

**STATE OF MICHIGAN
27TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT - NEWAYGO COUNTY**

Policy No.: 4.10	Policy Title: REASONABLE PARENTING TIME POLICY				
Date Written: 5-7-02 Date Revised: 2-4-21					Page 1 of 12
Application: (Check boxes below applicable groups)	All Circuit Court Services	Juvenile Division	Friend of the Court	Supervisors	Other: _____
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POLICY & PROCEDURE

Michigan law recognizes that it is in the best interest of children that parenting time occurs in a frequency, duration, and type reasonably calculated to promote a strong relationship between children and parents. Ideally, parents develop their own parenting time schedule that takes into consideration the unique circumstances of their family. This policy has been developed as a basis for the non-custodial parent to be ensured a reasonable amount of time with the child(ren) for those situations where parents cannot reach an agreement as to the amount of parenting time to be awarded. This schedule is only utilized in cases in which the order refers to the non-custodial parent as having “reasonable parenting time” or when the order specifically states that parenting time is according to this policy.

This policy has been developed based upon the assumption that there is a normal degree of familiarity between the non-custodial parent and a child. A parenting time schedule will have to be considered on a case-by-case basis when this is not the situation or if there has been an extended absence by the non-custodial parent.

Parenting time and child support are separate issues and are not dependent upon each other. As a rule, parenting time should continue whether support is being paid or not, and likewise, support must be paid whether or not parenting time is occurring.

PARENTING TIME SCHEDULE

Children Age 0 to 1 year

Parenting time shall occur every Wednesday from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and every Sunday from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Children Age 1 year to 2 years

Parenting time shall occur alternating weekends from 9:00 a.m. Saturday until 6:00 p.m. Sunday and every Wednesday from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

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Children Age 2 years and older

Parenting time shall occur alternating weekends from 6:00 p.m. Friday until 6:00 p.m. Sunday and every Wednesday from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. If the non-custodial parent is consistently available to pick the child(ren) up at school on Friday and drop the child(ren) off at school on Monday, parenting time shall be alternating weekends from Friday after school to the following Monday morning. The child must be on time to school. If Friday in question is not a school day, the non-custodial parent may retrieve the child at 3:00 p.m. If Monday in question is not a school day, the custodial parent may retrieve the child at 9:00 a.m.

For purposes of this parenting time schedule, if the parties have children that fall into different age brackets, all children shall follow the schedule of the oldest child.

Children shall advance to next age range on the date of their birth.

SUMMER BREAK PARENTING TIME SCHEDULE

In scheduling the summer break parenting time schedule, the age of a child as of June 1st shall determine which of the following schedules shall be observed.

Children Age 0 to 1 year

Regular schedule will be observed all year until the child attains the age of 1 year old.

Children Age 1 year to 2 years

The non-custodial parent shall have parenting time for a total of three weeks in one week blocks of time, and on the fourth weekend of each month commencing on the fourth Friday of the month.

- The first one-week block of parenting time shall commence at 6:00 p.m. on the second Sunday of June and conclude at 6:00 p.m. on the third Sunday of June.
- The second one-week block of parenting time shall commence at 6:00 p.m. on the second Sunday of July and conclude at 6:00 p.m. on the third Sunday of July.
- The third one-week block of parenting time shall commence at 6:00 p.m. on the second Sunday of August and conclude at 6:00 p.m. on the third Sunday of August.
- Weekend parenting time shall take place on the fourth weekend of each month, to commence at 6:00 p.m. Friday and conclude at 6:00 p.m. Sunday.

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Children Age 2 years and older

The non-custodial parent shall have parenting time in one week blocks of time starting the first Sunday after the end of the school year in the district in which the child resides at 6:00 p.m. and alternating weeks thereafter with exchanges occurring each Sunday at 6:00 p.m. Alternating weeks of summer break parenting time shall end the last Sunday prior to the beginning of the next school year at 6:00 p.m.

For purposes of this parenting time schedule, if the parties have children that fall into different age brackets, all children shall follow the schedule of the oldest child.

Children shall advance to next age range on the date of their birth.

RECOMMENCING SCHOOL YEAR PARENTING TIME

Regardless of the rotation of weeks of summer parenting time, the parties shall begin rotating weekend parenting time the first weekend following the first day of school, ensuring the rotation is such that the custodial parent weekend aligns with the Labor Day weekend. Due to districts beginning school at different times, this may require the parties to count weekends back to determine the correct rotation. Wednesday evening parenting time shall commence the Wednesday that occurs during the first week of school regardless of the day school actually begins. If there is a question please call the Newaygo County Friend of the Court.

SUMMER SCHOOL POLICY

SUMMER SCHOOL POLICY

In the event summer school is anticipated for any minor child who is subject of the Reasonable Parenting time policy of the Court, the following guidelines shall be adopted:

1. That the custodial parent shall notify the non-custodial parent of the intent to enroll the child in summer school no later than May 1st of that year.
2. That it shall be determined and confirmed by a representative of the school that summer school is an academic necessity for the child.
3. That if the parties live in the same school district the non-custodial parent shall be entitled to enjoy parenting time as scheduled, but will transport or make suitable arrangements for the transportation of the child to and from summer school.

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4. That if the non-custodial parent lives outside of the school district of the proposed summer school location, the parent shall choose one of the following three options:
 - a. exercise parenting time as scheduled and arrange for summer school locally;
 - b. exercise parenting time as scheduled and arrange for transportation to the proposed summer school location; or
 - c. re-arrange summer parenting time schedule, allowing for make-up parenting time for any time missed, but shall allow the minor child to stay with the custodial parent for the time period covered by summer school.
5. That the non-custodial parent shall be allowed make-up parenting time for any lost parenting time as determined to be appropriate by the Newaygo County Friend of the Court.

HOLIDAY & BREAKS SCHEDULE

MEMORIAL DAY weekend shall be exercised by the non-custodial parent each year regardless of the weekly rotation leading up to the holiday, beginning 6:00 p.m. the Friday of the weekend and ending 6:00 p.m. Memorial Day. For children age 0 to 1 year, the non-custodial parent shall receive parenting time from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Memorial Day Monday. In split custody situations, this holiday shall be exercised each year by the father.

EASTER weekend beginning 6:00 p.m. the Friday (Good Friday) of the weekend and ending 6:00 p.m. Easter. If a child is school age and Good Friday is not a school day, parenting time will commence 6:00 p.m. the Thursday prior to Easter weekend and end 6:00 p.m. Easter. This holiday time coincides with the spring break holiday parenting time for purposes of convenience in relevant years. For children age 0 to 1 year, the parent shall receive parenting time from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Easter Sunday. *The father shall have parenting time in years ending in an even number and the mother shall have parenting time in years ending in an odd number.*

SPRING BREAK shall occur during the spring break of the school district in which the child resides from 6:00 p.m. the day school is scheduled to recess until 6:00 p.m. the day before school is scheduled to resume. This does not apply to children 0 to 1 year. *The father shall have parenting time in years ending in an even number and the mother shall have parenting time in years ending in an odd number for the Spring break.*

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MOTHER'S DAY

All children shall be with the mother on Mother's Day from 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. For children age 0 to 1 year, the mother shall have parenting time from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on the day of the holiday.

FATHER'S DAY

All children shall be with the father on Father's Day from 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. For children age 0 to 1 year, the father shall have parenting time from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on the day of the holiday.

FOURTH OF JULY beginning 6:00 p.m. on July 3rd and ending 9:00 a.m. on July 5th. For children age 0 to 1 year, the parent shall receive parenting time from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on the 4th. *The father shall have parenting time in years ending in an even number and the mother shall have parenting time in years ending in an odd number.*

LABOR DAY weekend shall be exercised by the custodial parent each year. In split custody situations, this holiday shall be exercised each year by the mother. The parent shall receive parenting time from Friday at 6 p.m. until Monday at 6:00 p.m.

HALLOWEEN beginning at 5:00 p.m. and ending at 9:00 p.m. on the evening of trick or treating in the town in which the child resides. This holiday shall not apply to children once a child attains the age of 12 years old. *The father shall have parenting time in years ending in an odd number and the mother shall have parenting time in years ending in an even number.*

THANKSGIVING weekend beginning 6:00 p.m. the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and ending 6:00 p.m. the Sunday following Thanksgiving. For children age 0 to 1 year, the parent shall receive parenting time from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day. *The father shall have parenting time in years ending in an even number and the mother shall have parenting time in years ending in an odd number*

CHRISTMAS BREAK

In odd years, the father shall have parenting time from 6:00 p.m. on the day that the school district in which the child resides recesses for winter break until 12:00 noon on December 25 and the mother shall have parenting time from 12:00 noon on December 25 until 12:00 noon on New Year's Day. If applicable, the father shall then have parenting time from 12:00 noon on New Year's Day until 6:00 p.m. on the day before school resumes in the school district in which the child resides. For children 0 to 1 year, the non-custodial parent shall have parenting time from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on December 24.

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In even years, the mother shall have parenting time from 6:00 p.m. on the day that the school district in which the child resides recesses for winter break until 12:00 noon on December 25 and the father shall have parenting time from 12:00 noon on December 25 until 12:00 noon on New Year's Day. If applicable, the mother shall then have parenting time from 12:00 noon on New Year's Day until 6:00 p.m. on the day before school resumes in the school district in which the child resides. For children 0 to 1 year, the non-custodial parent shall have parenting time from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on December 25.

CHILD'S BIRTHDAY: Birthday parenting time during summer break and on weekends shall be from 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. If the child's Birthday falls on a school day, birthday parenting time shall be from 4:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. If the child's Birthday falls on a holiday, the holiday takes precedence over the Birthday and no makeup shall be provided. For children age 0 to 1 year, the parent shall receive parenting time from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on the child's birthday. In cases with multiple children, all children shall have parenting time for each child's birthday under this provision. *The father shall have parenting time in years ending in an odd number and the mother shall have parenting time in years ending in an even number.*

HOLIDAY PARENTING TIME PREFERENCE OVER OTHER SCHEDULED TIME

Whenever a holiday conflicts with other parenting time it shall be given preference over the regularly scheduled parenting time. When the holiday concludes, the alternating weekend schedule shall be resumed according to the pre-existing schedule as if it had not been interrupted.

TABLE FOR PARENTING TIME SCHEDULE

HOLIDAY or BREAK	EVEN YEARS	ODD YEARS
Easter	Father	Mother
Spring Break	Father	Mother
Mother's Day	Mother	Mother
Memorial Day	Non-custodial Parent	Non-custodial Parent
Father's Day	Father	Father
Fourth of July	Father	Mother
Labor Day	Custodial Parent	Custodial Parent
Halloween	Mother	Father
Thanksgiving	Father	Mother
Christmas Break	Father - Dec. 25 – Jan. 1	Mother - Dec. 25 – Jan. 1
Child(ren)'s Birthday	Mother	Father

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MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

JOINT LEGAL CUSTODY

Joint legal custody means that parents share decision-making authority as to the important decisions affecting the welfare of the child. Joint custody does not depend on the amount of time the child is with each parent. Certain decisions regarding religion, health care and schooling must be made by both parents. Absent an emergency, one parent may not make these important decisions without consulting with and the agreement of the other parent. Disputes must be resolved by the Court. It is assumed that parents with joint legal custody shall be afforded equal access to information by schools and health care providers and can access that information via phone calls, email and the school web site without relying on the other party to provide that information. Some information regarding appointments made by one parent or school information that is sent home with a child on a day to day basis may not be readily available to the other parent and should be shared by the parent making the appointment or receiving the information. Also, a parent with joint legal custody may not change the residence or domicile of a child to a location more than 100 miles away from the residence at the time the Order was issued or out of state without prior approval of the Court.

CLOTHING

Each parent shall be responsible for providing adequate clothing for the child sufficient for the weather and events in which the child engages. When occasional need or cost issues favor having only one item, such as seasonal clothing, snow boots or swim wear, these items shall be transported back and forth with the child. Any clothing that is with the child at the beginning of parenting time shall be cleaned and returned with the child.

NECESSITIES OF CHILDREN

That unless otherwise agreed or ordered by the Court, the party who has the minor child, pursuant to custody or parenting time orders, shall be responsible for the provision of day to day necessities of the minor child, including but not limited to: food or meals (at appropriate times), toiletries (toothbrush, soap, etc.), and infant or baby items, including diapers, bottles, etc.

TRANSPORTATION

Unless otherwise agreed, ordered by the court or provided for in this policy, the non-custodial parent (parent receiving the child for purposes of parenting time) shall pick the child up at the designated time at the custodial parent's home. The custodial parent (parent receiving the child at the conclusion of parenting time) shall pick the child up at the designated time at the non-custodial parent's home. The parent retrieving the child should be present at all exchanges,

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however, if a conflict is unavoidable, the parent may send a friend or relative, with whom the child is familiar and comfortable, to retrieve the child. A properly licensed driver, operating a properly licensed, registered and insured vehicle, shall provide all transportation. All legally required restraints must be present and used. For Wednesday 5:00 – 8:00 parenting time, the Non-Custodial Parent shall provide all transportation.

CONTAMINATION OF PARENTING TIME

Neither parent shall use the parenting time exchange as an opportunity to exchange bills, discuss support issues, discuss parenting time, or to behave disrespectfully toward the other parent.

CHILD’S MEDICAL NEEDS

A parent shall provide all necessary medication and doctor’s written instructions to the parent exercising parenting time. The parent exercising parenting time shall administer all medications according to the doctor’s written instructions. If a child requires medical attention during parenting time, the non-custodial parent shall obtain treatment for the child and notify the custodial parent immediately.

In the event special equipment is necessary for a child’s health, the parent exercising parenting time shall become familiar with the equipment and arrange for the equipment’s transfer.

Parents need to discuss the general health care needs of the child and advise each other of illness and treatment requirements. It is imperative that information regarding medical treatment be shared between the parents regardless of which parent initially sought treatment.

SICK CHILD

When a child is sick, the non-custodial parent shall still have the opportunity to have the child unless a licensed physician recommends, in writing, that the child not visit the non-custodial parent. The custodial parent shall immediately notify the non-custodial parent any time a child is hospitalized. The non-custodial parent shall be entitled to any hospital visitation as the standard policy of the hospital allows. Missed parenting time due to a doctor’s request or hospitalization is not subject to make-up.

COVID-19

Please refer to attached Administrative Memorandum – COVID-19 Parenting Time Clarifications for further information as to temporary parenting time and custody deviations when a parent, child or household member contracts, shows symptoms of or is required to quarantine due to COVID-19.

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PREPARING A CHILD FOR PARENTING TIME

The custodial parent should offer encouragement to prepare a child emotionally for parenting time. Neither parent should use parenting time as an occasion to cause concern or anxiety to a child. The custodial parent should use all reasonable means to ensure that parenting time occurs provided no excessive force is used. In general, the following **ARE NOT** appropriate reasons for denying parenting time.

- ❖ A child has a minor illness.
- ❖ A child had to go somewhere else.
- ❖ A child was not home.
- ❖ The custodial parent did not want the child to go.
- ❖ The non-custodial party is behind in support.
- ❖ The weather was bad.
- ❖ A child had no clothes to wear.
- ❖ A child refused to go.
- ❖ The other party failed to meet preconditions unilaterally established by the party allegedly denying parenting time.
- ❖ Religious reasons.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

It is assumed that participation in extracurricular activities, including athletics, music, theater, dance, Scouts, etc., is in the best interests of a child and a parent shall not deny to a child the opportunity to take part in at least one extracurricular activity per school semester. When enrolling a child in extracurricular activities the parties shall ensure that the activities do not materially interfere with the ability of a child to exercise parenting time. If it appears that the extracurricular activity may materially interfere with parenting time, the parent should consult with the other parent prior to signing the child up for the activity. Neither the custodial parent nor the non-custodial parent should enroll a child in excessive activities that serve to interfere with the other parent's ability to spend time with a child.

Keeping this in mind, both parents shall ensure that while a child is in their care that child attends all scheduled activities, including practices, games, performances, lessons, tutoring sessions and other like activities. If the activity creates a consistent and unavoidable conflict with

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mid-week (Wednesday) parenting time, the parties shall work out an alternate day for the mid-week parenting time to occur.

Parents shall keep one another informed of all activities so the other parent has the opportunity to attend or participate in the activity, even if the activity occurs when the non-custodial parent does not otherwise have scheduled parenting time.

A child shall be permitted to acknowledge, speak with and otherwise associate with both parents when attending sporting, artistic or other events.

FUNERALS

The child(ren) shall be allowed to attend the funeral of siblings, parents, step parents, paternal and maternal grandparents, biological aunts & uncles, first cousins, half siblings & current step siblings. The child(ren) shall be made available to the parent attending the funeral with enough time to arrive at the funeral home 30 minutes prior to the start of the funeral. The parent attending the funeral shall return the child(ren) to the other parent after the proceedings, including luncheon and graveside service. The parent requesting the child(ren) for this time shall be responsible for all transportation; however, another person who is agreed upon by the parties may transport the minor child(ren). The term “funeral” shall include celebration of life, visitation, memorial service and other like ceremonies.

TIME FOR PARENTING TIME EXCHANGE

Neither parent shall do anything to inconvenience the other during the exchange of the child. Arriving late by no more than thirty (30) minutes may be acceptable in exceptional circumstances, but should never become the norm. A parent should be late, only when a legitimate, unavoidable, reason exists for being late. A parent who anticipates being late shall contact the other parent as soon as possible.

A parent shall not be early for parenting time as this may cause undue disruption for the child and the other parent.

The non-custodial parent shall notify the custodial parent twenty-four (24) hours in advance if he/she is unable to take advantage of specified parenting time.

Being late to pick up the child does not waive the non-custodial parent’s right to exercise parenting time. The non-custodial parent must however make arrangements to pick up the child at a time convenient to the other parent. The custodial parent may make other arrangements, if necessary to provide for the care and supervision of the child.

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FOUR-HOUR RULE REGARDING CHILD CARE

If either parent has the child in their care and requires child care for an uninterrupted period of time of four hours or more, in the absence of an order denying, restricting or requiring supervised parenting time, the other parent shall be contacted and offered that time with the minor child. This provision shall be deemed to be in addition to any previously ordered parenting time, and not in lieu of same. Visits with grandparents and other relatives and play time with friends (including sleep-overs) are not considered child care for this purpose. Likewise, it is not considered child care if the four hour period of time includes any time after 10:00 p.m. and the child would otherwise be home with a step-parent.

PERSONAL PROTECTION ORDERS

If either party has a Personal Protection Order against the other, parenting time exchanges shall occur (if permitted by the order) in a manner which ensures the order is not violated. In order to provide appropriate safety when a Personal Protection Order is in place, all exchanges shall occur in a public place, at a designated neutral exchange site. If the parties are unable to determine a neutral exchange site, the Friend of the Court shall make the determination.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Neither parent shall indulge excessively in alcoholic beverages nor take any illegal drugs or controlled substances immediately prior to or during parenting time unless said drugs or controlled substances have been prescribed by a licensed physician.

INHERENT RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

All minor children have an inherent right to the affection and love of both parents. Neither parent shall take any action that might estrange a minor child from the other parent or tend to discredit, cause disrespect to or diminish the quality of the relationship with the other parent.

SECOND HAND SMOKE

The child(ren) shall not be subjected to second hand smoke in any vehicle or home. There shall be no smoking in the home in which the child lives or regularly visits. There shall be no smoking in a vehicle in which the child is regularly transported.

HAGUE CONVENTION

That neither parent shall exercise parenting time in a foreign country/nation that is not a party to the Hague Convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction without the consent of the other party or an order of the court.

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OMISSIONS AND OVERSIGHTS

In the event a situation arises that is not provided for in this policy, the office of the Newaygo County Friend of the Court shall have authority to render an opinion. The personnel of the Friend of the Court office, in reaching an opinion, shall rely on the Michigan Parenting Time Guideline, as published by the Michigan Supreme Court and/or the usual past practices of the Newaygo County Circuit Court.


APPROVED AND ADOPTED

DATE: 2-9-21



 Honorable Robert D. Springstead
 Chief Judge of the 27th Circuit Court

DATE: 2/8/2021



 Honorable Melissa K. Dykman
 Newaygo County Probate Judge, *assigned to the*
 Newaygo County Circuit Court Family Division