

# The Other Party and I Do Not Agree: What Comes Next?

- Domestic Relations cases most often raise some or all of the following major issues:
  - spousal support
  - distribution of property
  - distribution of debt
  - child support
  - allocation of parental responsibilities
  - allocation of parenting time
- Absent an agreement, each party will present their case to the judge and ask the judge to decide the matters they cannot decide amongst themselves. This process is called litigation.
- Litigation is a long and complex process that involves pleadings, discovery, and hearings. Because there are many substantive and procedural rules that must be followed, you are encouraged to speak to an attorney.
- There are many resources available in Cook County that may help you through this process:
  - Litigants can contact CARPLS at (312) 738-9200 or at their Help Desk located in room CL-16 at the Daley Center.
  - Veterans, active military personnel, their spouses, and their qualified dependents can receive legal advice from attorneys via the Illinois Armed Forces Legal Aid Network at (855) 452-3526.
  - Litigants can review legal aid agencies available in their area online at [www.illinoislegalaid.org/get-legal-help](http://www.illinoislegalaid.org/get-legal-help).
  - Litigants can consult [www.illinoislegalaid.org](http://www.illinoislegalaid.org) for legal information and guidance in drafting pleadings.
  - Litigants can consult <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/Forms/approved/Circuit.asp> for information, forms, and templates that are designed to help clarify what needs to be included in common pleadings.
  - Litigants can contact the Chicago Bar Association at (312) 554-2055 for a referral to a private attorney.

**DISCLAIMER:** This guide serves as a court-process navigation tool. It does not contain legal advice. Litigants are encouraged to consult an attorney if possible and the Illinois Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act (IMDMA) at 750 ILCS 5/ *et seq.* for more information. Note that the IMDMA and all accompanying statutes have been interpreted and explained by the Illinois Appellate Court and the Supreme Court of Illinois; and their decisions are equally as binding on the trial court as the statute itself. To research and review those cases via a legal research database commonly used by judges and attorneys, please visit any of the Circuit Court of Cook County's Law Libraries (e.g. 29<sup>th</sup> floor of the Daley Center).