

Mesa, Arizona Child Custody Cases: Important Terms and Definitions

By: Timothy Durkin, Attorney at Law
JacksonWhite, P.C.

Before proceeding with a [child custody case in Mesa, AZ](#), or any other city in the Phoenix metro area, a parent should be familiar with the vocabulary used in such proceedings. In Arizona there are five key terms, each with its own unique interpretations. The following child custody terms and definitions found in Statute: 25-402, can help any person seeking child custody to understand their rights:

1. Joint Custody: Joint Custody can refer to Joint Legal Custody, Joint Physical Custody, or it can also refer to both.
2. Joint Legal Custody: Joint Legal Custody means both parents of the child are equal in the eyes of the law, without any parent being superior to each other when it comes to the child. Joint Legal Custody may be changed by the decision of the court or by the parents in their final judgments.
3. Joint Physical Custody: Joint Physical Custody means the physical residence of the child is between both of the parents, and allows an amount of time and contact with each parent that is equal, or as close to equal as possible.
4. Parenting time: A parent awarded parenting time has the right to live with the child physically. The parent also has the rights and responsibilities of the child during their time together, including major decisions about the child's care.
5. Sole Custody: Sole Custody awards full legal custody of the child to one person or parent, and possibly Sole Physical custody as well.

Knowing what these terms mean is important for any parent seeking custody of their child, no matter what kind.



Timothy Durkin joined JacksonWhite in 2010, and quickly established himself as a highly effective family law attorney with the perfect balance of assertiveness and compassion. Tim is often complimented for his dedication to professional service, as he works closely with his clients to keep them informed, listen to their needs and involve them in the decision making process.

Tim handles all types of family law, including divorces, paternity actions, child custody, child support, relocation and jurisdiction issues, adoptions, termination of parental rights and parental severance actions, title 8 guardianships, spousal maintenance cases, division of marital property and debts, pre-nuptial agreements, post decree modifications and enforcement of custody and divorce orders, mediation services, grandparent visitation cases, and domestic violence issues. He is licensed to practice law in all Arizona State Courts, as well as the United States District Court, District of Arizona, and serves clients throughout the Phoenix metro area. To read more about what former clients are saying about hiring Tim, or to set up a free consultation, please visit www.jacksonwhitelaw.com/arizona-family-law.

Founded in 1983, JacksonWhite P.C. offers a full -range of services to assist individuals, families and businesses with their legal needs. Since its inception, the Mesa firm has grown steadily to include 22 highly experienced attorneys and over 40 paralegals, legal assistants and staff. At this size, the firm is large enough to offer the [efficiency and technical expertise of larger firms](#), yet small enough to provide clients with individualized, personalized attention. JacksonWhite has multiple offices around the state of Arizona including a Mesa, Casa Grande and Peoria locations. For more information on a specific attorney or area of practice, please visit www.jacksonwhitelaw.com, or www.jacksonwhitelaw.com/arizona-family-law.