



## **EXPEDITED SERVICES AND HOW CAN IT HELP ME WITH MY FAMILY LAW CASE?**

Questions and answers to commonly asked about Expedited Services.  
By Carrie Titus, Esq.

### **What is Expedited Services?**

Expedited Services is a department of the Family Support Services for Maricopa County that helps parties and judges find solutions to child support issues, including enforcement and calculations. Expedited Services also deals with spousal maintenance enforcement and visitation issues, often without the long waiting period associated with getting a hearing date with a judge.

### **Why was Expedited Services formed?**

Expedited Services was formed in 1988 after the Arizona legislature established procedures to implement an expedited process for the enforcement of court orders for child support, spousal maintenance and parenting time (visitation), in 1987.

### **How can I use Expedited Services?**

Expedited Services can be useful in helping parties reach agreements and to get Orders signed by a judge much faster than if the parties had to wait to get a Court date. Parties are initially referred to Expedited Services by the assigned judge on the case or a party may file a Petition for the Enforcement of Child Support/Spousal Maintenance or an Expedited Process Request to Enforce Parenting Time. Once the Court issues an Order for child support enforcement, Expedited Services monitors the case, allowing the parties to request a Conference for the Enforcement of Child Support. To enforce Child Support or Spousal Maintenance, there must be a current Maricopa Order and the unpaid support must equal at least one month of the support ordered. Additionally, the party owing the money must be available to be served.

### **What do I need to bring with me to the Expedited Services Conference?**

For a Conference involving child support, Expedited Services requires that parties bring their most current pay stubs, W-2, W-4 and income tax forms for the past two years, proof of court-ordered support for any other children, proof of costs of supporting natural or adopted children for whom there is no court order, proof that court-ordered spousal maintenance is being paid, proof of paying the medical insurance premium for the children related to the case and proof of any necessary extra education, child care, and extraordinary expenses paid for the children in the case. Also bring your children's social security numbers and dates of birth. (Expedited Services provides a list of the information needed when you receive the date for your Conference).

### **Do I need an attorney for the Expedited Services Conference?**

This decision is up to each individual and the complications in your unique circumstance. Expedited Services allows attorney involvement in the process but not every party brings their attorney, even if they are represented. If you are frightened of the other party, feel you may be pressured by the other party, are worried about being clear in your answers, or are unsure of your understanding of the process, having an attorney present may be to your benefit. If you work well with the other party and already have reached an agreement but simply need to make the agreement an Order, you may not need an attorney. This is an individual decision and since each case is different, there is no easy answer to whether you should have an attorney for Expedited Services.



**Why do I have to submit all of my documents, especially since I am the one who should receive child support and I have done nothing wrong?**

Expedited Services uses the information provided to calculate child support pursuant to Arizona law when making its recommendation to the Judge. Moreover, since the other party is likely to contest the amounts owed or even whether any amounts are owed, you must prove your assertions.

**How is child support calculated in Arizona?**

In Arizona, child support follows the Income Shares Model. This model was developed by the Child Support Guidelines Project of the National Center for State Courts. Basically, to calculate child support, Arizona estimates the amount that would have been spent on the child(ren) if the parents and child(ren) continued living together. This amount is based on each party's gross income and the number of children in common. From this amount, medical insurance premiums, day care expenses, support of other children, extraordinary costs and extra education costs are added. Then the non-custodial parent receives a reduction for the amount of visitation days they have with the child(ren). The calculator then tells what amount each parent should contribute for their proportionate share of the total child support amount.

To review the Child Support calculator and see what your child support might be, you can go to: [www.supreme.state.az.us/dr/childsup/drguide](http://www.supreme.state.az.us/dr/childsup/drguide).

**What if I can no longer pay the court-ordered amount for child support?**

Either party may file to modify the child support if the new child support will change up or down at least fifteen percent (15%) from the current amount.

**If the parties have reached an agreement for child support, should we still attend the Expedited Services Conference?**

If you have reached an agreement, you can have the agreement entered as a Stipulated Order or can attend the Expedited Services Conference. If you choose to attend the conference, the Conference Officer will calculate what the child support should be according to the Arizona Guidelines. In its Report, Recommendation and Order, Expedited Services will inform the judge of your agreement and of the child support amount according to the Guidelines. The judge then has the final decision whether your agreement is fair to the children or if the Guideline amount should be ordered.

**Who makes the decisions at an expedited Services Conference?**

The conferences are run by Conference Officers who are neutral, impartial county employees who have training in Child Support and Parenting Time.

**What happens during an Expedited Services Conference?**

The Conference Officers work with the parties to help them reach agreements on the issues. The Conference Officer also gathers information that may be useful if the parties are unable to reach an agreement. The Conference Officer may perform calculations and include them in his/her Report, Recommendation, and Order that will go to the judge.

**What happens after the Conference?**

Following the conference, the Conference Officer submits a Report, Recommendation and Order to the judge. If the parties reached an agreement, the Conference Officer will give that information to the judge. If the parties were unable to reach an agreement, the Conference Officer will give recommendations to the judge. The judge will then review the Report, Recommendation and Order and will either approve the recommendation or modify it. The Court will then issue an order informing the parties what was ordered.



**What if I do not like the outcome of the Expedited Services Conference?**

Once the Conference Officer files the Report, Recommendation and Order the parties have twenty-five (25) days to file an Objection to the Report, Recommendation and Order. If an Objection is filed, the assigned judge will review the Report and Objection and decide if a formal court hearing before the judge is necessary to resolve the issue.

**Carrie Titus** is an Associate Attorney at Wilcox and Wilcox, P.C. and formerly worked as a Conference Officer at Expedited Services handling the Establishment, Modification and Enforcement of Child Support, as well as visitation and related problems. Carrie has also completed forty hours of Mediation training and has been a volunteer mediator for Valley Justice Courts.

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All the information in this article may be changed at any time as updates by the Arizona legislature and new programs are implemented at Expedited Services.

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