your request relates to the **custody or placement of a minor child or children**, you may be required to participate in **mediation** as a first step in the process.
 - You must fill out the form to request mediation and take it, and a check for \$150.00, to the Clerk of Court's counter. You can do this before, at the same time as, or after filing your request for a court hearing. Note: if you attend only one session of mediation, whether or not you reach an agreement, the \$150.00 deposit will be refunded to you.
 - Be aware, however, that if you do not reach agreement in mediation, you will then need to request appointment of a **guardian ad litem (GAL)**. This is an attorney who will be appointed to represent the best interests of your child or children. A deposit of \$1,500.00 is required before a GAL will be appointed. You may be eligible for a reduced deposit, but you and/or the other parent will be ultimately responsible for the cost of the GAL. The cost may be more or less than \$1,500.00, depending on the amount of time the GAL spends on the case. There is a form you must complete to request appointment of a GAL. You must file that form at the Clerk of Court's counter along with the \$1,500.00 deposit or a request for waiver or reduction of the deposit.
 - If you want the other parent make part of the required deposit, and that parent does not do so, you must ask the court to make that order when you attend your court hearing. The process of mediation or appointment of a GAL does not start until the court has the deposit.
 - The court can order the other party to pay or reimburse you for some or all of the cost of the GAL even if you make the deposit upfront.