



OWENS PERKINS

Areas of Practice

Family Law
Bankruptcy
Business Law
Contract Law
Criminal & DUI
Civil Litigation
Estate Planning
Probate
Real Estate Law
Short Sales

Family Law

OWENS & PERKINS offers a full range of legal services for all aspects of Family Law such as divorce, legal separation, paternity and post decree matters.

Attorney Spotlight

Michelle J. Perkins

is the Managing Partner. She has received numerous professional accolades including leadership awards, an Award of Excellence and being named one of the top 5% of Family Law lawyers in Arizona.



Child Custody in Arizona

Unfortunately, in Maricopa County we average approximately 15,000 divorces per year. This means that many children grow up in single or blended family homes. If you have children and are contemplating divorce, one of the primary concerns for most parents is custody. In Arizona, the term “custody” means decision making authority in three statutory areas: health, education and religion.

Custody

A parent with sole custody has the legal right to make all decisions for their minor child(ren) without the input and even over the objection of the other parent. Parents who share joint custody will presumably be able to jointly make decisions regarding their children. The legal standard is “what is in the best interests of the child(ren)”.

Of the three statutory areas for decision making (health, education and religion), most parents can agree on decisions relating to their child(ren)’s health. Not all, but a majority. Regarding education, because the Valley is so spread out, the ability to make decisions about your children’s education (i.e. where he/she will attend school) has become a hot topic for litigation. If you have the legal right to choose where your child will attend school, you basically have the right to decide what part of town the child(ren) will live in. As to religion, most parenting plans state that each parent may take the child(ren) to a place of worship of his/her choosing.

Parenting Time

Often what is more important to each parent is how much time the child(ren) will be spending with each of them. This is known as “parenting time”. There are as many different types of parenting plans as there are types of families. The parenting plan depends on each parent’s availability during non-working hours, the age(s) of the child(ren), the child(ren)’s activities, the relationship with each parent, etc. The Arizona Supreme Court has provided guidance in a publication called Planning for Parenting Time: Arizona’s Guide for Parents Living Apart, that can be found on the resources tab of our website at <http://oplaw.com/resources/public-documents.aspx>.

If you would like to meet with an Attorney regarding a divorce, legal separation or paternity action, please call 480.994.8824 to schedule your consultation.

