

**LAW OFFICES OF JOSEPH H NIVIN, ESQ.
RULES FOR CONTESTED CUSTODY CASES**

- 1. At the outset of representation, draft an e-mail or letter detailing the history of your relationship with the other party, and provide it to the attorney. Keep a journal throughout the proceeding, and provide it to the attorney prior to preparation for the custody trial.**
- 2. During the litigation, always treat the other party and his or her family as you would expect yourself to be treated. There is no expectation that you be a “doormat.” Rather, it is expected that you avoid taking actions that serve no purpose except to harass or annoy your ex.**
- 3. Make police reports to document any violations of court orders, and provide those reports to the attorney.**

Avoid making any major changes during the proceeding, such as moving your residence, starting a new relationship, etc. If you must make these changes, then speak with the attorney first about how to minimize the impact upon the litigation.

- 1. Do not post on social media during the litigation. Even if you think that your privacy settings are high, you are guaranteed to have mutual friends with your ex.**
 - 2. It is appropriate to use text messages and e-mails to communicate with your ex. However, always pretend that the judge is CC'd.**
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- 1. Do not make allegations of abuse or neglect that you cannot prove.**
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- 1. Do not use your child(ren) as pawn(s). It is important to show that you are encouraging the relationship between your ex and**

your child(ren) in a manner that is consistent with your child(ren)'s safety.

- 1. Never speak negatively to the child(ren) about your ex or his or her family. If you are speaking negatively about your ex or his or her family while you are in the same home as the child(ren), that is the same thing as doing so directly to the child(ren).**
- 1. Do everything possible to reduce the drama in your relationship with your significant other during the litigation. Every bump along the road will be blown out of proportion when you go to court. If you leave the fighting to the attorneys, then you will reduce the financial and emotional toll of the litigation.**