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Common Divorce Vocabulary- 8 Terms to Know

Lawyers have their own language. It's a mishmash of legal jargon, Latin phrases, arcane vocabulary and obscure words to make us sound smart. Here are just a few of the common terms.



Final Judgment of Divorce, or ***Final Judgment*** or ***Decree of Divorce*** or ***Final Order of Divorce***

This is the technical divorce. This is the document that once signed by the Judge and filed by the lawyer, you and your spouse are divorced. Every single case will have this document.

Property Settlement Agreement, PSA, ***Marital Dissolution Agreement***, MDA, ***Final Separation Agreement***, etc.

These are your “divorce papers.” This recounts your rights, obligations, and the terms of your divorce. If your divorce ended via an Agreement you will have one of these.

Opinion of the Court.

These are your “divorce papers” if the Judge decided your case. If you did not agree, but went to Court, the Judge ruled you will have, most likely an Opinion and Final Judgment.

Qualified Domestic Relations Order

This is how divisible retirement accounts are divided and apportioned to each party without tax consequences. Commonly referred to as a QDRO (pronounced quah-drow). Depending on what you do with the QDRO transfer ultimately determines if there are taxes, what amount and penalties, if any.

No Fault Divorce.

It's not technically “No Fault” in Mississippi, but rather Irreconcilable Differences or (ID). This requires you to agree to the divorce and all the terms, which include custody, support, alimony and division of real and personal. This would be detailed in the Property Settlement Agreement.

Fault Divorce.

A divorce granted on fault grounds; adultery, cruelty, drunkenness, drug use, etc.

Real Property.

[The house\(s\) and land.](#)

Personal Property.

The stuff; cars, couches, TVs and spoons.

Child Custody

A determination of both legal and physical child custody. Sometimes referred to as primary or joint
paramount. Each possibly meaning something different and then Visitation thrown in for good n

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Knowledge is Power, the more you know...*

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