



# Thomas M. Cooley Law Libraries' Research Guide Series

## FAMILY LAW: A Selective Research Guide

### I. Michigan Resources

### III. Journals

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### II. Federal Resources

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### VI. Michigan Online Resources

#### Overview:

This guide is selective and attempts to provide resources on the topic of family law. It is not comprehensive in scope or intended to be a catchall source, but rather to act as a starting point for the researcher to find additional sources and relevant information. At its core, the guide attempts to lead the researcher to up-to-date items held by the Cooley libraries. Additionally, the guide is tilted towards Michigan sources on the topic while other state specific guides have been omitted. The annotations provide brief descriptions and do not purport to serve as critiques or endorsements of the titles' contents or authority.

## I. MICHIGAN RESOURCES

### Complex Issues in Divorce for the Michigan Practitioner

**Location: KFM 4300 .Z9 G418**

This resource discusses some of the more complex issues commonly found in divorce cases: valuation issues, tax issues, asset and liability division, spousal maintenance, child custody, child support, complex divorce actions, and the lawyer's ethical responsibility during the dissolution of a marriage. Applicable cases are provided under each separate issue, as well as forms and miscellaneous memorandums and articles pertaining to the separate issues of law.

### Divorce Cases in Michigan: A Systems Approach

**Location: KFM4300 .D58**

This step-by-step manual explains how to handle a divorce case in Michigan. Arranged chronologically, this book walks the reader through each stage of a divorce case while reviewing applicable statutes and court rules. Narrative sections explain the required court procedures. In addition, forms and checklists are provided to assist you in your practice.

### Domestic Violence Benchbook: A Guide to Civil and Criminal Proceedings

**Location: KFM4767.F35 L68**

This benchbook discusses Michigan law governing domestic violence issues in the three most common courtroom contexts where it is found: personal protection proceedings, criminal proceedings, divorce and child custody proceedings.



## **Equitable Distribution in Divorce Settlements in Michigan: Valuation, Tax and Other Issues**

**Location: KFM4300 .Z9 G37**

Determining the equitable distribution of marital assets is a complex task. Not only does this book discuss the key cases that define equitable distribution in Michigan, it outlines valuation issues, ethics considerations, tax considerations, and the role of mediation in a divorce case. In addition, cases, forms and other resources are provided.

## **Family Law Litigation in Michigan**

**Location: KFM 4300 .Z9 B73**

This work provides general information about family law in Michigan, from the intake interview to litigation techniques.

## **Family Law Trial Book for Michigan Referees**

**Location: KFM 4300 . A57 D55**

Originally published for the Oakland County Friend of the Court, this resource is now utilized by many practicing attorneys in Michigan. This book provides information on: child custody, parenting time, grandparent visitation, legal residence of the child, termination of parental rights, stepparent adoptions, child support, paternity, spousal support, property, delinquency, personal protection orders, attorney fees, divorce, child's name, and cases.

## **How to File for Divorce in Michigan**

**Location: KFM4300 .Z9 H36**

This resource simplifies the divorce process by using straightforward language in describing this inherently complex process. Also included are court forms and a glossary of terms.

## **Juvenile Justice Benchbook: Delinquency and Criminal Proceedings**

**Location: KFM4796 .M535 2003**

This benchbook discusses the proceedings of juvenile cases, from delinquency to cases where a juvenile may be tried as an adult. The benchbook also covers the costs of juvenile proceedings and recordkeeping requirements. In addition, this book is available electronically at: <http://courts.michigan.gov/mji/resources/jjbook/jjbench.htm> .

## **Michigan Basic Practice Handbook**

**Location: KFM4277 .M522**

Chapter 2 in the Michigan Basic Practice Handbook discusses divorce cases, from the initial consultation through the appeals process. Topics include: filing requirements, ex parte and temporary orders, discovery, Friend of the Court, alternative dispute resolution, property division, spousal support, child custody and parenting time, child support, entry of judgment, modification of judgment, relief from judgments and appeals. Numerous forms are also included.

## **Michigan Divorce Book: A Guide to Doing an Uncontested Divorce Without an Attorney – with minor children**

**Location: KFM4300 .Z9 M38**

This common sense guide to filing for divorce yourself explains difficult concepts and provides step-by-step guidance on how to file for divorce without involving an attorney. Also



included are appendices containing specific information on a variety of topics, from divorce and the military to child support provisions. Numerous forms are also included.

### **Michigan Family Law**

**Location: KFM4300 .M515**

This comprehensive work covers all aspects of family law practice in Michigan. Citations to both Michigan and federal case law are included in every chapter, as well as family law forms and examples.

### **Michigan Family Law Benchbook**

**Location: KFM4294 .A6 M53**

The official judge's book covers all major areas within the jurisdiction of the Family Division, such as: divorce procedure, marriage, annulment and separate maintenance, child custody, parenting time, child support, spousal support, Friend of the Court, property division, tax considerations in divorce, paternity, adoption, guardianships, conservatorships, as well as other miscellaneous issues.

### **Michigan Family Laws and Rules**

**Location: KFM4294 .A29**

Michigan Family Laws and Rules provides access to current Michigan laws and court rules governing family law issues.

### **Michigan Guardianship and Conservatorship Handbook, revised edition,**

**Location: KFM4306 .M52**

A step-by-step guide to Michigan guardianships and conservatorships. Covers guardianships for legally incapacitated persons, minors, and developmentally disabled persons, as well as alternatives to guardianship. Includes sample forms.

### **Michigan Legal Forms**

**Location: KFM 4268 .M53**

The Michigan Legal Forms books provide readers with customizable legal and business forms that have been reviewed and approved for court use. The areas of law covered are: business organizations, estate planning, real estate, personal and commercial transactions, government, municipal and regulatory affairs, and contracts. Volume 4 of this set focuses on family law forms.

### **Michigan Probate Sourcebook, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.**

**Location: KFM4344 .M52**

A compilation of all of the Michigan statutes, rules, and forms needed for probate practice. Includes EPIC and selected federal and SCAO forms.

### **Michigan Real Property Law**

**Location: KFM4312 .C36**

This treatise covers all major topics related to Michigan real estate law, including the rights acquired by marriage or cohabitation.



## **QDROs, EDRO & Division of Employee Benefits on Divorce: A Guide for Michigan Practitioners**

**Location: KFM4297 .Q152**

This guide discusses the strategies for handling the valuation and division of benefits in a divorce case and includes the following topics: discovery and valuation, Qualified Domestic Relations Orders (QDROs), Eligible Domestic Relations Orders (EDROs), retirement benefits, social security issues, tax consequences, Medical Child Support Orders (MCSOs), life insurance and non-qualified employee and retirement benefits.

## **Trusts, Estate Planning and Divorce in Michigan**

**Location: KFM4300 .Z9 S53**

Published by the National Business Institute, this resource provides an overview of trust law, discusses trusts and estate planning, taxation and trusts, ethical issues for estate planning, and cooperative estate planning.

## **II. FEDERAL RESOURCES**

### **Child Support Guidelines: Interpretation and Application**

**Location: KF549 .M672**

This comprehensive guidebook takes readers step-by-step through the application of the child support guidelines and in understanding all aspects of child support cases. In addition, this resource discusses each State's version of the models used to determine child support: percentage of income model, income shares model, and the Melson formula.

### **Divorce and Money: How to Make the Best Financial Decisions During Divorce**

**Location: KF524.Z9 W66**

Available in both print and as an e-book, this resource discusses the legal and financial realities of divorce. Also included are practical advice tips on future things to plan for, insurance issues, retirement plans, property issues, and debt.

### **Family Law Litigation Guide**

**Location: KF505 .F354**

This in-depth guide provides readers with detailed coverage of procedural and evidentiary rules by examining the information in four different sections: law of discovery, discovery practice, law of evidence, and trial practice. In addition, over 200 family law forms are provided, as well as practice checklists, sample motions, sample discovery documents, and sample questions.

### **Family Law and Practice**

**Location: KF505 .F34**

This national treatise covers the various stages of family law proceedings, from intake through trial to modification and enforcement of the divorce decrees. Also included are model pleadings, orders, motion papers, sample retainers, financial questionnaires, sample discovery documents, models of equitable distribution of marital property, and model direct and cross-examinations.



## **Guide to Marriage, Divorce & Families**

**Location:** KF505 .Z9 A47

Prepared by the American Bar Association, this resource discusses the following topics: premarital agreements, valid and invalid marriages, same-sex marriages, civil unions and domestic partnerships, living together, financial aspects of marriage, children, adoption, deciding whether or not to divorce, separation, annulment, dividing property, alimony/maintenance, child support, custody and parenting time, domestic violence, working with an attorney, mediation and other alternatives.

## **Valuation and Distribution of Marital Property**

**Location:** KF524 .V35

Provides guidance on property disposition in community property states, including information about tax issues, the valuation and division of property, businesses, professional practices, intangible assets, pension plans, antenuptial, postnuptial and property settlement agreements, the marital home and conflicts of law.

### **III. JOURNALS/PERIODICALS**

#### **Michigan Family Law Journal Resources for the Public**

**Location:** KFM4294 .A15

This website provides numerous articles about domestic relations law as well as a list of domestic violence resources. It can also be reached by going to the following website: [http://www.michbar.org/family/public\\_resources.cfm](http://www.michbar.org/family/public_resources.cfm) .

### **IV. NUTSHELLS & OTHER RESOURCES**

#### **Family Law in a Nutshell**

**Location:** KF505 .Z9 K7

Family Law in a Nutshell highlights recent developments in family law on topics such as constitutional law, the marriage relationship, spousal rights and obligations in the ongoing marriage, the parent-child relationship, termination of marital status, and the economic consequences of divorce.

### **V. INTERNET RESOURCES**

#### **ABA Commission on Domestic Violence Publications**

<http://www.abanet.org/domviol/pubs.html>

Provides access to resources on domestic violence, including publications, newsletters, and information for attorneys on domestic violence practice.

#### **American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers**

[www.aaml.org](http://www.aaml.org)

This website provides information on all areas of family law, including divorce, annulment, prenuptial agreements, postnuptial agreements, marital settlement agreements, child custody



and visitation, business valuations, property valuations and division, alimony, child support and other family law issues.

### **Child Support Guidelines**

<http://www.supportguidelines.com/main.html>

Regularly updated with new case law and articles on child support, this comprehensive resource provides access to child support guidelines across the United States.

### **Department of Health and Human Services**

<http://www.hhs.gov/children/index.html>

The HHS website provides links to resources on topics such as family issues (child support, child care, domestic violence, child abuse), adoption, children, HHS Agencies, medicaid and other health insurance.

### **Findlaw: Family Law Center**

<http://family.findlaw.com/>

Findlaw's Family Law Center provides access to in-depth legal information, including common law issues, marriage, divorce, child custody, child support, adoption, living together, and more. Also included are links to pertinent legal resources, forms, hot topics, and state laws.

### **Lexis**

Sign on to the Lexis research system and select "Enter research system" on the right side of the page.

- Select the "research" tab
- Select the "Family Law" category

You may search the Family Law directory or narrow your search by selecting a family law sub-topic.

### **Martindale-Hubbell Lawyers.com**

[www.lawyers.com](http://www.lawyers.com)

Martindale-Hubbell allows you access to many different resources. You can find a lawyer, search for information on particular legal issues, discuss your legal issue on a legal message board, locate legal resources or review the law blogs on a variety of topics. In addition, a nationwide lawyer referral service is also available.

### **Nolo.com**

<http://nolo.com>

Nolo.com provides information on many different legal topics. In order to locate information on family law, select the "Family Law" link to obtain information on changing your name, parenting & adoption, marriage, living together, divorce, child custody, health care, elder care, immigration and green cards. In addition, links to pertinent articles are provided, as well as links to legal forms, related topics and other resources.



## **Virtual Chase Family Law Research Links**

[http://www.virtualchase.com/topics/family\\_law.shtml](http://www.virtualchase.com/topics/family_law.shtml)

Virtual Chase provides numerous links on various family law topics, from Access to Information by Adopted Persons to International Child Abduction and Same Sex Marriage.

## **Westlaw**

<https://lawschool.westlaw.com/>

Login and select the “Westlaw Research” tab at the top of the page. Then:

- Select “Directory” at the top of the page
- Select “Topical Practice Areas”
- Select “Family Law”

You may search the Family Law directory or narrow your search by selecting a family law sub-topic.

## **VI. MICHIGAN ONLINE RESOURCES**

### **Adoption Proceedings Benchbook, by Jennifer D. Warner, with the Adoption Benchbook Advisory Committee, Michigan Judicial Institute, 2003.**

<http://courts.michigan.gov/mji/resources/adoption/adoption.htm>

Contains detailed discussions of the following topics: releases and consents; termination of parental rights; identifying the father; international adoptions; temporary, formal, and direct placements; adoption subsidies; adult adoptions; stepparent adoptions; rehearings and appeals; record keeping and release of information; and the Indian Child Welfare Act.

### **Domestic Violence: A Guide to Civil and Criminal Proceedings, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., by Mary M. Lovik, with the Domestic Violence Benchbook Advisory Committee, Michigan Judicial Institute, 2004.**

<http://courts.michigan.gov/mji/resources/dvbook/dvbook.htm>

This Benchbook discusses Michigan law governing domestic violence issues in the three most common courtroom contexts where it is found: personal protection proceedings, criminal proceedings, divorce, and child custody proceedings.

### **Friend of the Court Domestic Violence Resource Book, by Mary M. Lovik, with the Friend of the Court Domestic Violence Resource Book Advisory Committee, Michigan Judicial Institute, 2004.**

[http://courts.michigan.gov/mji/resources/focdv/foc\\_dv.htm](http://courts.michigan.gov/mji/resources/focdv/foc_dv.htm)

Contains information about the nature and dynamics of domestic violence, community referral resources, the laws governing access to children and support as they apply in cases involving domestic violence, safety concerns, and the relationships between criminal and PPO actions and domestic relations cases involving the same parties.



## **Juvenile Justice Benchbook: Delinquency and Criminal Proceedings, Juvenile Justice Benchbook Advisory Committee, Michigan Judicial Institute, 2003-2008.**

<http://courts.michigan.gov/mji/resources/jjbook/jjbench.htm>

This Benchbook discusses the proceedings of juvenile cases, from delinquency to cases where a juvenile may be tried as an adult. The Benchbook also covers the costs of juvenile proceedings and recordkeeping requirements.

## **Michigan Child Support Formula Manual and Supplement**

<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/resources/publications/manuals/focb/2008MCSFmanual.pdf>

<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/resources/publications/manuals/focb/2008MCSFsupplement.pdf>

Provides the complete 2008 Michigan Child Support Formula (MCSF) that is used to calculate child support in Michigan. The Supplement contains tables used to calculate a child support obligation based on the MCSF.

## **Michigan Court Forms:**

Domestic Relations Court Forms

<http://courts.michigan.gov/SCAO/courtforms/domesticrelations/drindex.htm>

Probate Court Forms

<http://courts.michigan.gov/SCAO/courtforms/probate/gpindex.htm>

Adoption Court Forms

<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/courtforms/adoptions/adindex.htm>

Juvenile Court Forms

<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/courtforms/juvenile/juvindex.htm>

Provides all State Court Administrative Office approved forms for the subject areas.

## **Michigan Court Self-Help Center**

<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/selfhelp/sitemap.htm>

This resource provides a comprehensive self-help guide that offers general information as well as self-help in the area of domestic relations.

## **Michigan Department of Human Services**

<http://www.michigan.gov/dhs>

The Michigan Department of Human Services website provides information.

## **Michigan Family Law Journal and Resources for the Public**

[http://www.michbar.org/family/public\\_resources.cfm](http://www.michbar.org/family/public_resources.cfm)

This website provides numerous articles about domestic relations law as well as a list of domestic violence resources.

## **Michigan Office of Child Support**

[http://www.michigan.gov/dhs/0,1607,7-124-5453\\_5528---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/dhs/0,1607,7-124-5453_5528---,00.html)

The Michigan Department of Human Services site provides links to information on establishing paternity, enforcement of child support, interstate child support, the Michigan State Disbursement Unit, parent locator resources, forms, publications, and reports and statistics.



## **Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence**

<http://www.resourcecenter.info/>

The Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence offers a unique collection of books, videos, journals, and other media, which are useful for training, counseling, education, research, non-profit business management, program development, and activism.

## **State Bar of Michigan Family Law Self-Help**

<http://www.michbar.org/generalinfo/libraries/familylaw.cfm>

This Self-Help site offers links to introductory materials, Michigan statutes, legal forms, Michigan guides, lawyer referral services, and other public resources pertaining to family law.

## **State Court Administrative Office Brochures and Pamphlets**

<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/resources/publications/pamphlets/index.htm#focpubs>

This site offers resources such as informational brochures and pamphlets produced and/or distributed by the State Court Administrative Office. These brochures cover information pertaining to custody, parenting time, child support, and other domestic relations matters.

