

Instructions: How to complete the “*Decree of Dissolution of Marriage (Divorce) Without Minor Children*”

INFORMATION ABOUT THE DIVORCE DECREE

- **What the Decree Means to You.** The Decree is the Court Order that legally ends your marriage. Once the judge or commissioner has signed the Decree, it determines the rights and responsibilities of both you and your ex-spouse. If either party does not do what the Decree tells him/her to do, then the other party may ask the Court for help. This is a very important document. Once it has been signed by the judge, your rights and responsibilities are affected forever.
- **Failure to do What the Decree Tells You to do Could Get You into Trouble with the Court.** This does not mean that the Court will police you or the other party to make sure you are following the Decree. It does mean that you, or your ex-spouse, can request a “*Contempt Order*” or an “*Order to Enforce*” parts of the Decree if you, or your ex-spouse, fail to do what the Decree tells you to do.
- **Getting Your Divorce Finalized.** Before your divorce can become final, a judge or commissioner must sign the Decree. The Decree states how the property (if any) is divided, how the debts and assets (if any) are divided, and the amount of spousal maintenance/support (alimony)(if any)
- **Divorce by Default.** If you are seeking a Default Decree, you must repeat, as closely as possible, what you requested in your Petition. You cannot request something different in the Decree than what you requested in the Petition. If you try to do this, the judge or commissioner will not sign the Decree. If you want to change your requests to the Court, you must file an “*Amended Petition.*” It is a good idea to have your Petition handy when you fill out your Decree so you can refer to it as needed.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING OUT THE DECREE:

- When filling out any court forms, type or print with black ink only.
- Fill out the Decree before you go to your hearing or before you give it to the judge to sign.
- Do not fill in the spaces allocated for the judge’s signature and date.
- If the judge disagrees with anything you have written, he/she may change it before signing the Decree or he/she may ask the parties to come to a hearing.

PROCEDURES: HOW TO GET YOUR DECREE SIGNED BY THE JUDGE

- Make two copies of the Decree.
- Take the documents to your trial or default hearing. If you are using the default process and you wish to proceed without a hearing, see the procedures and forms to proceed by Motion. .