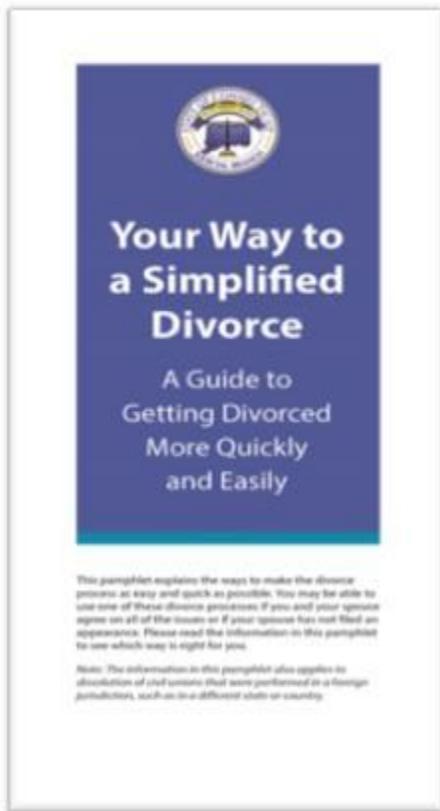


New Law Effective Oct. 1 Expected to Further Streamline Divorce Process



A new law effective Oct. 1 will simplify and shorten the court process for eligible individuals filing for divorce.

Before Oct. 1, an individual filing for divorce had to unnecessarily wait for the 90-day statutory waiting period to expire if his or her spouse did not appear in court within 30 days following the return date of the case. Under the new law, the person filing for the divorce can now ask the court to waive the 90-day period, provided *specific criteria are met. If the judge agrees that all of the criteria are met, then he or she may

wave the waiting period and grant the divorce, in some cases, without a hearing.

“The Judicial Branch has been working over the past several years to simplify the divorce process so that people can move on with their lives,” Chief Court Administrator Patrick L. Carroll III said. “This new law is another way to do that.”

The Connecticut Judicial Branch submitted the proposal this past legislative session, and the General Assembly approved it, with the Oct. 1 effective date. The new law adds to the various options the Judicial Branch already offers individuals who may be eligible for non-adversarial divorce.

**Upon determining that the defendant was properly served, that there are no children involved, that there are no restraining orders between the parties, that the plaintiff is not seeking alimony or spousal support, and that there is no joint property or debt, the judge may waive the waiting period and grant the dissolution or separation without a hearing. The court must call the plaintiff in for a hearing if there is a question regarding the conditions.*