

Do's and Don'ts of Divorce and Family Law

1. Prepare a list of everything that you and your spouse own and all of the debts, including credit cards, mortgages and notes. Record the date that the debts were incurred, the amount, and what the money was used for.
2. If you inherit money keep it in a separate account.
3. Start reading the mail that comes to your house. Make a list of the companies sending the mail, and their addresses, and copy all documents from financial institutions, credit card companies, insurance companies and real estate firms.
4. Get a post office box and file a change of address with the post office so that only you will be able to read personal mail that you receive.
5. Start reading the tax returns you file and make copies of tax returns for previous years. Don't sign a new tax return unless you understand what you are signing. See a tax consultant if you don't.
6. Find out if any taxes are owed to the federal, state, parish or any municipality. Copy notices of any tax assessments.
7. Look inside all safety deposit boxes or bank boxes and make a list of what's there. Take photos of any jewelry or valuables. Find out if there are any boxes that are not in joint names.
8. Find out about your spouse's business interests. Get as much information as you can and make copies of business information such as bank statements, loan documents corporate or partnership tax returns and financial statements.
9. Cancel any credit cards that can be used by your spouse without your permission.
10. Get a copy of all pension plans, 401-ks, profit sharing plans and retirement funds.
11. Copy all loan documents, mortgage applications and financial statements.
12. Make copies of all insurance policies.
13. Check and make sure that you have medical insurance in place. It may also be a good idea to have a dental and medical checkup so that you can prepare for future medical needs.
14. Start putting away cash. In case of a separation you may need an emergency fund.
15. Do not buy anything on credit, and make no large purchases.
16. Make necessary repairs to your automobile.