

PROCEDURES: HOW TO SERVE COURT PAPERS – BY CERTIFIED MAIL

USE THIS PROCEDURE ONLY after you have filed your papers with the court.

STEP 1: GO TO THE POST OFFICE and tell the clerk you would like to mail the other party a letter as follows:

- Certified Mail, and
- Deliver to Addressee Only, and
- Restricted Delivery, and
- Return Receipt Requested, and
- Pay the postage

STEP 2: WAIT for green receipt to be returned with the other party's signature. When you get the green receipt, note the date the other party received and signed for the papers.

STEP 3: PAPERS FOR THE COURT

- **COMPLETE:** Original of "***Affidavit of Service by Certified Mail.***" Fill in *ALL* information requested on the form before proceeding. Be sure you fill in the date the other party received the papers. If you are unsure of the date, use the date you received the return receipt card. If you fail to list a date, the court may not process your papers and your case may be delayed.
- **ATTACH:** You must attach a copy of the green receipt to the Affidavit to prove how you served the other party. Make sure you copy both sides of the green receipt. **Do not throw the original green receipt away. Keep the original in your files.**
- **COPY:** Make yourself a copy of the "***Affidavit of Service by Certified Mail***" and attach the green receipt to it.

STEP 4: FILE PAPERS WITH THE COURT. File the Original "***Affidavit of Service by Certified Mail***" and attach a copy of the green receipt with the Clerk of the Court.

STEP 5: COUNT. Note the date the other party was served the papers and start counting the days the other party has to file a Response or Answer. (When counting the days, start counting with the day **after** the other party signed the green receipt.)

NOTICE: The Petitioner must serve the Respondent with a copy of the petition and all of the forms filed with the petition within 120 days after the petition has been filed with the Clerk of Court. If service is not complete, your case will be dismissed.

DO NOT BRING CHILDREN TO COURT.