

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION**

**GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER: 2022 D 5 Amended**

**SUBJECT: Prove-Up Guidelines**

**EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:**

1. This order applies to and clarifies 750 ILCS 5/405 and Circuit Court of Cook County Rule 13.5.
2. A “prove-up” is the final court date in an uncontested or default dissolution of marriage proceeding to finalize a divorce. This General Administrative Order provides a list of pleadings, proposed orders, and other documents that the judge presiding shall minimally require for a prove-up hearing. The Court retains jurisdiction to require the submission of other information or documents in its discretion.
3. **AGREED PROVE-UPS (UNCONTESTED):** 750 ILCS 5/502(a) provides that agreements between parties shall be in writing before a prove-up hearing shall occur, except for good cause shown. Parties may proceed to have their uncontested final matters conducted as follows:
  - a. In order to proceed with a prove-up on all calendars, the parties shall schedule a prove-up date with the Clerk of the Circuit Court unless they have obtained a prove-up date by court order. A Certification Agreement must be filed to obtain a prove-up date from the Clerk of the Circuit Court. The Certification Agreement shall be e-filed, unless a party qualifies for an e-filing exemption. The proposed prove-up hearing date will appear on the online portal upon filing of the Certification Agreement.
  - b. The following documents, without limitation, shall be required to proceed to prove-up by agreement. All documents shall be sent to the Court five (5) court business days in advance of the scheduled prove-up. The required documents shall be scanned, saved, and sent as individual documents in PDF format in one (1) email. The email shall be sent to the courtroom email address of the assigned prove-up judge, and all counsel of record or self-represented parties shall be included. A list of contact information for all courtrooms may be found at the Circuit Court of Cook County’s Domestic Relations Division’s webpage, [cookcountycourt.org](http://cookcountycourt.org).
    - i. **Previously filed documents (these will have a file stamp on them):**
      1. Petition for Dissolution of Marriage/Civil Union;
      2. Notice of Motion and Certificate of Service;
      3. Affidavit as to Military Service;
      4. Certification Agreement;
      5. Affidavit of Service; and,
      6. **IF CASE INVOLVES MINOR CHILDREN:**
        - i. Court-approved parenting education completion certificate.

- ii. **Documents to prepare for prove-up hearing (these will NOT have a file stamp on them):**
  - 1. Completed Proposed Order on Prove-Up (28-day Order);
  - 2. Uniform Prove-Up Sheet;
  - 3. Court Reporter Information Sheet;
  - 4. Order for Free Transcript (if Petitioner has a pre-approved fee waiver or Petitioner may file a fee waiver);
  - 5. Proposed, signed Marital Settlement Agreement (if applicable);
  - 6. Proposed, signed Judgment of Dissolution of Marriage;
  - 7. **IF CASE INVOLVES MINOR CHILDREN:**
    - i. Proposed Uniform Order for Support with the Income Shares Calculation Sheet with Child Support Data Sheet attached; and,
    - ii. Proposed, signed Allocation of Parental Responsibilities and Parenting Plan Judgment.
- c. All documents listed in Paragraph 3(b)(i) may be accessed via Justice (previously known as Odyssey) or through the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County's office. All documents listed in Paragraph 3(b)(ii) may be found at either the State of Illinois Office of the Illinois Courts website, [www.illinoiscourts.gov](http://www.illinoiscourts.gov), or the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County website, [www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org](http://www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org). If the Court finds that the documents are an accurate representation of the dissolution of marriage proceedings and encapsulates and finalizes all outstanding issues between the parties, the Court may enter the documents listed in Paragraph 3(b)(ii) into the official court record.
- d. All email submissions concerning Agreed Prove-Ups (Uncontested) shall use the subject title: Agreed Prove-Up, the Case Number, and the Agreed Prove-Up Date.
  - i. **e.g. Agreed Prove-Up; Case No. 2020 D 1234; October 1, 2022.**
- 4. **DEFAULT PROVE-UPS:**
  - a. A default prove-up occurs when either a Respondent has been personally served and failed to file an Appearance or has been served by publication and failed to file an Appearance.
  - b. The judge will not conduct a default prove-up unless all proper means have been taken to notify the respondent of the lawsuit. 750 ILCS 5/405.
    - i. If the Respondent was served with a file-stamped Petition for Dissolution of Marriage or filed an Appearance, the Petitioner shall mail the Respondent the default Motion and Order for Default to the Respondent's last known address.
    - ii. If the Respondent was served via publication, then, within ten (10) days of the first publication, Petitioner shall mail a copy of the original publication notice to the Respondent's last known address. Petitioner shall submit a copy of their affidavit of diligent efforts to serve the Respondent with notice to the Court. Petitioner shall also submit a file-stamped copy of the law bulletin's first notice of publication to the Court.

- c. **Two (2) separate court dates are required to obtain a default prove-up:**
- i. First, the Petitioner shall schedule a hearing on a motion for default with the Clerk of the Circuit Court; and
  - ii. Second, if the Court enters an Order for Default, the movant shall schedule the default prove-up with the Clerk of the Circuit Court no sooner than thirty (30) days after the entry of the default order.
- d. The following documents, without limitation, shall be required to proceed to a default prove-up. The party scheduling the default prove-up must email the Court all required documents at least five (5) court business in advance of the scheduled prove-up. The required documents shall be scanned, saved, and sent as individual documents in PDF format in one (1) email. The email shall be sent to the courtroom email address of the assigned prove-up judge. A list of contact information for all courtrooms may be found at the Circuit Court of Cook County's Domestic Relations Division's webpage, [cookcountycourt.org](http://cookcountycourt.org). All counsel of record or self-represented parties shall be included on the email.
- i. **Default Judgment with Personal Service**
    - A. **Previously filed documents (these will have a file stamp on them):**
      1. Petition for Dissolution of Marriage/Civil Union;
      2. Notice of Motion and Certificate of Service;
      3. Entered Certification and Motion for Default/Order of Default;
      4. Notice of Prove-Up/Proof of Service of Default Order to Respondent;
      5. Affidavit as to Military Service;
      6. Affidavit of Service; and
      7. **IF CASE INVOLVES MINOR CHILDREN:**
        - a. Court-approved parenting education course completion certificate.
    - B. **Documents to prepare for prove-up hearing (these will NOT have a file stamp on them):**
      1. Completed Proposed Order on Prove-Up (28-day Order);
      2. Uniform Prove-Up Sheet;
      3. Court Reporter Information Sheet;
      4. Order for Free Transcript (if Petitioner has a pre-approved fee waiver or Petitioner may file a fee waiver);
      5. Proposed Judgment of Dissolution of Marriage; and
      6. **IF CASE INVOLVES MINOR CHILDREN:**
        - a. Proposed Uniform Order for Support with the Income Shares Calculation Sheet with Child Support Data Sheet attached; and,
        - b. Proposed Allocation of Parental Responsibilities and Parenting Plan Judgment.

ii. **Default Judgment with Service by Publication**

**A. Previously filed documents (these will have a file stamp on them):**

1. Petition for Dissolution of Marriage/Civil Union;
2. Certification and Motion for Default/Order of Default;
3. Notice of Prove-Up/Proof of Service of Default Order to Respondent;
4. Affidavit as to Military Service;
5. Certificate of Mailing;
6. File stamped copy of Law Bulletin First Notice of Publication; and
7. **IF CASE INVOLVES MINOR CHILDREN:**
  - a. Court-approved parenting education course completion certificate.

**B. Documents to prepare for prove-up hearing (these will NOT have a file stamp on them):**

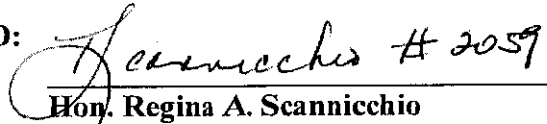
1. Completed Proposed Order on Prove-Up (28-day Order);
2. Uniform Prove-Up Sheet;
3. Court Reporter Information Sheet;
4. Order for Free Transcript (if Petitioner has a pre-approved fee waiver or Petitioner may file a fee waiver);
5. Due Diligence Worksheet (attached below);
6. Proposed Judgment of Dissolution of Marriage; and
7. **IF CASE INVOLVES MINOR CHILDREN:**
  - a. The Petitioner may be awarded sole decision-making and child support shall be reserved.

- e. All documents listed in Paragraph 4(d) may be accessed via Justice (previously known as Odyssey) or through the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County's office. All documents listed in Paragraph 4(d) may be found at either the State of Illinois Office of the Illinois Courts website, [www.illinoiscourts.gov](http://www.illinoiscourts.gov), or the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County website, [www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org](http://www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org). If the Court finds that the documents are an accurate representation of the dissolution of marriage proceedings and encapsulates and finalizes all outstanding issues between the parties, the Court may enter the documents listed in Paragraphs 4(d)(i)(B) and 4(d)(ii)(B) into the official court record.
- f. No default prove-up shall occur without a certified court reporter pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 46. The Petitioner shall notify the Court of the default prove-up five (5) court business days in advance of the scheduled prove-up, so that the Court may arrange for an Official Court Reporter to transcribe the proceedings. The Petitioner shall be responsible for the associated costs unless otherwise ordered by the Court.
- g. All email submissions concerning Default Prove-Ups shall use the title: "Default Prove-Up," Case Number, and Default Prove-Up Date.
  - a. e.g. "Default Prove-Up;" Case No. 2020 D 1234; October 1, 2022.

5. **Prove-Ups via Affidavit:** The Domestic Relations Division allows for the prove-up process to occur via affidavit in cases where Petitioner and Respondent are represented by counsel. For more information on prove-ups via affidavit, please refer to General Administrative Order 2025 D 2.

Dated the 23rd day of April 2025. This Order shall be spread upon the records of this Court and published. This Order amends Administrative Order 2022D5, which was entered on September 21, 2022.

ENTERED:

 # 2059

Hon. Regina A. Scannicchio  
Presiding Judge  
Domestic Relations Division

Judge Regina A. Scannicchio

APR 23 2025

Circuit Court-2059

THIS SPACE LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK

Case Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Actions Taken to Show Due Diligence**

As the person who filed this case (the "Petitioner"), you have an obligation to notify the other party (the "Respondent") so that he or she can participate. The process of formally notifying the other party that a lawsuit (i.e. petition for dissolution of marriage) has been filed is called "service."

The case cannot go forward without proper service. If you have not been able to have the Respondent served in person, you may, as a last resort, seek to publish notice of the case in a local newspaper by filing an Affidavit for Service by Publication with the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court.

This worksheet includes questions the judge may ask to decide if publication was appropriate. Use this worksheet to organize your notes on the steps you took to locate the Respondent.

Please note that if in the process of completing this worksheet you get a current address for the Respondent, you should have the Sheriff's Office serve them at that location.

**1. Have you given the Sheriff's Office (1) a copy of your summons, (2) a copy of the petition you filed to start your case, and (3) the Respondent's last known address?**

a. Yes, and it was still necessary to serve the Respondent by publication because

\_\_\_\_\_

b. No, because

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. Is there a history of domestic violence between you and the Respondent (circle all that are relevant)?**

a. Yes, and I do not feel safe contacting them.

b. Yes, and I do not think the Respondent will feel safe if I contact them.

c. No.

If you selected options A or B, complete the rest of this worksheet and whatever search attempts you can, but do not attempt to contact the Respondent directly.

**3. How long has it been since you last spoke to, texted, emailed or otherwise communicated with the Respondent?**

\_\_\_\_\_

Case Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Have you asked the Respondent's friends or family for the Respondent's contact information?**

a. Yes, and I still can't find them because

\_\_\_\_\_

b. No, because

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Have you contacted the Respondent's most recent employer to see if the Respondent still works there?**

a. Yes, and I still can't find them because

\_\_\_\_\_

b. No, because

\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Have you searched for the Respondent on the internet (i.e. Facebook, LinkedIn, Google, beenverified.com, whitepages.com, military database: <https://scra.dmdc.osd.mil/scra/#/home>)?**

a. Yes, and I still can't find them because

\_\_\_\_\_

b. No, because

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Do you know any other information about the Respondent that may help you find them?**

a. Yes, I know that the Respondent

\_\_\_\_\_ and I still can't find them  
because \_\_\_\_\_

b. No, because

\_\_\_\_\_