

LAW OFFICE OF  
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**THE DIVORCE IS OVER, NOW WHAT?**  
by Melaney G. Hodge, Esq.

So the separation agreement is signed and filed with the court, custody has been determined, the assets divided, and the court has granted your divorce. What happens next?

While the divorce may be over, you have continuing responsibilities. First and foremost, make sure to complete any requirements contained in your separation agreement or divorce judgment. For instance, if you are required to refinance your house within ninety days of the agreement, make sure you begin the process early. Many times, retirement accounts must be divided by a QDRO, which require further court filings. By fulfilling your responsibilities under the agreement or judgment, you can avoid a possible contempt in the future.

Next, you will want to change any beneficial designations listed on financial accounts, such as bank accounts, life insurance, retirement accounts, etc., provided that your agreement does not require you retain your ex-spouse as a beneficiary.

Finally, now that you are officially divorced, estate planning documents, such as a will, healthcare proxy, or power of attorney, should be amended to reflect your new marital status.

The divorce itself is stressful, but post-divorce can present its own unique challenges. Make sure to take some personal time after your divorce to de-stress and enter this new phase of your life as a new rejuvenated person!

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