

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ANSWER AND COUNTERCLAIM TO COMPLAINT FOR DIVORCE WITHOUT CHILDREN

1. What forms do I need to fill out when filing for divorce? (Use this as your checklist.)

REQUIRED

- ☐ **Answer and Counterclaim to Complaint for Divorce Without Children**, [DR-837](http://ak-courts.info/dr837), ak-courts.info/dr837
- ☐ **Information Sheet**, [DR-314](http://ak-courts.info/314), ak-courts.info/314

OPTIONAL (depending on your situation)

- ☐ If you do **not** use TrueFiling: **Case Description Form**, [CIV-125S](http://ak-courts.info/civ125s), ak-courts.info/civ125s

2. How do I fill out the Answer and Counterclaim for Divorce without Children?

The Answer and Counterclaim is your response to the Complaint. The Answer tells the court which parts of the Complaint you agree with and which parts you disagree with, and allows you to tell the judge if you think the Alaska court does not have the authority to decide your case, called [jurisdiction](http://ak-courts.info/cusjurs), ak-courts.info/cusjurs. It also includes a counterclaim section where you can tell the judge what you want to happen in your case.

3. How do I fill out the *Information Sheet*?

The other side should have already **completed** this form and given you a copy. If the form was filled out correctly, check the box at the top of the form that states the information was already provided and is correct.

If any of the information is wrong or **not complete**:

- Fill in all of the information requested in # 1, 2 and 3.
- Provide complete information for yourself and your spouse if you know it.
- Sign your name and date.

4. What do I do with the completed forms?

File your documents. File all of your completed forms with the court where the Complaint was filed. You must use the court's electronic filing platform, TrueFiling, unless you are exempt. You are exempt if one of these applies:

- You are in a jail or correctional facility.
- You have a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- You do not have safe access to a computer, internet, or email.
- You cannot access the help you need to use TrueFiling.
- You have a language barrier or are Limited English Proficient.

You do not need to prove you are exempt. If you are exempt **and** you choose not to use TrueFiling, check and sign the text box at the end of your Answer form.

Serve your documents. You must give a copy of this form (and everything attached to it) to every party in the case. This is called "service."

Use TrueFiling to serve the other party if:

- Both you and the other party are using TrueFiling.
- You are using TrueFiling and the other party gave their email address to the court.

Fill out the Certificate of Service at the end of your Answer form if:

- The other party is not using TrueFiling and did not give their email address to the court.
- You are exempt from using TrueFiling.

5. What happens next?

The court will set a hearing to schedule the trial date after the defendant files an answer. Usually, the purposes of the hearings are to discuss the trial date and trial deadlines and determine if the parties want a formal or informal trial.

Learn about the difference between formal and informal trials in **Domestic Relations Trials – Understanding the Two Options**, [PUB-45](#), ak-courts.info/pub45.

6. Are there other resources?

- The Family Law Self-Help Center has legal information for people without lawyers. Call (907) 264-0851 or (866) 279-0851. Staff can also answer questions about using the court's TrueFiling electronic filing system.
- Visit the court's family law self-help page: www.courts.alaska.gov/shc/family/selfhelp.htm.
- Learn about representing yourself at: ak-courts.info/findlawyer
- Learn about the court's TrueFiling system at: ak-courts.info/dr305howto.
- The Zoom Family Law Education Class explains the court process for people who do not have lawyers. Learn about the class at: ak-courts.info/flecinfo.
- The Zoom Hearing and Trial Preparation class helps people without lawyers prepare for a hearing or trial. Learn about the class: <https://courts.alaska.gov/shc/classes.htm#trial-prep>.