

2019 Shared Parenting Report Card

National Parents Organization conducted a review of the child custody laws of all 50 states and graded them on the degree to which these laws promote shared parenting, the arrangement that research shows is in children's best interest after divorce or separation. Washington received a 'C' for its child custody statutes. (Visit sharedparenting.org.)



State Details

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
Washington WASH. REV. CODE § 26.09.194 WASH. REV. CODE § 26.09.187(3)	C	<p>Washington statutes allow each parent to submit a temporary parenting plan with a motion that it be incorporated into temporary orders. This plan will include all aspects of decision-making authority as well as residential arrangements for the child. This, in effect, permits joint legal custody and shared physical custody during temporary orders. WASH. REV. CODE § 26.09.194</p> <p>Washington statutes recognize three methods a court may use to settle decision-making authority in permanent parenting plans: allocation of decision-making authority; sole decision-making authority; and mutual decision-making authority. WASH. REV. CODE § 26.09.194</p> <p>Washington statutes contain language encouraging shared parenting. WASH. REV. CODE § 26.09.187(3)</p>	<p>Washington has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders.</p>

How Can Washington Improve?

Recommendation # 1 - Implement Presumptive Shared Parenting

NPO recommends Washington pass the currently proposed legislation in HB1050, HB1274 or SB6023. This legislation is consistent with social science research and national polls in support of shared parenting.

How Does Washington Compare to Other States?

Summary: State Grades	
Grade	2019
A	2
B	7
C	26
D	14
F	2
Average	C-

Recommendation # 2- Tracking Parenting Time Orders

NPO strongly recommends that the Washington legislature require each county court that handles child custody cases to maintain records of the division of parenting time, tracked by overnights or equivalent, for all cases of divorce involving minor children and for paternity cases, and to compile and publish these statistics annually, separating marital from non-marital cases and agreed judgments from court-imposed judgments.

About NPO

National Parents Organization seeks to promote children's wellbeing by making equal shared parenting the norm when parents are living apart. This is the separated parenting arrangement that research shows is typically in children's best interest.

Join National Parents Organization to help achieve its goals.

For more information, visit nationalparentsorganization.org

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