## A Look at Divorce Statistics in Long Island and NY State

In August, the U.S. Census Bureau released a detailed **report[H1]** on marital events from the 2009 American Community Survey (ACS). While the national divorce rate per thousand is 9.2 for men, and 9.7 for women, New York fell well below that average with a rate of 6.6 for men and 7.3 for women.

Equally intriguing are 2009 vital statistics from New York counties. Outside of New York, the three leading counties for marriage dissolution were Suffolk, Nassau, and Westchester counties.

By adding a *no-fault* divorce ground in October of last year, New York eliminated the need for one spouse to accept blame for a marriage breakdown. Our family law firm now files cases weekly on the no-fault ground.

But in 2009, prior to the new legislation, the top three grounds for divorce in just under 50,000 divorces in New York State—and in Nassau, Suffolk, and Queens counties—included the following:

- Abandonment: Over 34,000 divorces claimed abandonment as cause for divorce
- Cruelty: Fewer than 10,000 cases named cruelty as proof of marital breakdown
- Separation after agreement: Fewer than 3,500 couples divorced after separating by agreement

When available, 2010 divorce statistics will likely reveal the impact of the *no-fault* ground as well as upward or downward trends fed by economic uncertainty. From our experience? Regardless of statistics, every divorce and child custody battle is unique. No matter the grounds for your divorce, hire strong, dedicated legal counsel to protect your financial and parental rights.

[H1]http://www.census.gov/prod/2011pubs/acs-13.pdf

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