

Common Course Outline
PALG 206
Domestic Relations for Paralegals
3 Semester Hours

The Community College of Baltimore County

Description

PALG 206 – 3 credits - Domestic Relations for Paralegals introduces students to Maryland's domestic law. Topics covered in this course include marriage and divorce, as well as the related issues of child support, custody and alimony. Students gain an understanding of Maryland's laws related to guardianship, adoption, paternity, and domestic violence. Students develop first-hand experience preparing family court pleadings and motions, among other related documents.

Prerequisite: PALG 103

Overall Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. discuss the role of a paralegal in a domestic practice;
2. distinguish between void, voidable and valid marriages;
3. contrast the grounds for annulment, legal and religious;
4. distinguish between limited and absolute divorce;
5. examine the concept of corroboration and the defenses of reconciliation, condonation, and recrimination;
6. analyze the domestic violence petition process;
7. apply the best interests of the child standard in custody and visitation, using case law, statutory law and the litigation process in custody litigation;
8. utilize the Maryland Child Support Guidelines to calculate support using the sole and shared physical custody worksheets;
9. discuss the support of adult dependent children;
10. compare methods of enforcement for non-support;
11. analyze factors for indefinite and rehabilitative alimony;
12. examine the issue of marital property and the court's role in the division of such property;
13. contrast the elements of a valid separation agreement and a valid pre-nuptial agreement;
14. analyze paternity statutes and related litigation;
15. assess the factors involved in the adjudication of Child in Need of Assistance (CINA) cases; and
16. examine the best interests of the child standard in adoptions.

Major Topics

- I. Marriage
 - A. Valid
 - B. Void
 - C. Voidable
- II. Divorce
 - A. Absolute
 - B. Limited
- III. Defenses to Actions for Divorce
- IV. Domestic Violence Statutes
- V. Custody
 - A. Visitation
 - 1. Parent
 - 2. Grandparent
 - B. Joint
 - C. Individual
 - D. Best Interest of the Child Standard
- VI. Maryland Child Support Guidelines
 - A. Civil Non-support
 - B. Criminal Non-support
- VII. Alimony
- VIII. Marital Property
- IX. Separation Agreements
 - A. Pre-Nuptial Agreements
 - B. Post-Nuptial Agreements
- X. Paternity
- XI. Child in Need of Assistance (CINA)
- XII. Adoption

Course Requirements

Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member and specific assignments and procedures for evaluating student performance will be described in the individual class syllabus, but will include the following:

Grading/exams: A minimum of two exams: a mid-term and a final (the final does not have to be cumulative) OR two major written projects combining objective and analytical/critical thinking components such as researching and analyzing a fictional client's case and a preparing a written memorandum detailing the law on point and the student's application and analysis of the law to the client's situation; or preparation of a child support worksheet based upon a fictional scenario.

Writing: A minimum of two written assignments to allow for both objective and analytical review of primary legal sources, such as case briefs or a written comparison/analysis of cases and/or statutes.

Other Course Information

This course is a Paralegal Studies elective. It is taught in the classroom using a variety of instructional techniques, which are intended to meet the varied learning styles of our diverse population.