

**ON A SEPARATE PIECE OF PAPER, HAND-WRITE OR TYPE,
YOUR DECLARATION FOR REVIEW BY THE COURT**

SAMPLE CUSTODY/VISITATION DECLARATION

[MOTHER or FATHER] and I have [NUMBER] of minor children together: [NAME/AGES]. I request the court enter the following orders: [STATE THE SPECIFIC ORDERS YOU WANT THE COURT TO ENTER]

If you have a custody request, here are some options you can ask for:

JOINT LEGAL CUSTODY: Both parents share in the right and responsibility to make decisions for their children regarding a child's welfare, education (where to go to school), health (who a child's pediatrician is).

SOLE LEGAL CUSTODY: One parent has the right and responsibility for making decisions for the children regarding a child's welfare, education (where to go to school), health (who a child's pediatrician is).

JOINT PHYSICAL CUSTODY: Children spend a significant amount of time with each parent. This does not mean custodial time must be equally shared by the parents.

SOLE PHYSICAL CUSTODY: Children reside primarily with one parent, and may or not may not have visitation with the other parent.

[Once you decide which type of custody you want, explain to the court why that type of custody is in the child's best interests. If it's a change from an existing order, explain to the court why a change is necessary. Keep it short and to the point. For instance, "Mother and I get along very well. We have always been able to make joint decisions regarding our child. A joint custody order is best under this situation."]

[If you want to propose a parenting plan, describe to the court what schedule you would like for yourself and for the other parent. *DO NOT STATE THAT YOU WANT 50/50.* Describe a schedule, such as every other Friday through Monday morning, etc.

[Once you determine the best schedule, explain why it is in the child's best interests. If it's a change from an existing order, explain to the court why a change is necessary.]

If you are seeking the assistance of the Family Law Facilitator's office/Self Help Center, you must also provide the following:

- _____ copy of most recent orders (If you do not have a copy, you may obtain one from the clerk's office at 3055 Cleveland Ave., Santa Rosa, CA)
- _____ stamped envelope addressed to other party or other party's attorney of record, if any