

Uncontested Divorces: Light Lift for the Pro Bono Attorney, Huge Relief for the Grateful Client

Date: September 16, 2026

Time: 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Location: Zoom (<https://urichmond.zoom.us/j/87514355557>)

Speaker: Lisa Bennett, Esq.
Central Virginia Legal Aid Society

Sarah Merryman, Esq.
Capital One

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Description:

Uncontested divorce assistance remains the number one requested service of Central Virginia Legal Aid Society, yet staff and pro bono attorneys remain too few to meet this demand. To help bridge this gap, innovative pro bono training and support has been developed to assist attorneys and law students alike to meet this acute need of our community. Our expert presenters will discuss the laws and process governing no fault divorces in Virginia, including best practices for the procedures of pro bono partnerships and engagement.

Please join the Carrico Center as we welcome Lisa Bennett, Director of Pro Bono & Triage Programs with Central Virginia Legal Aid Society, as well as Sarah Merryman, Capital One attorney and pro bono champion, who have partnered in recruiting, training, and mentoring the pro bono community to meet this ongoing need.

Biography of Presenter

Lisa Bennett, Esq.

Central Virginia Legal Aid Society

Lisa Bennett currently serves as Central Virginia Legal Aid's Director of Pro Bono & Triage Programs, recruiting and training pro bono volunteers to assist low-income families in civil legal cases in Richmond, Petersburg, Charlottesville and the surrounding counties. For over 35 years, Lisa has worked as a legal aid attorney first at Central Virginia Legal Aid litigating employment, housing and consumer matters and then at Legal Aid Justice Center's JustChildren program advocating on behalf of youth in education and juvenile justice matters. Lisa is a graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University and the University of Richmond School of Law.

Sarah Merryman, Esq.

Capital One

Sarah joined Capital One's Legal Department in 2022 and currently serves as Deputy Chief of Staff to a growing team of 80+ attorneys and legal professionals. In addition to her core responsibilities, Sarah actively serves on the Capital One Pro Bono Committee, focusing her efforts on supporting low-income individuals through No-Fault Divorce and immigration legal services. Prior to her current role and throughout her legal career, Sarah has been dedicated to grassroots advocacy, routinely volunteering for community events and serving on the Board of Directors for ReEstablish Richmond—a non-profit supporting refugee resettlement—since 2017. Sarah is a graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University and the University of Richmond School of Law.

Uncontested Divorces: Light Lift for the Pro Bono Attorney, Huge Relief for the Grateful Client

Agenda

This presentation covers the law and court processes for seeking uncontested divorces in Virginia. The additional documents will serve as templates for prospective pro bono attorneys and law students to use in their representation of clients referred to them through the Triage Project. The purpose of this course is to teach attorneys about this area of law and give them the tools necessary to provide pro bono representation.

Introductions	12:00 pm
1. Uncontested/No Fault Divorce Law 2. Uncontested/No Fault Divorce Procedure and Process 3. Pro Bono Referrals and Case Management 4. Pro Bono Mentorship 5. Next Steps for Engagement	12:10 am – 1:15 pm
Questions & Answers	1:20 pm – 1:30 pm

Uncontested Divorce:

Light Lift for the Pro Bono Attorney - Huge Relief for the Grateful Client!

Sept. 2026

Presented by:

Sarah Merryman
Pro Bono Attorney
Capital One

Lisa Bennett
Director of Pro Bono
Central Virginia Legal Aid Society

Uncontested Divorces: Agenda

I am not a *Family Lawyer* -
Can I do Uncontested Divorces?

- What is an Uncontested Divorce?
- Divorce Fundamentals: Jurisdiction, Venue, and Grounds for Divorce
- Flow Charts, Best Practices, and Procedures (Capital One)
- Pro Bono Practical Matters (CVLAS)



No Family Law Experience Necessary!

- **Register to Volunteer** at portal.justiceserver.org and select Central Virginia Legal Aid Society as your legal service provider.
 - Malpractice insurance is provided.
- Step by Step Outline and Templates Provided -
 - Family Law Experts on call to take your questions
 - Templates are designed to meet all statutory requirements
- Cases generally require **only 5-10 hours** and typically no court appearance required.
 - Don't forget - 4 hours of Pro Bono work earns 1 hour Live MCLE credit!
 - Pro Bono paralegals and law students make excellent first drafters!
- Clients = Excited & Eager!

What is an Uncontested No Fault Divorce?

Parties agree & no dispute * Often only one side actively participates * Basis of divorce is 1 Year of separation (or 6 months if no kids and a separation agreement) * VA Code 20-91(A)(9)

ITEMS NOT AT ISSUE:

**FAULT OF
PARTIES**

**CUSTODY &
CHILD SUPPORT**

**SPOUSAL
SUPPORT**

**PROPERTY OR
DEBTS**

Different Uncontested Divorce Scenarios:

One-Step Divorce: The defendant accepts & waives service and signs the final decree, so that all of the documents can be submitted to the court at once.

Standard Uncontested Divorce: The defendant is served by the sheriff or Order of Publication/Posting and does not participate or contest the divorce.

Incarcerated Spouse: One of the spouses is incarcerated and a guardian ad litem is needed, or the incarcerated spouse waives the GAL and service, and signs the divorce decree.

Divorce Fundamentals:

JURISDICTION

“The Plaintiff (or Defendant) is and has been an actual and bona fide resident and domiciliary of the Commonwealth of Virginia for more than six months next preceding the filing of this suit.”

VENUE

File in Virginia Circuit Court -

1. Where parties last cohabitated,
2. Where defendant resides or
3. If service is done by publication/posting or if there is an out of state defendant, where Plaintiff resides.

Does it matter? -> In some courts yes! Objections can be made by the Court or Defendant.

GROUND

Time Frame:

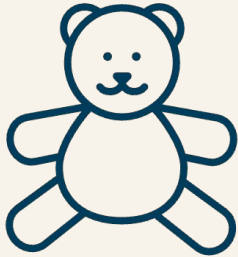
1. One-year separation
2. Six months separation if parties have no minor children and a written separation agreement

Language: “The parties separated on or about (date) and since that time have continued to live separate and apart, continuously, without interruption and without cohabitation for a period exceeding one year. The Plaintiff intended for the separation.” And
“There is no prospect of reconciliation.”

Key Facts for Grounds: time frame, separate & apart (without cohabitation), continuous, intent to remain apart, no reconciliation.

ALL Virginia Legal Aids Assigning No Fault Divorce Cases to Pro Bono:

1. Screen clients for financial eligibility based on household income at/below federal poverty level
 - a. Below 125% or up to 200% if domestic violence involved
2. Provide necessary documentation (via Intake Questionnaire) to draft documents including:



Court Orders -
Custody / Support



Marriage License



Property Settlement
Agreement

FEES:

All legal aid clients should qualify for a fee waiver

PETITION FOR PROCEEDING IN A NO-FAULT DIVORCE WITHOUT PAYMENT OF FEES OR COSTS

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA VA.CODE § 17.1-606

Case No. _____

..... Circuit Court

..... v. _____

I request the court permit me to proceed in a no-fault divorce case under Virginia Code § 20-91(A)(9) in this court without the payment of fees or costs and to have from all officers all needful services and process. In support of the petition, I state that the following information is true:

1. ☒ I currently receive the following type(s) of public assistance in _____
CITY/COUNTY

☐ TANF \$ _____ ☐ Medicaid ☐ Supplemental Security Income \$ _____

☐ SNAP (food stamps) \$ _____ ☐ Other (specify type and amount) _____

☒ I am represented in this matter by a legal aid society, an attorney appearing as counsel *pro bono*, or an attorney assigned to me or referred by a legal aid society.

If no boxes in this section are checked, complete sections 2 and 3 below. If one or both boxes in this section are checked, skip section 2 and complete only section 3 below.

Divorce Process



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graph LR; A[COMPLAINT & SERVICE] --> B[EVIDENCE]; B --> C[FINAL DECREE]
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COMPLAINT
& SERVICE

EVIDENCE

FINAL
DECREE

Complaint - What to include

- Domiciliary, Residency, Addresses
- Dates/Places of Marriage & Separation
- Parties are over the age of 18, of sound mind and neither is in a mental or penal institution (or if incarcerated state so here). Military or non-military status.
- Parties have been intentionally & continuously separated for 1 year (6 months if a Property Settlement Agreement signed by both parties). No possibility of reconciliation.
- There were no children born or adopted of the marriage OR there were X number of children born or adopted of the marriage. (include names and dates of births). Custody/Support of children is not at issue and JDR Jurisdiction retained (if applicable). Neither party is known to be pregnant of the marriage.
- All issues of property division resolved (or reserved).
- Reserve or waive right to spousal support (if applicable).
- Plaintiff wants a no fault divorce.
- Resume use of maiden name (if applicable).

Service of Process and Notice:

One Step Divorce

Acceptance / Waiver of Service

Defendant waives or accepts service on Form 1406 (signs before a notary)

Defendant also signs Final Decree

Move on to Standard filing after 30 days with no response

Standard Divorce

Service

Methods from Va Code Section 8.01-296 (personal, substituted, posted + mailing)

Written notice to the clerk of the Court to issue process (fees should be waived)

Defendant is in default after 21 days with no response

Standard Divorce

Order of Posting / Publication

When: Defendant lives outside VA or whereabouts unknown

Requirements: Affidavit by Plaintiff with basis; clerk mails copy in lieu of publication, 20-104

Defendant is in default if no response is filed before deadline

Acceptance / Waiver of Service:

ACCEPTANCE/WAIVER OF SERVICE OF PROCESS AND WAIVER OF FUTURE SERVICE OF PROCESS

AND NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA VA. CODE §§ 8.01-327; 20-99.1-1; Rules 3-5, 3-8

Case No. _____

Circuit Court

PLAINTIFF

V.

DEFENDANT

I, the undersigned party named below, swear under oath/affirm the following:

1. I am a party ☐ plaintiff ☒ defendant in the above-styled suit.

2. I have received a copy of the following documents on this date:

☒ Complaint

☐ filed on _____, attached

DATE

☒ pre-filing copy pursuant to Va. Code § 20-99.1-1(A), attached

☐ Summons with copy of Complaint filed on _____, attached

DATE

☐ Other – Describe: _____ filed on _____

DATE

I understand that my receipt of these copies and my signature below constitute

☒ the acceptance of service of process of these copies, or

☐ a waiver of service of process and notice which may be prescribed by law.

3. I agree to voluntarily and freely waive any future service of process and notice as checked below in this case:

☒ a. the 21-day time period for filing a responsive pleading.

☒ b. any further service of process.

☐ c. notice of the appointment of a commissioner in chancery and hearings held by such commissioner in chancery, if a commissioner in chancery is appointed.

☒ d. notice of the taking of depositions.

☐ e. notice of the filing of any reports by a commissioner in chancery of the filing of depositions.

☐ f. notice of testimony to be given orally in open court.

☒ g. notice of entry of any order, judgment or decree, including the final decree of divorce.

I understand that, by waiving service of process and notice, I am giving up my right to be notified of the events where indicated above.

DATE

☐ DEFENDANT

☐ PLAINTIFF

TO DEFENDANT: Notify the Court in writing of any changes of your address while this case is pending.

State/Commonwealth of _____, [] City [] County of _____

Subscribed and sworn to/affirmed before me this _____ day of _____, 20 _____

by _____

PRINT NAME OF AFFIANT

DATE

☐ CLERK ☐ DEPUTY CLERK

☐ NOTARY PUBLIC (My commission expires _____)

Registration No. _____

Make sure to call
attention to the fact
that this document
needs to be notarized.

Affidavit for Order of Publication:

AFFIDAVIT FOR ORDER OF PUBLICATION

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA VA. CODE §§ 8.01-316, 20-104

Case No. _____

In the _____ Circuit Court

PLAINTIFF

v.

DEFENDANT

Comes now _____, a party seeking service on the below-named party by Order of Publication, and states under oath:

[] That the requesting party proceeds pursuant to Virginia Code § 20-104 and has been determined to be indigent;

That the party to be served (mark one or more of the reasons below):

1. [] is a foreign corporation; or
[] is a foreign unincorporated association; or
[] is a foreign unincorporated common carrier; or
[] is a non-resident individual, other than a non-resident individual fiduciary who has appointed a statutory agent;

OR

2. [] cannot be found, and that diligence has been used without effect to ascertain the location of the party to be served, with the following efforts being made:

OR

3. [] cannot be served at the last known residence with court process, and that a return has been filed by the sheriff which shows that the process has been in his or her hands for twenty-one (21) days and that the sheriff has been unable to make service;

OR

4. [] is set out in the pleading as a person or persons, as defendants by the general description of "parties unknown;" are deemed interested in the subject to be divided or disposed of; and the nature of such interest is described as:

OR

5. [] are parties appearing by pleading or exhibit filed, who are defendants who represent like interests with the parties not served with process, and the number of defendants upon whom process has been served exceeds ten (10).

NOTE: Only the Judge may enter an ORDER OF PUBLICATION upon a claim based upon reason number 5.

[] _____
NAME OF PARTY AGAINST WHOM SERVICE BY ORDER OF PUBLICATION IS REQUESTED

LAST KNOWN ADDRESS

OR

[] Not known.

NAME OF REQUESTING PARTY

COUNSEL FOR REQUESTING PARTY

State/Commonwealth of _____

[] City [] County of _____

The foregoing instrument was subscribed and sworn to/affirmed before me this

_____ day of _____, 20 _____

by _____

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY

NOTARY PUBLIC

My commission expires: _____

Registration No. _____

You will also include an Order of Publication - the date the Court chooses as the deadline will tell you when the Defendant is in default.

WHEN THE SPOUSE IS IN JAIL

By law, a Defendant that is incarcerated is a person under a disability and entitled to a Guardian *ad litem* (GAL).

KEY FACTORS

Waiver GAL: “Certain persons who are entitled to a GAL may waive that right. One who actually lacks capacity to waive the right cannot do so. However, one who is disabled only as a matter of law, such as a convict, can do so.” Thompson v. Commonwealth, 27 Va. App. 620, 625 (1998)

Waiver of Service: An incarcerated person can also waive service.

GAL Fees: Fees can be paid by the Commonwealth when:

1. Defendant is a felon incarcerated for crime against spouse, child, or stepchild - confined for more than 1 year Va. Code § 8.01-9(A)
2. Parties are Indigent per the Supreme Court Chart of Allowances 8.01-9(A)

Evidence or Testimony

Uncorroborated Testimony

Uncontested Divorces based on Separation:

Va. Code Section 20-99 provides that No fault divorces can be granted on uncorroborated testimony of the parties.

Party Affidavit: May be submitted pursuant to Section 20-91(A).

Evidence by Party Affidavit or Deposition

Va. Code Section 20-106 (A) : Plaintiff may submit evidence of the grounds of divorce through an affidavit under Va. Code Section 20-91(A)(9) if:

- Issues resolved through a PSA,
- No issue other than grounds to be resolved, or
- Adverse party personally served and failed to respond.

NOTE: May be times when notice of presentment is required (i.e. posted service).

Final Decree - Necessary Documents

- Recitation of facts as basis for the divorce found by court - tracks Complaint & Affidavit
- Describes Method of Service or Waiver of Service
- Based on one year separation
- Custody/Support if applicable – decline jurisdiction and remand to appropriate JDR Court
- Spousal support – Waived knowing that they cannot later request or reserve
- Equitable distribution – denied or reserved (no personal jurisdiction – may have to reserve)
- Statutory language from subsection B of Va. Code Section 20-111.1
- Incorporation of Confidential Addendum containing Social Security Nos.
- Attach - Child Custody/Support or Separation Agreements
- Removal from docket

Each case moves through **THREE** main phases:

PHASE ONE

The Client &
Materials Prep

PHASE TWO

The Court



PHASE THREE

Wrap Up

Longest phase



FYI - Client will have completed Legal Aid intake paperwork before being assigned to you.

Phase One Timeline

Justice Server Access

1

In order to access case documents, you must register with JusticeServer. To accept a case:

1. Create an account
2. Alert CVLAS once account has been created and they will assign case
3. Complete conflict check **and then** accept case

Client Intro Call

2

Intro call goals -

1. Confirm NFD questionnaire info is correct
2. Schedule in-person document signing
3. Establish best way to communicate going forward (text is usually fine)
4. Confirm defendant's address and likelihood of them signing waiver

Case Notes

3

In order to prepare for document completion, pull the vital information from the Client's intake paperwork (saved in JusticeServer) into your case notes.

Find notes template in Appendix.

Complete Documents

4

After completing your case notes, create a secure folder to house completed and editable versions of each document.

It's vital that you have access to the editable versions during your client meeting so that you can make corrections quickly.

Use the following reference tables to complete documents.

Additional Review

5

Share documents with peers in order to confirm process/substantive accuracy and share documents with the client in order to ensure factual accuracy. CVLAS can be reached if issues arise.

Upload final versions of each document to JusticeServer before in-person client meeting.

No-Fault Divorce - Document Breakdown

Use blue ink for signatures (except for the VS-4) so that it's obvious which documents are originals versus copies!

DOCUMENT	PURPOSE	CALL OUTS	SIGNATURE(S) REQUIRED	NOTARIZED?
RETAINER AGREEMENT	Defines scope of attorney/client relationship.	Template requires an edit (depending on client's citizenship status). CVLAS template included in appendix.	Attorney & Client	No
PETITION FOR PROCEEDING IN A NO-FAULT DIVORCE WITHOUT PAYMENT OF FEES OR COSTS	Asks the court to permit the petitioner to proceed in a no-fault divorce case under Virginia Code § 20-91(A)(9) without the payment of fees or costs.	Only need to complete heading + sections 1 & 3.	Client	No
ADDENDUM FOR PROTECTED IDENTIFYING INFORMATION	This addendum shall be used to distribute protected identifying information only as required by law, and may be made available only to the parties, to their attorneys, and to other person(s) as the court may allow.	Both parties' SSN needed. As of July 1, 2026 - if SSN is unknown, client can write "unknown" in this section.	Attorney	No

Document Prep - What to Expect

VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE [LOCATION OF COURT]

[CLIENT FULL NAME],)
Plaintiff,)
) Civil Action No.: _____
v.)
[DEFENDANT FULL NAME],)
Defendant.)
)
)

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff, [Client full name], by counsel, prays that the Court grant [him/her] a divorce *a vínculo matrimonii* from Defendant, [Defendant full name], on grounds of having a separation for more than one year; and in support sets forth the following:

1. Plaintiff, [Client full name], is a natural person, who resides at [Client's county or city and state of residence] and was at the time of the filing of this divorce suit, and had been for a period in excess of six months immediately preceding the filing of this suit, domiciled in and an actual *bona fide* resident of the Commonwealth of Virginia.
2. Defendant, [Defendant full name], is a natural person, who resides at [Defendant address with city or county and state].
3. Plaintiff and Defendant were lawfully married in the [city/county listed on marriage certificate], in the [state listed on marriage certificate] on [date entered on marriage certificate].

4. Plaintiff and Defendant are both over the age of eighteen years.
5. Neither party is suffering from any condition that renders either party legally incompetent.
6. Neither party is currently incarcerated in a mental or penal institution.
7. Neither party is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States of America.
8. The parties last cohabited as husband and wife in the [city/county where couple last cohabited].
9. [Use if there were no children born or adopted during the marriage] There are no children born of the parties, and no children adopted by either party, or adopted by both of the parties, during the marriage. [Delete this section if unused]

OR

9. [Use if children were born or adopted during the marriage] There were [# of children born of the marriage] child born of the marriage, [child's full name] (born [month] [day], [year]) and [# of children adopted during marriage] child adopted during the marriage, [adopted child's full name] (born [month] [day], [year]), [OPTIONAL- all of whom are in the custody of Plaintiff and Plaintiff is receiving child support from Defendant pursuant to Orders of the [name of issuing Court] entered on [month/day/year custody order was entered] (custody) and [month/day/year child support order was entered] (child support), respectively, attached as Exhibits [Exhibit #s].) No other children were adopted by either party, or by both of the parties during the marriage. [If using children's initials]: Full names and birth dates of the children known to Plaintiff are included in the Addendum for Protected Information. [Delete this section if unused]
10. Neither party is pregnant of the marriage.

No-Fault Divorce - Document Breakdown (cont.)

DOCUMENT	PURPOSE	CALL OUTS	SIGNATURE(S) REQUIRED	NOTARIZED?
COMPLAINT	Initiates the divorce proceeding - gives the Court the information it needs to determine proper venue, cause of divorce, and request for relief.	Certificate of mailing - fill out dates by hand day-of (so that it matches the day you actually mailed the paperwork to the Defendant). If spousal support is not addressed, it is automatically waived.	Attorney	No
PARTY AFFIDAVIT	Provides a sworn, written statement that confirms the legal requirements for divorce have been met, thereby allowing the parties to finalize the divorce without a court trial.	Double check that names, addresses, and dates match the Complaint.	Client	Yes
FINAL DECREE OF DIVORCE	Serves as the final order, and once signed by a judge, it makes the divorce final, allowing the individuals to remarry and formally separate their legal and financial lives.	Double check that names, addresses, and dates match the Complaint & the Affidavit. Must specify if spousal support is reserved or waived.	Attorney & Defendant	No
VITAL STATISTICS (VS-4) FORM	Updates client's and defendant's vital statistics with the state.	Must be filled out by hand in black ink . Parties' SSN required. Use marriage certificate as a reference. Ask Bureau, Clerk's Office or Legal Aid for blank forms.	Attorney	No

No-Fault Divorce - Document Breakdown (cont.)

DOCUMENT	PURPOSE	CALL OUTS	SIGNATURE(S) REQUIRED	NOTARIZED?
COURT COVER LETTER	Alerts Court to initiation of divorce proceeding and also gives Clerk a point of contact for issues and questions.	Use official letterhead. Address to Clerk of Court (by name).	Attorney	No
COVER SHEET FOR FILING CIVIL ACTIONS	Notifies the Clerk of Court that you are filing a civil action.	Under “Domestic/Family” select “Divorce” AND “Complaint-Uncontested.” Also select “Name Change” if applicable.	Attorney	No
DEFENDANT COVER LETTER	Alerts Defendant to divorce proceeding and provides them with recommendations on next steps.	Use official letterhead. Write-in date to match the day you put the documents in the mail. Must include: Complaint, Acceptance/Waiver of Service, & Final Decree of Divorce.	Attorney	No
ACCEPTANCE/WAIVER OF SERVICE OF PROCESS AND WAIVER OF FUTURE SERVICE OF PROCESS AND NOTICE	By signing it, Defendant acknowledges receipt of the divorce documents, waives their right to be formally served, and agrees to receive future notices via mail or other means.	Use “sign here” stickers & add a sticky note to remind them about signing in front of a notary.	Defendant	Yes

No-Fault Divorce - Document Breakdown (cont.)

DOCUMENT	PURPOSE	CALL OUTS	SIGNATURE(S) REQUIRED	NOTARIZED?
OPTIONAL - MOTION FOR RESTORATION OF MAIDEN NAME	Requests that the Court change the Plaintiff's married name back to their prior name.	Use client marriage certificate as a reference.	Attorney & Client	Yes
OPTIONAL - ORDER RESTORING MAIDEN NAME	This court order restores former name and serves as proof for updating official records like a driver's license, Social Security card, and passport.	Use client marriage certificate as a reference.	Attorney	No

No-Fault Divorce - Document Breakdown (Standard Filing)

DOCUMENT	PURPOSE	CALL OUTS	SIGNATURE(S) REQUIRED	NOTARIZED?
STANDARD FILING - FINAL DECREE OF DIVORCE	Same purpose as One-Step Final Decree of Divorce.	Instead of “Seen and Agreed” before Defendant’s signature block, you will include - “Signature Waived pursuant to Va. Sup. Ct. Rule 1:13”	Attorney	No
STANDARD FILING - COVER LETTER TO COURT FOR FILING COMPLAINT & SERVICE OF PROCESS REQUEST	Alerts Court to initiation of divorce proceeding and requests that service be made by the Sheriff’s Office.	Use if Defendant’s address is known and in-state.	Attorney	No
STANDARD FILING - COVER LETTER TO COURT FOR FILING COMPLAINT & ORDER OF PUBLICATION	Same as above	Use when Defendant’s address is unknown, out-of-state, or service is unsuccessful.	Attorney	No
AFFIDAVIT FOR ORDER OF PUBLICATION	Same purpose as One-Step Filing Affidavit.	Example of due diligence language - “checked with all family members, investigated using social media, and verified not available at last known address”	Attorney & Client	Yes
ORDER OF PUBLICATION	Provides formal, legal notice of the divorce action to a missing or unlocatable spouse when personal service of the legal papers is not possible.	Call Clerk’s office to confirm whether Court posts electronically (like Chesterfield County) or physically.	Attorney	No

Document Best Practices

Where to file: Venue lies where **the parties last cohabitated**, where the defendant resides or if the defendant is out of state, where the plaintiff resides.

- Triple check that you've chosen the correct venue - if that part is wrong, you'll have to re-do almost everything

Consistency is key! Names and dates should be consistent across all documents.

- “Find & replace” is your BFF
- If your initial notes are correct, you can just copy/paste
- Middle initials are preferred (less opportunity for typos)

Limit your use of full mailing addresses to the Addendum for Protected Identifying Information (one of the last documents you will file). This way you won't have to re-do everything if a party's address changes.

For the other documents, it's ok to just say “Defendant is a natural person who resides in the city of Richmond, Virginia,” for example.

Just make sure you're consistent and the format of where both parties reside matches.

Whenever possible, leave spots for today's date blank (to be filled out by hand). It's very easy for initial meetings to move around and you don't want to reprint everything just because it's out-of-date.

- Also, leave everything highlighted as you fill out the paperwork until you triple check what you've entered – then remove highlighting.

Leave spot for case number blank - there is no number assigned until you initiate the process. Which means you will not need a case number for one-step filing cases (but you will for standard filing cases since you submit multiple packets to the Court).

- Case number can be found on court docket (see link below) or by calling the Court Clerk's office.

FYI - Some clients prefer documents sent via email so they can sign them (with notary) and mail them back. You can also arrange a hybrid meeting if client wants to meet in-office and attorney can only join virtually.

Phase Two Timeline: One-Step

Initial Client Meeting

1

You should prepare for this initial meeting in the following ways:

1. Double check every document for typos and inconsistencies
2. Confirm with client (and remind them that they must bring a photo id!)
3. Confirm with CVLAS (if meeting in-office)
4. Ensure you have editable versions of every document handy for easy access

Post-Client Meeting

2

Once client leaves (with copies of all signed and Defendant-bound documents), you will make copies of each document and mail the following documents to the Defendant:

1. Defendant cover letter (signed)
2. Complaint (signed)
3. Final Decree of Divorce (signed)
4. Acceptance/waiver of service or process...

Keep the original "wet ink" copies of everything else in a secure place - this is what you will send to the Court once Defendant responds or time to respond lapses.

Defendant's Response

3

Once packet has been mailed to Defendant, they have 30 days to respond (mark your calendar for 30 day deadline).

If client responds:

- Double check signatures and confirm that it has been notarized
- Make copies of each returned document

If client does not respond:

- Move forward with Standard filing route (see next slide for Standard filing timeline)

Court Filing

4

For One-Step filings, you will mail the Court (with copies sent to Client and Defendant) a packet with the following documents:

1. Court cover letter;
2. Cover letter for civil actions;
3. Petition for... costs
4. Addendum for protected...
5. Complaint;
6. Affidavit;
7. Final decree of divorce;
8. Vital stats form (VS-4);
9. Acceptance/waiver...
10. Motion for... maiden name; (when needed);
11. Order to restore... (when needed)

Court Response

5

Once One-Step packet has been mailed to the Court, you will need to do the following:

1. Mark the submission date on your calendar and set a reminder to check the Court's online Civil docket in 10 days. Should the case entry not appear on the docket, contact the Clerk's office to confirm document receipt.
2. If the Court has everything they need, the Final Decree of Divorce will come via mail. Any required clarifications will be communicated directly (via email or mail).

Phase Two Timeline: Standard - With Service

If Defendant's address is known and in-state

Three Types of Service

Personal Service

Posted / Substitute Service

Court Response

1

2

3

4

5

Confirm Defendant's address with Client.

Send cover letter to Clerk's office asking for service via Sheriff's office (Sheriff's office in the city/county where Defendant resides - **note that it may differ from your filing jurisdiction**).

Call the Clerk's office after 10 days to confirm receipt and date request will be submitted to the Sheriff's office.

Call the Sheriff's office 10 days after they received the request and confirm date/type of service.

Personal - documents go into the hands of Defendant (21 day response clock starts - or Defendant is in default)

Posted - affix documents to front door (effective as long as also mailed first class to last known address - must include certificate of that mailing with next Court filing)

Substitute - documents left with someone else in the house (16+); treated similar to Posted but additional notices are required

No response = Move to Order of Publication

For Personal Service, you will mail the Court (with a copy sent to Client) a packet with the following documents:

1. Court cover letter;
2. Notice of presentment*;
3. Final Decree of Divorce;
4. Vital stats form (VS-4);
5. Party Affidavit

* Call court to know if in-person presentment is required (like in Henrico)

For Posted / Substitute Service, you will mail the Court (with copies sent to Client and Defendant) a packet with the following documents:

1. Court cover letter;
2. Notice of presentment*;
3. Final Decree of Divorce;
4. Vital stats form (VS-4);
5. Party Affidavit

* Call Court to know if in-person presentment is required (like in Henrico)

Once final packet has been mailed to the Court, you will need to do the following:

1. Mark the submission date on your calendar and set a reminder to check the Court's online Civil docket in 10 days. Should a case update not appear on the docket, contact the Clerk's office to confirm document receipt.
2. If the Court has everything they need, the Final Decree of Divorce will come via mail. Any required clarifications will be communicated directly (via email or mail).

Phase Two Timeline: Standard - Order of Publication

**If Defendant's
address is unknown,
out-of-state, or
service is
unsuccessful.**

1

Draft Order of Publication based on the practices of the jurisdiction. Practices vary between physical and electronic publication (your cover letter should indicate which one). For physical, leave end date blank for the clerk to fill in.

Check the Court's online docket to find out end date (or call Clerk's office).

Wait for that date to pass, contact the Clerk's office, and make sure no answer has been filed. If no, they're in default. Then proceed as if the Defendant was served personally.

**Court
Filing**

2

For Order of Publication, you will mail the Court (with a copy sent to Client) a packet with the following documents:

1. Court cover letter;
2. Final Decree of Divorce;
3. Vital stats form (VS-4);
4. Party Affidavit

**Course
Response**

3

Once final packet has been mailed to the Court, you will need to do the following:

1. Mark the submission date on your calendar and set a reminder to check the Court's online Civil docket in 10 days. Should a case update not appear on the docket, contact the Clerk's office to confirm document receipt.
2. If the Court has everything they need, the Final Decree of Divorce will come via mail. Any required clarifications will be communicated directly (via email or mail).



NOW IT'S TIME TO TAKE ACTION

SIGN UP FOR A CASE TODAY!

LOCAL LEGAL AID

Contact your local
Legal Aid to take on an
uncontested divorce case
today!

JUSTICE SERVER

Sign up for a case via Justice
Server (certain jurisdictions):

Registering is easy! Visit -
portal.justiceserver.org

IN THE RICHMOND AREA

Contact:

Lisa Bennett
lisa@cvlas.org

Sarah Merryman
Sarah.merryman@capitalone.com

Appendix

Search for Case Updates Online:



Virginia Courts Case Information



Circuit Court Case Information

This is the case management system for circuit courts in Virginia. This is a project with a limited number of courts. Cases may be searched using name, case number, or hearing date. Searches must be done by individual courts. Statewide searches are not possible.

Disclaimer:

Please be advised that the Fairfax Circuit Court does not utilize the statewide Circuit Case Management System and, as a result, does not participate in the Online Case Information System. For case information pertaining to the Fairfax Circuit Court, please contact the court directly at (703) 246-4111 or visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/circuit/>.

Select Court

Once you have selected your court, please click the "Begin" button.

(Log off button)

Please read the instructions on the screen.

Using this system, you will be able to search for cases and view case information.

This system is designed to be used on a computer, and will perform best with Internet Explorer Version 6 or higher. The system also supports Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox and Safari Internet browsers. Your browser must also accept cookies and allow Java applets to run.

Each time you log on to the system, you will be prompted to create a new session. If the system remains inactive, the session will expire and you will be prompted to log on again.

Please observe the following instructions:

1. Do not use the system if you are not a court employee.
2. Do not use the system if you are not authorized to use the system.
3. Do not use the system if you are not logged in.

Accomack Circuit Court

Albemarle Circuit Court

Alexandria Circuit Court

Alleghany Circuit Court

Amelia Circuit Court

Amherst Circuit Court

Appomattox Circuit Court

Arlington Circuit Court

Augusta Circuit Court

Bath Circuit Court

Bedford Circuit Court

Bland Circuit Court

Botetourt Circuit Court

Bristol Circuit Court

Brunswick Circuit Court

Buchanan Circuit Court

Buckingham Circuit Court

Buena Vista Circuit Court

Campbell Circuit Court

Caroline Circuit Court

Begin

, and will perform best with Internet Explorer Version 6 or higher. The system also supports Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox and Safari Internet browsers. Your browser must also accept cookies and

Circuit Court Case Information opening page where you select the circuit court. When you are finished using this system, please click the "Logoff" button available on each page. If the system remains the Circuit Court Case Information opening page.

between pages.

return to a specific page later.

Site URL -
<https://eapps.courts.state.va.us/CJISWeb/circuit.jsp>

CVLAS Flowchart

**CVLAS JUSTICESERVER
UNCONTESTED NO-FAULT DIVORCE INFO TEMPLATE FLOW CHART**

Note: Jurisdiction for divorce cases is nationwide. However, it is best to file and process where the parties last cohabited.

One-Step vs. Standard Filing
(see Virginia Code §20-99.1 and §20-106.1, amended 2019)

- Client's spouse (the Defendant) must be willing to cooperate with divorce proceedings
- The Defendant must be sent (1) an Acceptance/Waiver of Service of Process, (2) a copy of the Complaint, and (3) a copy of the proposed Final Decree of Divorce (FDD)
- The Defendant must sign and notarize the Acceptance/Waiver of Service of Process, sign the proposed FDD (FDD does not require notarization), and send both of these items.

If Defendant is unwilling to cooperate and/or refuses to sign the Acceptance/Waiver form and FDD, you MUST proceed with a standard filing. If Defendant's address is known and in-state, this means you must attempt service of process. However, if the location of process was unsuccessful, or if Defendant's address is either unknown or out of state/country, you must proceed with a special pro se non FDD Order of Publication (§20-106).

Filing Preparation Checklist

Templates are hyperlinked below, sections **highlighted in blue**. MUST be addressed/removed according to the facts of each case

Required Documents for ALL NFD Cases

- Doc 1: Cover Letter to Client Initiating Representation (template)
- Doc 2: CVLAS Retainer Agreement (template)
- Doc 3: Petition for Proceeding in a No-Fault Divorce without Payment of Fees or Costs (CC-142) (2020 template) (a No-Fault Divorce requires a version with a notary clause (2019))
- Doc 5: Complaint for Uncontested No-Fault Divorce (template)
- Doc 6: Cover Letter to Filing Civil Actions (CC-143) (template)
- Doc 7: Affidavit for Protected Identifying Information - Confidential (CC-143b) (template)
- Doc 8: Affidavit for Protected Identifying Information - Confidential (CC-143b) (template)
- Doc 9: Mandatory Visit Statistics Form - Report of Divorce of Amusement (Form VS-4) (template)
- Doc 11: Termination Letter (template)

Additional Documents for ONE-STEP NFD cases only:

- Doc 4b: Cover Letter to Client with the One-Step Draft Documents (template)
- Doc 9b: Final Decree of Divorce for One-Step Filing (template)
- Doc 12: Cover Letter to Defendant for Acceptance of Service (template)
- Doc 13: Acceptance/Waiver of Service of Process (CC-140) (template). *Note: Section 3 leaves a/b/g to waive future service of process are optional, though strongly recommended.*
- Doc 14: Cover Letter to Court for One-Step Filing (template)

Additional Documents for STANDARD NFD cases only:

- Doc 4b: Cover Letter to Client with Standard Draft Documents (template)

For STANDARD Filing (One-Step Filing is not possible)
(see Virginia Code § 20-99.1)

Step 2: Documents for Client Review/Signature

- Send client the following:
 - Doc 4b: Cover Letter to Client with Standard Draft Documents
 - Doc 5: Complaint with Certificate of Mailing
 - Doc 7: Affidavit for Protected Identifying Information
 - Doc 10: Visit Statistics Form (Send a copy, email of the original VS4)
- If Defendant's address is unknown or out of state/country, or service in-state was unsuccessful, also send **client** the following:
 - Doc 17: Affidavit for Order of Publication (CC-143b)
 - Doc 18: Order of Publication
- Client must sign, notarize, and return Doc 17 (Affidavit for Order of Publication)
- If client requests a name change:
 - Send client Doc 21 or 22 and 23 (name change documents)
 - Client must sign, notarize, Affidavit in support of name change, and return Doc 21/22

Step 3: Documents for Filing with the Court

After client has signed and returned the documents from Steps 1 and 2, send the Court the following:

- Doc 3 (signed by client): Petition for Proceeding in NFD without Payment of Fees or Costs
- Doc 5 (signed by counsel): Complaint for Proceeding in NFD without Payment of Fees or Costs
- Doc 6 (signed by counsel): Cover Sheet for Filing Civil Actions (also check "Name Change" if applicable)
- Doc 8 (signed by client and notarized): Affidavit for Protected Identifying Information
- Doc 9 (signed by client and notarized): Affidavit for Protected Identifying Information
- Doc 10 (signed by client and notarized): Affidavit for Protected Identifying Information
- Doc 11: Termination Letter (very important for ethical and insurance coverage purposes) or Close in Jetties/Service

If Defendant's address is known and in-state (i.e. if you must attempt service of process):

- Doc 15: Cover Letter to Court for Filing Complaint and Service of Process Request

If Defendant's address is unknown or out of state/country, or in-state service was unsuccessful:

- Doc 16 (signed by counsel): Cover Letter to Court for Filing Complaint and Order of Publication
- Doc 17 (signed by client and notarized): Affidavit for Order of Publication
- Doc 18 (signed by counsel): Order of Publication

If applicable: Doc 21 or 22 (signed by client) and 23 (signed by counsel)

Step 4: Documents for Client Review/Signature (Note: to prevent affidavits from going stale, do not proceed with this step until AFTER your in-state service was effectuated or if the Court has issued the Order of Publication and the designated waiting period service was effected by the judge through his request.)

Send client the following:

- Doc 8: Plaintiff Affidavit
- Doc 9b: Final Decree of Divorce for Standard Filing
- Doc 19: Cover Letter to Client with Affidavits for Review

Client must sign, notarize, and return Doc 8 (Plaintiff Affidavit)

- Doc 9b: Final Decree of Divorce for Standard Filing (template)

If Defendant's address is known and in-state:

- Doc 15: Cover Letter to Court for Filing Complaint and Service of Process Request (template)

If Defendant's address is unknown or out of state/country, or service was unsuccessful:

- Doc 16: Cover Letter to Court for Filing Complaint and Order of Publication (template)
- Doc 17: Affidavit for Order of Publication (CC-143b) (template)
- Doc 18: Order of Publication
- Doc 19: Cover Letter to Client with Affidavits for Review (template)
- Doc 20: Cover Letter to Client with Affidavits for Review (template)
- Doc 21: Order to Restore Maiden Name (template)
- Doc 22: Order to Restore Maiden Name (template)

Documents if Client Requests Name Change/Maiden Name Restoration:**

- Doc 12: Motion to Restore Maiden Name (template) or Doc 22: Application for Change of Name (CC-141) (template)
- Doc 23: Order to Restore Maiden Name (template)

Filing Flowchart

Step 1 (name for One-Step and Standard Filing): Engagement Correspondence

Send client the following documents:

- Doc 1: Cover Letter to Client Initiating Representation
- Doc 2: CVLAS Retainer Agreement
- Doc 3: Petition for Proceeding in a No-Fault Divorce without Payment of Fees or Costs (CC-142)
 - This document covers for you and has first line after any applicable non-legal and society v.i.g. CVLAS's professional liability policy covering this pro bono representation/understanding
- Doc 3: Petition for Proceeding in a No-Fault Divorce without Payment of Fees or Costs (CC-142)
 - This should be applicable to all Justice Server clients since they qualify for 10-2-20 judgments. However, **please confirm client's current income and debts** before completing this form.

Client must sign and return the retainer agreement and Doc 3. Client must sign, notarize, and return the fee waiver (Doc 3) however, this should not until Step 2 is served client having to go to a notary more than once.

For ONE-STEP Filing (send down for Standard Filing):

Step 2: Documents for Client Review/Signature

Send client the following:

- Doc 4a (signed by counsel): Cover Letter to Client with One-Step Draft Documents
- Doc 5 (signed by counsel): Complaint

Step 3: Documents for Filing with the Court

After client has signed and returned documents from Step 4, send the Court the following:

- Doc 8 (signed by client and notarized): Plaintiff Affidavit
- Doc 9b (signed by counsel): Final Decree of Divorce for Standard Filing
- Doc 10 (signed by counsel): Visit Statistics Form - Report of Divorce or Amusement
- If applicable: Doc 19 (signed by counsel)
- Doc 20 (signed by counsel): Cover Letter to Court for Filing Final Decree of Divorce/Affidavit VS-4

Step 4: Closing Correspondence

Once the FDD has been signed by the judge and entered (usually 2-3 weeks after filing), send client the following:

- Doc 9b (signed by counsel): Final Decree of Divorce for Court seal
- Doc 11: Termination Letter (very important for ethical and professional insurance purposes) or If applicable: Doc 23 (signed by Court)

***Addendum for Protected Identifying Information (Doc 7):** This document lists any information the client would like to keep confidential but that is required by the Court. Social Security numbers of each of the parties must be put in this Addendum and are thereby incorporated by reference into the Final Decree. Full addresses of parties, full names and birth dates of children may be protected, etc. You may attach additional sheets to this addendum as needed. When modifying the language of the divorce filing to protect protected information (i.e. using initials in place of children's names), include a statement indicating that the complete information is included in the Addendum. If FDD's unknown, use add an affidavit stating effort made and manner who SSN unknown and unknown, in no documents in their possession containing SSN, etc.

****Maiden Name Restoration:** If a party seeking a name change has a filer's correction, has previously changed names, or is a registered partner with the Sex Offender & Crime Appraisal/Monitor Registry, or if the name change is fraudulent or would infringe on the rights of others, see Code §20-121.4, subject to §10-1-27 requirements.

Important Reminders:

- You must use the same spelling/language format and DATES etc. across ALL documents
- Check all your documents at least twice before filing
- A One-Step NFD filing, Defendant should sign FDD however if Defendant waived signature in Doc 14 (Acceptance/Waiver) that has been LaTeXed checked, thereby waiving this signature requirement you can include that statement in facts of defendant
- In a Standard NFD filing, you must copy Defendant on ALL filings unless waived by him/her in Section 3 of the Waiver of Service of Process, or the Defendant has gone into default by failing to file a timely Answer after respective phoning in the Complaint within 21 days after service of process by Sheriff or within the Order of Publication "waiting period" entered through by the judge. **Note: Almost all defendants go into default and thereby are no longer required to be served by a filer or notice or other papers thereafter in your NFD proceeding. I am default by Defendant you may proceed to the below further notice to Defendant.**
- Close in Jetties/Service by selecting End Representation, upload FDD and record total hours spent

THANKS FOR THIS PRO-BONO SERVICE FOR THE BAR & OUR COMMUNITY
*****Occasional Bump Encountered Along the Road to a Final Divorce*****

- Doc 7: Addendum for Protected Identifying Information (protect SSN & other confidential info of parties)
- Doc 8: Affidavit of Plaintiff in Support of Divorce
- Doc 9b: Final Decree of Divorce for One-Step Filing
- If applicable: Doc 23 or 24 (name change documents)

Send Defendant the following:

- Doc 5 (signed by Doc 13): Complaint reviewed by client, whereabouts of service upon Defendant (by mail)
- Doc 6 (signed by counsel): Final Decree of Divorce for One-Step Filing
- Doc 12 (signed by counsel): Cover Letter to Defendant for Acceptance of Service
- Doc 13 (signed by counsel): Cover Letter to Defendant for Acceptance of Service
- If applicable: Doc 21 or 22 and 23 (name change documents)

Client must sign, notarize, and return Doc 8 (Plaintiff Affidavit)

Defendant must sign, notarize, and return Doc 13 (Acceptance/Waiver) and Doc 9b (FDD, notary not required)

If client requests name change documents, must sign Doc 21 (Acceptance/Waiver) and Doc 21/22

Step 3: Documents for Filing with the Court

After client and Defendant have signed & returned the documents from Steps 1 and 2, send the Court the following:

- Doc 3 (signed by client): Petition for Proceeding in NFD without Payment of Fees or Costs
- Doc 5 (signed by counsel): Complaint
- Doc 6 (signed by counsel): Cover Sheet for Filing Civil Actions (also check "Name Change" if applicable)
- Doc 7 (signed by counsel): Affidavit for Protected Identifying Information
- Doc 8 (signed by client and notarized): Plaintiff Affidavit
- Doc 9b (signed by counsel and Defendant): Final Decree of Divorce for One-Step Filing
- Doc 10 (signed by counsel and Defendant): Visit Statistics Form - Report of Divorce or Amusement
- Doc 11 (signed by Defendant and notarized): Acceptance/Waiver of Service of Process
- Doc 14 (signed by counsel): Cover Letter to Court for One-Step Filing
- If applicable: Doc 21 or 22 (signed by client or defendant as appropriate) and 23 (signed by counsel)

Step 4: Closing Correspondence

- Once the FDD has been signed by the judge and entered (usually 2-3 weeks after filing), send client the following:
 - Doc 9b (signed by counsel): Final Decree of Divorce for One-Step Filing
 - If applicable: Doc 23 (signed by Court)
- Doc 11: Termination Letter (Very important for ethical and insurance coverage purposes) or Close in Jetties/Service

Once finished, report hours spent, upload final decree and close case in Jetties/Service

If Defendant is incarcerated for a felony, is a minor, or is a legally incompetent adult, see Virginia Code §§10-1-201 & §10-1-19 for requesting a Guardian Ad Litem (GAL). A GAL can be any decent and competent adult-at-law, but must be approved by a court order.

- Doc 24: Cover Letter to Client with Motion to Appoint GAL (template)
- Doc 25: Motion for Appointment of Guardian Ad Litem (template)
- Doc 26: Order Appointing Guardian Ad Litem (template)

If possible, have defendant include any matters or issues beyond those stated above, then contact David Hall, dhall@cvlas.com, who will be pleased to assist you. Or contact David at 808-200-6184.

Checklist of Documents to Send to the Court - One Step Filing:

- Cover letter to the court
- Cover Sheet for Filing Civil Actions (check Uncontested divorce & name change if applicable)
- Petition for Proceeding in a NFD without Payment of Fees or Costs
- Complaint with certificate of mailing
- Acceptance/Waiver of Service of Process (signed and notarized by the Defendant)
- Addendum for Protected Identifying Information
- Plaintiff Affidavit
- Final Decree of Divorce (signed by Defendant)
- Vital Statistics Form VS4
- Name Change documents if applicable

**VOLUNTEER WITH CENTRAL
VIRGINIA LEGAL AID SOCIETY &
CONNECT VIA JUSTICESERVER**

Guidance to Register and Accept a Case in
JusticeServer



STEP1: REGISTER



- To join, register at portal.justiceserver.org. Once at the URL, click the green “Register Now” button.
- Benefits of Registration
 - Malpractice Insurance
 - Tracks outcomes of cases and hours donated
 - Gives access to clients and connects you to resources and templates
 - Identifies key CVLAS staff for support

STEP 2: CREATE AN ACCOUNT

The screenshot shows the 'Create an Account' page. The header is identical to the homepage. Below the header, there are five tabs: '1. Login Information' (active), '2. Contact Information', '3. Professional Experience', '4. Bar License & Other', and '5. Select LSO'. The 'Login Information' tab is selected, showing a form with fields for 'Email*', 'Confirm Email*', 'Password*', and 'Repeat Password*'. Below the form, there is a note: 'Password must be at least min. 6 characters in length, minimum of 1 lower case, 1 upper case letter, 1 numeric and 1 special character without any space, special characters allowed @!\$%^&*()'. A 'NEXT' button is located at the bottom right of the form.

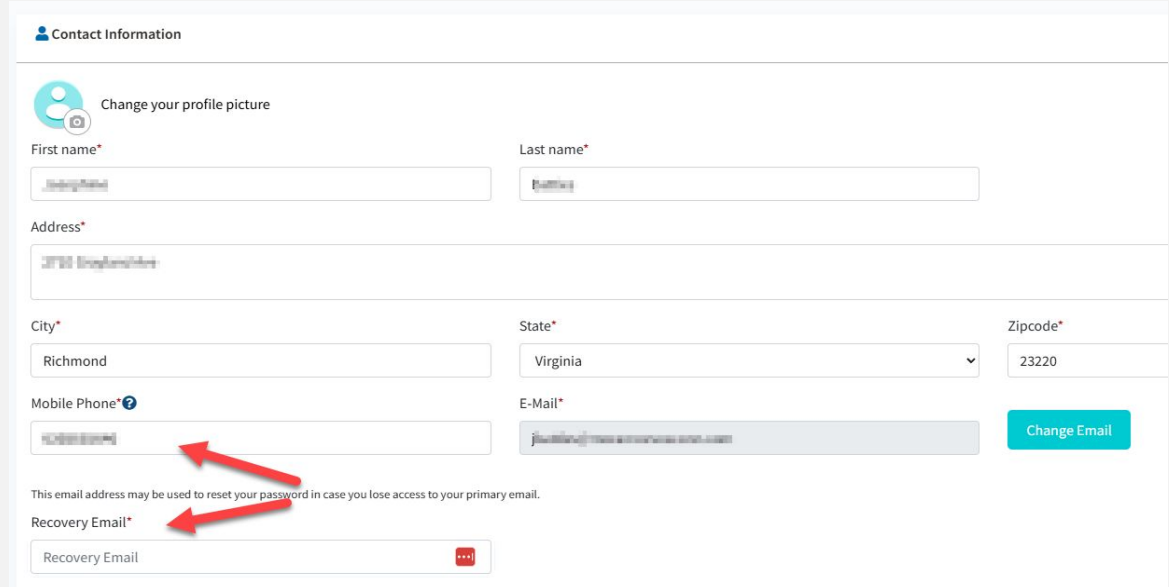
Create an account using an email address and a password. As a reminder:

- Include your Virginia State Bar Number
- **Select Central Virginia Legal Aid as the Legal Service Organization (LSO).**
- Expect Emails from Databasics.

ESTABLISH A RECOVERY EMAIL AND MOBILE NUMBER

****DO THIS BEFORE CHANGING YOUR EMAIL AS YOUR USERNAME IS
YOUR PRIMARY EMAIL ADDRESS!**

- Establish a Recovery Email
- Enter a second email address, like a personal email, that can be used to reset your password should you change law firms or lose access to your primary email.
- Add a Mobile Number where you can receive SMS messages for a two factor authentication.



The screenshot shows a 'Contact Information' form. At the top, there's a section for 'Change your profile picture' with a camera icon. Below this are fields for 'First name*', 'Last name*', and 'Address*'. Further down are 'City*', 'State*' (a dropdown menu), and 'Zipcode*'. The 'Mobile Phone*' field has a question mark icon and is highlighted with a red arrow. Below it, a note states: 'This email address may be used to reset your password in case you lose access to your primary email.' The 'Recovery Email*' field is also highlighted with a red arrow. A 'Change Email' button is located to the right of the 'E-Mail*' field.

Contact Information

Change your profile picture

First name* Last name*

Address*

City* State* Zipcode*

Richmond Virginia 23220

Mobile Phone* E-Mail*

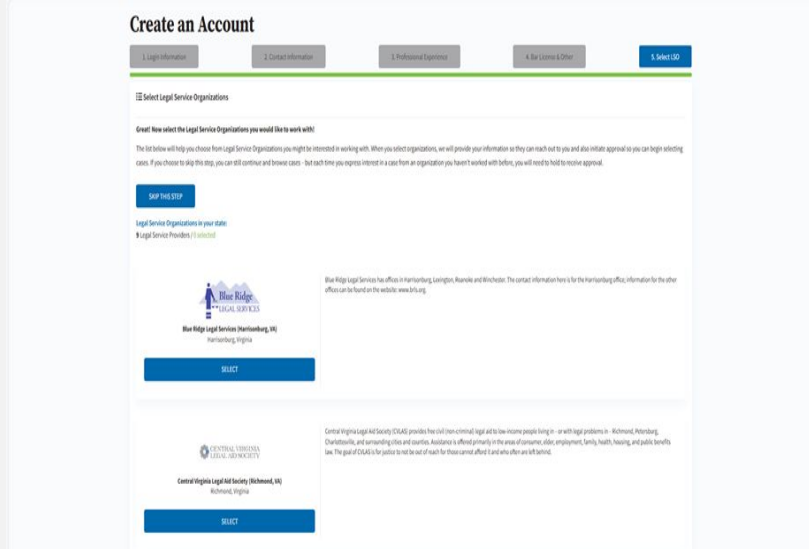
This email address may be used to reset your password in case you lose access to your primary email.

Recovery Email*

Change Email

Scroll to the bottom of the page and click “update” to save your changes

STEP 2A: SELECT LSO



Create an Account

1. Login Information 2. Contact Information 3. Professional Experience 4. Bar License & Other 5. Select LSO

Select Legal Service Organizations

Great! Now select the Legal Service Organizations you would like to work with!

The list below will help you choose from Legal Service Organizations you might be interested in working with. When you select organizations, we will provide your information so they can reach out to you and also initiate approval so you can begin selecting cases. If you choose to skip this step, you can still continue and browse cases - but each time you express interest in a case from an organization you haven't worked with before, you will need to hold to receive approval.

STEP THIS STEP

Legal Service Organizations in your state:
11 Legal Service Providers (11 listed)

Blue Ridge Legal Services (Harrisonburg, VA)
Harrisonburg, Virginia

SELECT

Central Virginia Legal Aid Society (Richmond, VA)
Richmond, Virginia

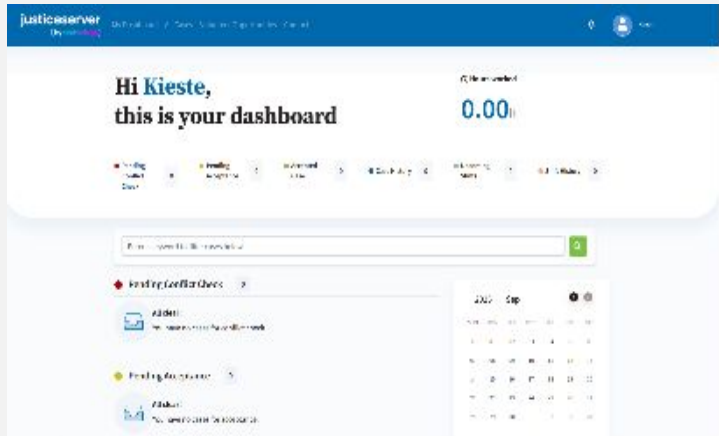
SELECT

Selecting CVLAS as your LSO is an essential step in creating your account. Choosing CVLAS allows us to see your account and approve you for access into our database.



If you forget to select CVLAS as your LSO, please click on your name in the upper-right hand corner of the screen next to the icon and Edit Your Profile. Here, you will have the ability to select CVLAS as your LSO.

STEP 3: MY DASHBOARD



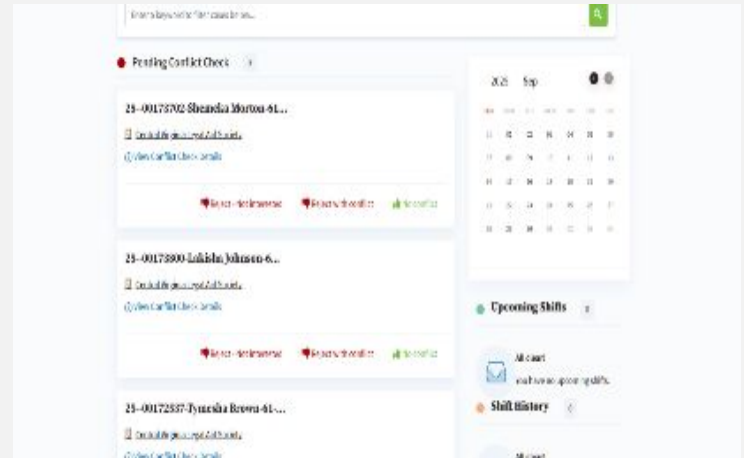
“**My Dashboard**” located on the [blue banner menu bar](#) at the top of the screen, allows you to see cases assigned to you. Each assigned case will be listed under one of the following:

Pending Conflict, Pending Acceptance, Accepted Case

Obtaining a Case: You may receive a case by

- **Direct Assignment** as an invite from a Staff Attorney or by
- **Self-selection** by Virginia licensed **Attorneys Only**, may select a case from the portal

STEP 4: PENDING CONFLICT CHECK



For cases in “Pending Conflict Check” status, check for conflicts by clicking “View Conflict Check Details” and read the information on the screen to ensure you do not have a conflict.

Please note: Rule 6.5 of VA Code of Professional Responsibility indicates that in a pro bono clinic, the only conflicts are known conflicts.

STEP 5-CONFLICT?

The screenshot shows a 'Case Summary' window. At the top, it displays '25--001-0000-0000 Johnson-64-Public Housing'. Below this, it lists 'Location: Richmond City' and 'Listed by: Central Virginia Legal Aid Society'. A 'Public Housing' tag is also present. On the right, a 'Time left to decide' timer shows '95h 54m 01s'. The 'Client and Adverse' section includes a 'Copy to Clipboard' button and lists 'Client: Johnson, Norfolk, VA 23503' and 'Adverse Party: Court Apartments,'. At the bottom, a message states 'Make sure there are no conflicts before making a decision.' Below this are three buttons: 'REJECT - NOT INTERESTED' (red), 'REJECT WITH CONFLICT' (red), and 'NO CONFLICT' (green). A 'DECIDE LATER' link is also visible.

After reviewing the details, select the appropriate button.

If there is no conflict, select the green “**No Conflict**” button.

If there is a conflict, select the red Reject with Conflict button and reach out to obtain another case.

STEP 6-CONFLICTS CHECK CLEARED

The screenshot shows a 'Message' window with the text 'You have passed the conflict check. Please view and accept the case.' Below the message is a large green button labeled 'OK'.

Once you have passed the conflicts check, the above message will appear on your screen.

Click the green “**OK**” button and proceed to the next screen to accept the case.

STEP 7-PENDING CASE ACCEPTANCE

JusticeServer
A Technology Solution

<Return To My Cases

Account Name: Hidden Household Contact Name: Rita Holden
Subject: Employment Discrimination in City of Roanoke Case Number: 00001079
Problem Code: Employment Discrimination Location: Roanoke City
External Overview: Employment Discrimination Case Description - Jackie Kuhle Test Case Special Requirements:
Date of Intake: 5/9/2017 Intake Questions:
1. Do you still work for the company that is discriminating against you? Yes
2. What is the name of the company? Angel Cars
3. How long have you worked there? 10 years
4. Did your management team indicate that you were being considered for a promotion? Yes, during the last 5 performance evaluations and they never came up as an issue. It was only discussed during a recent conversation with my manager.
5. Etc.

CASE STATUS

Accept Case
Reject Case

IMPORTANT DATES

Date	Type
5/9/2017	Court Appearance

Your case is in the “**Pending Acceptance**” status. In the upper right corner of the screen, under **Case Status**, there are two options:

- Accept Case
- Reject Case

Clicking “**Accept Case**” is a required step to gain access to the entirety of the client’s files.

STEP 8-CONFIRM CASE ACCEPTANCE

Accepted Case 1

25--001 [REDACTED] Johnson-6...

Working hours
0.00h

Central Virginia Legal Aid Society

Invite Others View Hours Details

View Case Archive Case

The case should now appear under your Dashboard as an “Accepted Case.” You now have access to all the case information. Click the blue “**View Case**” button and see the Resource Section.

Please repeat the steps for each case assigned to you.

STEP 9-WORKING THE CASE

Account Name	Jasmine Harris-Powell Household	Contact Name	Jasmine Rosemary Harris-Powell
Client Type	Individual	Case Number	00160761
Location of Issue	Richmond City	Location of Client (from contact)	Richmond City
Status	Intake Completed	Subject	23-1-00160761-Jasmine Harris-Powell/88-Other Individual Rights
# Household Members	3	Number of Adults	1
Number of Children	2	Mailing Address - Protected?	
Client Address	2001 East Grace Street Apt. 500 Richmond, VA 23223	Mailing Address - Sub?	
Phone	(854) 347-6920	Phone - Sub?	Yes
Mobile	(854) 347-6920	Mobile - Sub?	Yes
Other Phone		Other Phone Sub?	Yes
Email	jpowell800@gmail.com	Approves email?	Yes
Social Security	041-02-0418	Gender	Female
Birthdate	5/28/1959	Race	Black or African American
Age	33	Marital Status	Single
Total Yearly Income			

Case Details

Description

UD non-suited in Richmond 4/12/22

Use the Resources

Case Notes

New Note

After accepting a case, plan to reach out to the client within 48 hours of case acceptance.

STEP 10-COMPLETION OF ROLE

Reason for Closing?

My role is complete

None

The case is complete

My role is complete

I can no longer continue with the case

Closing Comments

Please provide any closing comments, describe what occurred on the case, and the outcome of the case.

Final Documents

Warning: upon closing you will no longer have access to further edit this case. Before proceeding, please confirm you have attached any closing documents.

If you have any final documents to attach, please upload them here

Choose File No file chosen

Final Hours

You have reported 0 on this case. If you have any additional hours to report please indicate below

Hours

250.00

What is your usual rate for these hours?

250.00

Upload petition-Hours

Case Details

Date Case Closed

11/05/2022

Reason Closed

None

Proof of Rep

None

Outcome

None

Final Level of Service

None

Compelling Story

Monetary Benefits

Benefit Type	Amount	Amount Type	Note	Action
None		One-time		Delete Row

Ending Representation requirements:

- Select “My Role is Complete” if work still must occur or “The Case is Complete” if you have obtained final resolution of the case and no further work must be done
- Enter your hours
- Upload any documents into the case file such as petitions, final orders, letters to the court or termination letter.

HOW TO UPDATE YOUR JUSTICESERVER PRO BONO LOGIN WHEN CHANGING FIRMS!

No Access

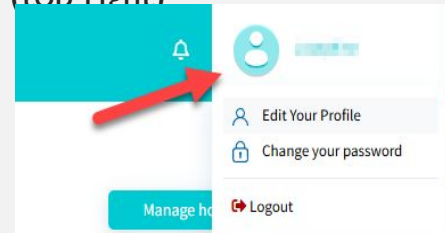
- If you have no access to your JusticeServer account because you no longer have your former firm's email access-
- Email sfsupport@techbridge.com
- Provide your name and your old and new email addresses.
 - Copy Lisa@cvlas.org!

Access

- If you will be changing firms in the future and have justiceserver access now-
- Log in to the Justiceserver Pro Bono Portal-
www.justiceserver.org

Click on your Profile Image (top right)

- Select Edit your Profile



FINALLY, SCROLL
TO THE TOP OF
YOUR PROFILE,
CHOOSE “UPDATE
EMAIL”

- **Click** the “change email” button, then enter the new desired email, confirm it and click “Update Email”.



A screenshot of a user profile's 'E-Mail' section. It features a text input field with a light blue border and a teal 'Change Email' button to its right. The input field contains a blurred email address. The label 'E-Mail*' is positioned above the input field.

E-Mail*

[Blurred email address]

Change Email

CVLAS Retainer Agreement Template:

Copy given/mailed to client _____

CENTRAL VIRGINIA LEGAL AID SOCIETY, INC. Private Attorney Involvement (PAI) RETAINER AGREEMENT

I, _____, request and authorize Central Virginia Legal Aid Society, Inc. (CVLAS) to provide legal counsel and representation to me in the following matter(s) only:

UNCONTESTED NO FAULT DIVORCE

1. I understand that CVLAS and its PAI will not represent me in any other matter unless specifically agreed upon between us and a new retainer agreement is signed. If I wish to take my case to a higher court or tribunal, CVLAS will then make a decision as to whether or not to represent me in such an appeal.
 2. The staff and PAI of CVLAS will provide legal services with diligence; however, no promise is made about the results to be obtained. CVLAS will not discriminate in the provision of services on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any other basis prohibited by law.
 3. CVLAS and PAI may withdraw from its representation of me if: (a) I am no longer financially eligible for the program's services; (b) my status as an eligible alien has changed; (c) I become incarcerated after my case has begun; (d) if CVLAS/PAI cannot locate me; (e) if CVLAS/PAI determines my case is not valid; (f) if I violate the terms of this agreement; (g) if CVLAS/PAI determines that it would be a conflict of interest to continue to represent me; or (e) there is other good cause. CVLAS/PAI has the right to review my case before appeal and to make a separate decision whether to represent me on appeal.
- CVLAS/PAI must attempt to notify me in writing before withdrawing as my representative in any matter before the matter is concluded.

4. I understand that CVLAS/PAI will keep me informed about its handling of my case. CVLAS/PAI will not settle my case without my approval and will not take any significant action on my case without my approval.
5. I agree to inform CVLAS/PAI of any changes in my address, telephone number, and income or assets. I understand that if I exceed CVLAS' eligibility guidelines, then CVLAS/PAI may have to end this agreement and stop representing me. I also agree to keep CVLA/PAI informed about any developments regarding the matter(s) it is handling for me.
6. CVLAS/PAI will keep information about my case confidential, except where I authorize its release, or where the information is required by law to be provided to others. CVLAS/PAI has my permission to disclose my name and information about my case to legal aid support centers and others to get help with my case. CVLAS/PAI also has my permission to disclose my name and information about my case to legal aid funding sources.
7. CVLAS or PAI will not charge me for its services nor for its out-of-pocket expenses for such things as mail, courier delivery, transportation, telephone calls, copying, or fees for

legal research. However, I understand I am responsible for court costs, fees for service of process and for other costs, such as fees to subpoena documents or witnesses, and fees to obtain expert witnesses and court reporters. CVLAS/PAI will inform me in advance, as best as it can, of what expenses can be expected for which I would be responsible.

If there is a choice as to whether or not to incur such an expense, CVLAS/PAI will inform me in advance of what is involved so that I can make the choice.

8. I understand that CVLAS/PAI may advance money for such fees and/or costs, provided that I have signed an agreement to repay the advanced funds to CVLAS/PAI. I understand that I remain obligated to repay these amounts.
9. I can tell CVLAS/PAI to stop representing me in this matter whenever I want. If I discharge CVLAS/PAI, such discharge will not affect CVLAS' or PAI's rights to recover all costs and expenses it has advanced for me.
10. I agree to cooperate with CVLAS/PAI in the handling of my case, including being on time for all appointments and court dates. I agree to honestly and completely provide a information requested by CVLAS/PAI.
11. I understand that CVLAS has a Grievance Procedure. If I have a complaint, I can request a copy of the procedure. I understand that the first step is to make my complaint in writing to the executive director, Stephen Dickinson. If the complaint concerns the executive director, I can write to the Chair of the Grievance Committee, in care of Central Virginia Legal Aid Society, Inc.
12. I have read this agreement, or it has been read to me, and I understand it and all information I have provided in support of my application for legal services is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge.
13. I have received a copy of this agreement.

Date Client Name

14. I hereby certify that I am a U.S. Citizen.

Date Client Name

OR

15. I hereby certify that I am not a U.S. Citizen and that I have provided proof of my alien eligibility status to CVLAS.

Date Client Name

Accepted for Central Virginia Legal Aid Society, Inc. by Pro Bono Attorney

Date Attorney Name

Addendum for Protected Identifying Info:

ADDENDUM FOR PROTECTED IDENTIFYING INFORMATION—

CONFIDENTIAL

Commonwealth of Virginia

Case No.

In the Circuit Court of the [] City [] County of

V.

This addendum is filed with and incorporated by reference in the document(s) indicated below, from which the protected identifying information contained herein has been removed by the attorney or party whose signature appears below. This addendum shall be used to distribute such information only as required by law, and may be made available only to the parties, to their attorneys, and to other person(s) as the court may allow.

☒ Complaint [] Petition [] Motion [] Order ☒ Decree ☒ Other Pleading: Affidavit

[] Agreement(s) of the Parties [] Transcripts [] Other:

PARTY NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE)	PARTY NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE)
ADDRESS	ADDRESS
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	DATE OF BIRTH

NAME OF ASSET, LIABILITY, ACCOUNT, CREDIT CARD	IDENTIFYING ACCOUNT NO.

NAME OF ASSET, LIABILITY, ACCOUNT, CREDIT CARD	IDENTIFYING ACCOUNT NO.

CHILD NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE)	SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	DATE OF BIRTH
CHILD NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE)	SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	DATE OF BIRTH

Attach additional sheet(s) for other information, as needed.

DATE [] PARTY [] ATTORNEY

PRINT NAME ADDRESS/TELEPHONE NUMBER OF SUBSCRIBER

Cover Sheet for Filing Civil Actions:

Clear All Data		
COVER SHEET FOR FILING CIVIL ACTIONS		
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA	Case No. _____ (CLERK'S OFFICE USE ONLY)	
Circuit Court		
v./In re: _____		
PLAINTIFF(S)	DEFENDANT(S)	
I, the undersigned ☐ plaintiff ☐ defendant ☒ attorney for ☒ plaintiff ☐ defendant hereby notify the Clerk of Court that I am filing the following civil action. (Please indicate by checking box that most closely identifies the claim being asserted or relief sought.)		
GENERAL CIVIL Subsequent Actions ☐ Claim Impeding Third Party Defendant ☐ Monetary Damages ☐ No Monetary Damages ☐ Counterclaim ☐ Monetary Damages ☐ No Monetary Damages ☐ Cross Claim ☐ Interpleader ☐ Reinstatement (other than divorce or driving privileges) ☐ Removal of Case to Federal Court Business & Contract ☐ Attachment ☐ Confessed Judgment ☐ Contract Action ☐ Contract Specific Performance ☐ Detinue ☐ Garnishment Property ☐ Annexation ☐ Condemnation ☐ Ejectment ☐ Encumber/Sell Real Estate ☐ Enforce Vendor's Lien ☐ Escheatment ☐ Establish Boundaries ☐ Landlord/Tenant ☐ Unlawful Detainer ☐ Mechanics Lien ☐ Partition ☐ Quiet Title ☐ Termination of Mineral Rights Tort ☐ Asbestos Litigation ☐ Compromise Settlement ☐ Intentional Tort ☐ Medical Malpractice ☐ Motor Vehicle Tort ☐ Product Liability ☐ Wrongful Death ☐ Other General Tort Liability	ADMINISTRATIVE LAW ☐ Appeal/Judicial Review of Decision of (select one) ☐ ABC Board ☐ Board of Zoning ☐ Compensation Board ☐ DMV License Suspension ☐ Employee Grievance Decision ☐ Employment Commission ☐ Local Government ☐ Marine Resources Commission ☐ School Board ☐ Voter Registration ☐ Other Administrative Appeal DOMESTIC/FAMILY ☐ Adoption ☐ Adoption - Foreign ☐ Adult Protection ☐ Annulment ☐ Annulment - Counterclaim/Responsive Pleading ☐ Child Abuse and Neglect - Unfounded ☐ Complaint ☐ Civil Contempt ☒ Divorce (select one) ☐ Complaint - Contested* ☒ Complaint - Uncontested* ☐ Counterclaim/Responsive Pleading ☐ Reinstatement - Custody/Visitation/Support/Equitable Distribution ☐ Separate Maintenance ☐ Separate Maintenance Counterclaim WRITS ☐ Certiorari ☐ Habeas Corpus ☐ Mandamus ☐ Prohibition ☐ Quo Warranto	PROBATE/WILLS AND TRUSTS ☐ Accounting ☐ Aid and Guidance ☐ Appointment (select one) ☐ Guardian/Conservator ☐ Standby Guardian/Conservator ☐ Custodian/Successor Custodian (UTMA) ☐ Trust (select one) ☐ Impress/Declare/Create ☐ Reformation ☐ Will (select one) ☐ Construe ☐ Contested MISCELLANEOUS ☐ Amend Birth/Death Certificate ☐ Appointment (select one) ☐ Church Trustee ☐ Conservator of Peace ☐ Marriage Celebrant ☐ Approval of Transfer of Structured Settlement ☐ Bond Forfeiture Appeal ☐ Declaratory Judgment ☐ Declare Death ☐ Driving Privileges (select one) ☐ Reinstatement pursuant to § 46.2-427 ☐ Restoration - Habitual Offender or 3 rd Offense ☐ Expungement ☐ Firearms Rights - Restoration ☐ Forfeiture of Property or Money ☐ Freedom of Information ☐ Injunction ☐ Interdiction ☐ Interrogatory ☐ Judgment Lien-Bill to Enforce ☐ Law Enforcement/Public Official Petition ☐ Name Change ☐ Referendum Elections ☐ Sever Order ☐ Taxes (select one) ☐ Correct Erroneous State/Local ☐ Delinquent ☐ Vehicle Confiscation ☐ Voting Rights - Restoration ☐ Other (please specify) _____
☐ Damages in the amount of \$ _____ are claimed. DATE _____ PRINT NAME _____ ADDRESS/TELEPHONE NUMBER OF SIGNATOR _____ EMAIL ADDRESS OF SIGNATOR (OPTIONAL) _____		
FORM CC-1416 (MASTER) PAGE ONE 02/23		

*"Contested" divorce means any of the following matters are in dispute: grounds of divorce, spousal support and maintenance, child custody and/or visitation, child support, property distribution or debt allocation. An "Uncontested" divorce is filed on no fault grounds and none of the above issues are in dispute.

NFD Case Notes Template:

No-Fault Divorce Case Notes -

- Case details:
 - Client -
 - Name change?
 - Children?
 - Mailing address -
 - Email -
 - Phone number (Mobile) -
 - DOB -
 - Defendant -
 - Mailing address -
 - DOB -
 - Important dates:
 - Date of marriage -
 - Date of separation -
 - Last lived together in -
 - Filing venue - |
- Documents needed (# total):
 - CVLAS Retainer Agreement - (date completed)
 - Cover letter for defendant - (date completed)
 - Acceptance/waiver of service/process - (date completed)
 - Complaint for uncontested... - (date completed)
 - Court Cover Letter - (date completed)
 - Cover letter for Civil Filings - (date completed)
 - Petition for... without fees - (date completed)
 - Addendum for protected info - (date completed)
 - Affidavit of plaintiff support of divorce - (date completed)
 - Final decree of divorce - (date completed)
 - Vital stats form (must complete hard copy by hand in black ink)