

Co-Parenting Email Communication Guidelines

The following guidelines should be followed when communicating via email in order to increase the clarity of communication and reduce disagreements:

- Limit email to one topic.
- Use a specific subject line describing the content of the email (and change subject line if the topic changes).
- Keep email brief (approximately one paragraph with five sentences).
- Keep the email focused on sharing information about present or future activities, or about a developing problem.
- Emails should be either informational (advising parent about an upcoming event or appointment, injury, or positive feedback); or a request (making a polite request for an action, approval, etc.).
- If a request is made and you disagree, consider providing reasonable counteroffer. If an agreement cannot be reached after one offer and one counteroffer, an agreement is unlikely. *Accept this and move on, don't harass your co-parent until you get the answer that satisfies you.*
- Avoid discussions of financial matters within parenting discussions; these should be handled separately or through your attorneys if have a history of not reaching agreements.
- Keep the focus of the email on the child(ren). Any references to past problems, grievances, or criticisms of the other parent have no place in co-parenting emails.
- Say something once and don't repeat yourself.
- Respond to an email in a timely manner, within 24 hours of when it was sent.
- If a full response cannot be provided within 24 hours, confirm receipt of the request within 24 hours and indicate when you will have an answer.
- Each parent should send no more than two emails per day unless there is an emergency. Emergencies are best handled voice-to-voice.
- Emails should be sent between the two parents instead of a stepparent or significant other to a parent.
- Emails should be checked regularly.
- Consider obtaining a separate email address for co-parenting matters.