



FAMILY LAW

Your Seat Cushion is Also a Flotation Device: 8 Critical Steps You Must Take to Prepare for a Possible Divorce

If you've ever flown on a commercial airline, you've undoubtedly heard the safety speech at the beginning where the flight attendant tells you that your seat cushion is also a flotation device. While everyone hopes they never have to experience an emergency water crash, when the turbulence hits they start going over this type of information in their head to prepare.

Similarly, most people hope that they never end up having to go through a divorce, but if you're going through a rough patch in your marriage, it is important to start preparing for the worst. The following critical steps should be taken by anyone who is facing a potential divorce in the future.

Remember, being prepared doesn't mean you're giving up. None of these steps will make it impossible or even less likely to reconcile with your spouse. In fact, many people have found that taking these steps actually helped to give them greater perspective, and made it possible for their marriage to heal.

So, while hoping and working for the best, consider these critical steps in order to prepare for a possible divorce.

Discuss Your Situation with an Attorney

Too many people put off contacting an attorney because they think that it is only necessary once a divorce is inevitable. The fact is, however, that the sooner you consult with a family law attorney at Freed Marcroft, LLC, the more options you will have available. A good attorney can provide you with the right advice to prepare yourself for any possibility.

This can help you to position yourself and your family so that you can emerge from a rocky patch in your marriage stronger than ever. If things don't go as you hope, however, contacting an attorney early on can also help to streamline the divorce process and minimize any wasted time, money, or hurt feelings.

Start Saving Money

There is no way around it, divorce is expensive. Even if you don't consider the legal expenses that are needed to get through the divorce, you and your spouse will essentially be doubling all the living expenses since you will each need your own home, vehicles, and other necessities. The last thing you want to have to do is face financial issues on top of your marital problems. Start putting away as much of your own personal income as you can, and be sure to put it in an account of which you are the sole owner.

Keep Track of Financial Records

Keeping a close eye on all your finances during this time is essential for many reasons. First, you don't want your spouse to be taking money without your knowledge or trying to hide assets. Secondly, if you do have to go through a divorce, the courts will need to have detailed records of financial accounts including savings, checking, 401k, IRAs, stocks, bonds, CDs, and more so that they can divide them up properly. Having these records prepared now will be one less thing you have to do should you get divorced.

Document Routines with Children

One of the most difficult parts of a divorce is determining who will get the children and when. The courts put a lot of emphasis on routine and keeping their lives consistent as much as possible. With this in mind, begin documenting as much as you can about your children's routines. Things like when they do homework, what sports they are in, what activities each parent does with them, and anything else you can think of.

Having this information available should you have to go in front of a judge can be invaluable. The more detail you can provide them about this type of thing, the better they will be able to determine things like parenting time and even child support.

Establish a Support System

Even if you are still attempting to salvage your marriage, it is a good idea to get a support system in place for yourself should things not go well. Having friends and family around who you can talk to, get advice from, depend on for practical assistance like watching the kids, or even just to vent toward can be invaluable. These are the people who will be there for you while going through one of the most difficult events in your life. Making sure you have who you need now will be critical for you down the road.

Consider Personal Counseling

Many people who are facing a divorce will be going to marital counseling, which is great. In many cases, however, it is also a good idea to seek individual counseling to help you to handle the emotional toll of everything you are facing. Whether you end up remaining married or you need to get a divorce, a good counselor can offer important insights, advice and strategies for coping, and other help that often can't be found without professional guidance.

Save Written Communications

A surprising amount of communicating between spouses today occurs via email and texting. Taking a moment to save all the conversations can be extremely helpful should a divorce become necessary. While this type of communicating is not a contract or legally binding, they may contain important information. If a divorce becomes necessary, providing this type of thing to your attorney may make a major difference in how your case goes.

Begin Establishing Your Own Credit

In many marriages most of the finances will be under one person's name. This is especially true when only one spouse works full time. If that is your situation, you will want to begin working on establishing your own credit score so that you are better positioned for success after a potential

divorce. Just about all major purchases today require you to have a good credit score, so doing things like putting some bills in your name now can help you to be ready for the future.

Contact Us Today

If you have any questions about a divorce, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Freed Marcroft Law Firm. We can work with you to help you to plan for the possibility of a divorce, and if that should become a reality, we will be there to represent your interests throughout the case. When the time comes to use your marital seat cushion as a flotation device, you can count on us providing you with the tools and knowledge you need to stay afloat, no matter how messy things get. We can be reached by calling 860-560-8160. We look forward to working with you soon.