

OCTOBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

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THE PANDEMIC AND DIVORCE- AN INCREASE IN DIVORCE FILINGS

FIRM ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. AWARDS:

Pozzuolo Rodden, P.C. is pleased to announce that Martindale-Hubbell, the information service company to the legal profession since 1868, announced that Joseph R. Pozzuolo's 2020 Peer Review Rating for ethical standards and professional ability is excellent.

Pozzuolo Rodden, P.C. is pleased to announce that The New York Times and The American Lawyer Roster Announced Joseph R. Pozzuolo's selection for the Lawyers of Distinction Selection Committee for Fall 2020.

Pozzuolo Rodden, P.C. is pleased to announce that The American Registry have selected Joseph R. Pozzuolo as an America's Most Honored Lawyer.

2. BLOGS:

1. The following are a few of the business, tax, employment, estate planning and business litigation blogs posted on our main website www.pozzuolo.com during the past month:

- a. Administration Of An Estate Cannot Compel An Alleged Heir To Take A DNA Paternity Test;
- b. Keeping Probate Costs Down, and,
- c. Why Should A Will Go Through Probate.

Please visit our website www.pozzuolo.com for more information on these and other relevant business, tax, estate, business litigation and employment topics.

2. The following are a few of the family law blogs posted on our family law website www.pozzuolofamilylaw.com during the past month:

- a. Post-Nuptial Agreement Ruled Invalid On Ground Of Duress And Fraud In The Inducement;
- b. What Are Living Together Agreements; and,
- c. Challenging A Pre-Nuptial Agreement.

Please visit our website www.pozzuolofamilylaw.com for more information on these and other relevant family law topics.

THE PANDEMIC AND DIVORCE – AN INCREASE IN DIVORCE FILINGS

In March 2020, many parts of the country went into lockdown, disrupting the lives of people. The complete lockdown period, which lasted in some cases more than 3 months, placed great strain on familial and other close relationships. Suddenly, spouses who worked outside the home or shared different family responsibilities were locked down together 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with no end in sight. Socializing outside of the marital relationship was eliminated and family members spent endless days and nights together without any separate time. Relationships that were already strained became unbearable and painful. Tensions and financial pressures rose resulting in a powder keg of emotion, confusion and concern for future stability. The threat of infection and potentially death from COVID-19 and its effect on families, friends and co-workers only increased hostilities. The unfortunate result is a skyrocketing divorce rate.

It is well documented that financial and economic uncertainties are part of the perfect storm contributing to anxiety, tension, mental health issues, drug use, alcoholism, marital discord and divorce. Spouses lost jobs, seniority, retirement, and financial security. Suddenly, there is no money to pay the mortgage, rent, utilities, food, tuition, and car payments. Decisions are made to cash in 401(k) accounts or other savings accounts and retirement funds. There is barely enough money to feed the family. The result is one spouse blames the other for the problems and divorce becomes the path and solution. It is easy to see why the United States divorce rate is on the rise during the COVID-19 pandemic. Recent studies have observed a 34% increase in divorce since the beginning of COVID-19 lockdowns.

During the COVID-19 “new normal”, some spouses are unable to communicate and have no one to talk through problems separate from his/her spouse. Your best friend at work, who you share your most intimate secrets and exchange advice, is now no longer part of your day to day life. Divorce seems like the right answer although the “new normal” may be clouding your judgment.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, there are numerous considerations for spouses to consider in contemplating divorce such as: who keeps the house; what happens to the debts accumulated; can and should we legally separate; who and how we support the children; where do the children live; should we continue to quarantine; should the children return to in-person school or attend virtually; and, most importantly, how can we divorce and maintain a similar standard of living pre-COVID-19.

If any of these situations apply to you, a family member or a friend, you or he/she should consult with an experienced family law attorney to discuss options available in the short term and for the future. These are difficult paths to navigate during normal times and you will need an experienced practitioner to review your individual situation and describe how the law can protect you and your children during this “new normal” period.

When combined all of the above-discussed issues make divorce even more difficult now than pre-COVID-19. However, there are certain steps you can take to make the divorce process more manageable during the “new normal”. First and foremost, attempt to talk to and work with your spouse on creating a plan for moving forward - this will make the entire process quicker, cheaper and less stressful in the long run. Second, be sure to gather all relevant financial documents for the last 3 years regarding your income, debts, accounts and assets. These steps will help you to be prepared when the time comes for you to actually file for divorce. We are here to help you in your time of need.

Our experienced family law attorneys are available now to speak with you by telephone and/or Zoom to discuss the specifics of your individual situation and help you determine how to proceed with your divorce, support and custody matters.

This newsletter is courtesy of Pozzuolo Rodden, P.C.

To subscribe, unsubscribe, or for any questions, please contact us at INFO@POZZUOLO.COM.