

# PARENT EDUCATION

A GUIDE TO PARENT EDUCATION IN THE FAMILY COURT

#### **FAMILY COURT OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE**

http://courts.delaware.gov/family

#### What is It?

Parent Education Programs are a 6-8 hour course to help parents cope with a divorce or separation. It is not a course on how to raise children.

### Who Must Attend?

All parents in divorce cases with children under the age of 18 All parents who are a party to a custody or visitation proceeding

#### Which Class Should I Attend?

A list of approved education programs is attached. Parents are responsible for enrolling themselves in a program.

#### **Who Must Attend Domestic Violence Related Classes?**

Both parents must go if:

- ⇒ One parent has a criminal conviction for a crime against the other parent
- ⇒ There is or ever was a Protection From Abuse Order between the parties

Parents may not attend the same domestic violence class.

## What happens if I do not attend a Parent Education Class?

The Court will not schedule your Custody or Visitation Petition for a hearing date until the Petitioner completes a Parent Education Class. If a Certificate of Completion is not received within 180 days of the date of the filing of the Petition, the Petition will be dismissed.

### Who Must Attend?

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## **Questions?**

**Call Family Court** 

New Castle County: (302) 255-0300

Kent County: (302) 672-1000

Sussex County: (302) 855-7400

#### What Does It Cost?

Each program sets its own fee, but the fee may not be more than \$100 per parent. The programs also offer financial aid.

#### When Do I Have to Take the Class?

The Court will not schedule a final custody or visitation hearing until the Petitioner has completed the class. If neither parent attends, the Court may dismiss the case. If one parent does not attend, the Court may consider the parent's failure to attend the class in deciding the case.

## **How Will The Court Know I Have Completed the Program?**

The teachers of each course will give you a certificate when you complete the program. You must give the original certificate to the Court.

## **Can This Requirement Be Waived?**

This requirement may be waived for good reason. The hearing can be scheduled without completing the course if you can show the Court that there is a good reason why you should not have to take the course. If the Petitioner wants the Court to do so, he or she must file a Motion, asking the Court to waive the requirement. Motions are available online and in the Resource Centers.