

Washington County Domestic Relations Section

Power of Attorney Guidelines

Parties to support actions through the Washington County Court of Common Pleas Domestic Relations Section have the right to designate another person to act for them as their Power of Attorney if necessary.

Circumstances which necessitate designation of a Power of Attorney may be, but are not limited to, the following:

- party is living or working out of state or is presently deployed military
- party has a disability or medical condition which prevents full, meaningful participation in case-related matters, or
- party has a cognitive impairment or learning disability which prevents full, meaningful participation in case-related matters.

Language barriers are not a disability, and are not considered a sufficient reason to designate a Power of Attorney; Domestic Relations currently provides telephone interpreter services through the PA Bureau of Child Support Enforcement.

Should it be necessary for a party to a support case to designate another person as Power of Attorney, a copy of the Power of Attorney must be docketed with the Domestic Relations Section prior to the person acting under the Power of Attorney performing any function in the case.

The Power of Attorney must include the following language: "**under this Power of Attorney, [name of designated person] has the authority to act for me with regard to Domestic Relations matters generally.**"

Should it be necessary for a party to designate a Power of Attorney to act on their behalf, the person acting under the Power of Attorney shall be permitted to drop off paperwork, provide requested and required document(s), file petitions, sign documents and obtain information. The person acting under the Power of Attorney shall not be permitted to offer testimony on behalf of or instead of the party.

The designated Power of Attorney shall only act on the party's behalf when the party is not present. If a party is present, the designated Power of Attorney will not be permitted to act on the party's behalf or in unison with the party.

Should the appearance of a party be required by the Court at a conference or hearing, the person acting under the Power of Attorney shall not be permitted to appear in the party's stead. If the party to the action is unable to appear, he or she must seek permission from the Court through Motion's Court to be excused from the conference or hearing, or to testify by telephone or other electronic means, as prescribed by the order.