

POSTDIVORCE CHECKLIST

Banking, Credit Union Accounts, and Investment Accounts

- Close any joint bank or credit union accounts. Make sure that any automatic debits, bill payments, or transfers are transferred to the correct new account.
- Close any safety deposit boxes that are jointly held. If needed, get one in your name.
- Open new checking and banking accounts in your name. Make sure your former spouse is not authorized signatory on new accounts.
- Close joint brokerage accounts and open new accounts in your individual name or trust. Contact your current financial institutions to facilitate the transfer of assets in kind, if required per the settlement.
- Review your investment portfolio to ensure your asset allocation is appropriate to meet your goals and matches your risk tolerance.
- Update any Transfer on Death (TOD) or beneficiary information on any investment accounts.

Cash Flow

- Review and update your budget. Seek the help of a CDFA[®] professional or financial advisor, if necessary.
- Create an emergency fund of three to six months of expenses.

Debt and Credit

- Close any remaining joint credit accounts. Make sure any outstanding joint credit card debt and joint loans are paid promptly and closed. Confirm that the account cannot be reopened.
- Make sure your former spouse is not an authorized user on any single name credit card accounts you maintain.
- Establish your personal credit history by opening a new credit card in your name.
- Settle all outstanding bills with your legal counsel and other divorce professionals.
- Obtain a credit report 30 days later to verify no joint accounts remain.

Estate Planning

- Update beneficiary designation on all retirement accounts. If you intend for your former spouse to remain as beneficiary, check to see if the custodian requires you to redesignate the beneficiary.
- Update any wills, trust, property, and healthcare powers of attorney. If necessary in your jurisdiction, revoke any pre-existing trusts.
- Establish trusts, if needed, and guardianships for minor children.
- Make sure assets are titled correctly, reflecting the update of any trusts or wills.
- Re-title any jointly owned real property or investments as Tenants in Common (TIC).

Insurance

- Obtain a copy of any life insurance policy required on the payor's life to ensure child and spousal payments. Ideally, the recipient should be the owner and beneficiary of the policy.
- If possible, the payor of child and spousal support should also have disability insurance.
- Review and update property and casualty insurance for auto, home, and any umbrella policies. Make sure you remove coverage for assets you have not retained.
- Revise health insurance coverage for spouse and dependents as indicated in the divorce decree. If getting COBRA coverage, the ex-spouse's employer must be notified within 60 days of the divorce decree.
- Consider obtaining long-term care (LTC) insurance.

Real Property

- Transfer ownership of deed and/or titles for any real estate, automobiles, boats, or anything else you are required to transfer and have recorded at the appropriate county or state office. Ensure you have proof of refinancing of any mortgages or liens before giving up title to an asset.
- Complete the process of refinancing or assuming any mortgages or secured debt.

Retirement Accounts

- Make sure any QDROs have been provided to and accepted by the plan administrator. If you are taking a cash distribution from a qualified plan, make sure it is done at this time to waive the early distribution penalty for individuals under age 59½.
- Contact your financial institution to retitle or transfer any IRA accounts per your settlement agreement.

Social Security

- Understand the social security benefits you may be entitled to from your former spouse.

Taxes

- Request cost basis data on any investment or other asset you receive in your settlement.
- Give your tax advisor a copy of your marital settlement agreement and divorce decree.
- Review your tax filing status and withholding allowances with your tax advisor. Determine if estimated quarterly payments will be necessary.
- Execute IRS form 8332 to transfer dependency exemptions to the non-custodial parent if necessary.

Miscellaneous

- Follow through with legal and financial documents if there is a name change. Include social security, driver's license, passport, etc.
- Obtain certified copy(s) of the divorce decree.
- Make sure utility bills are changed to your name.
- Keep records of any child-related expenses such as childcare, medical expenses, dental expenses, and extracurricular activities.
- Change passwords on emails, banking, and social media accounts.