

# FAMILY LIFE *Post-Divorce*

Family life post-divorce is not without its challenges, and a pertinent issue during the holiday season is the custody arrangement. When Christmas, Thanksgiving, birthdays, or school vacations are approaching, parents may need to discuss and agree on specific and clear visitation schedules.

Many parents find that it helps to alternate Christmas and school break vacations; for example, the child stays with one parent on even-numbered years, and with the other parent on odd-numbered years. This arrangement may also be suitable for other holidays such as Thanksgiving.

On birthdays or special occasions, some parents prefer that both parties have equal access to their child, whereas other parents adopt a similar strategy of alternating year by year. During other school summer vacation periods, you may decide to allocate blocks of time to the parent who does not have primary custody, for example, ten days in June and ten days in August.

In developing a custody agreement that encompasses holiday visitation, it is beneficial to work in collaboration with an attorney who specializes in custody

litigation. Composing a clear, fair, and legally binding custody agreement will ensure that your legal rights as a parent are both protected and respected.

In our COVID-19 environment, planning is everything. Families are already stressed by the holidays but even more so due to the concerns related to holiday events conflicting with social distancing. If you feel that there's a need to return to court to modify a parenting plan, take action early. Don't wait. The courts are functioning but under tremendous stress in their effort to process cases. Consequently, there are delays in getting on court calendars and in having your matters heard.

Arlene Kock is a recognized and highly respected California family law attorney representing clients on all family law matters including divorce and child custody cases. Drawing on more than three decades of experience in family litigation, Ms. Kock represents clients in Northern California and the San Francisco Bay Area.



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