

Parenting Coordination Email Rules

Emails are an effective method of communication whether you are using a regular email service or through a web site such as Our Family Wizard <http://ourfamilywizard.com/ofw/index.cfm> . Your emails should be courteous, to the point and direct. Remember you have no idea where that email will end up. Emails between parents and the PC may not be copied to the other parent as a matter of routine – but remember the work with a PC is not confidential and the file may eventually be obtained by the other parent and or their counsel and shown to the judge or another person in a fact finding role.

1. Ask a question. State the end result you are looking for, first. For example:
“Jane; I want to schedule an activity during your parenting time. Sally wants to play hockey and the practices are every Tuesday and Thursday from 5-7 pm. I will pay the cost. Please let me know by September 15 th if you agree.
2. Short, clear, full sentences work best. Avoid stream of consciousness.
3. If you are referencing a document, indicate what document and where your question is located – save your PC time and you money by attaching the document when possible.
4. When forwarding another individual’s email indicate why you are forwarding it and what result you are looking for – if it is only to provide information or background indicate that purpose.
5. If you go into the email of another to provide comment, indicate that fact in the body of your email.
6. Do not email essentially the same question repeatedly over several days. If you have sent an email and not received a response, reference the original email and request a response or call and request a response to the email citing the date and time.
7. Only in the most extraordinary situation should you email a PC daily.
8. If you expect privacy in your email (not copying or forwarding to the other party) state that fact. Be aware that there is no absolute privacy in any PC relationship; the file can always be requested by either party, counsel or the court.
9. Never use an old email for a new topic.

From: John
To: Mary
Sent: Tue, March 30, 2010 1:58:32 PM
Subject: RE: Tues.

I understand the plan for today – My email is for Tuesday’s and Wednesday’s moving forward.

From: Mary
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2010 12:44 PM
To: John
Subject: Re: Tues.

I am at school anyway, I can bring them home and pick up Lauren's science fair things and go to Bylands. Ellie is invited too and I would like to have her. It isn't as important as Lauren and Sophie getting their project done though.

From: John
To: Mary
Sent: Mon, March 29, 2010 3:21:32 PM
Subject: RE: Tues.

Mary,

Moving forward, I will pick up the girls on Tuesday and Wednesday. If Lauren and Ellie need to be somewhere, we can work it out.

John

From: Mary
Sent: Monday, March 29, 2010 2:56 PM
To: John
Subject: Tues.

John - Ellie stayed home today. She had a headache and earache this a.m and slept for a couple of hours. She is fine now again and isn't running a temp. I was thinking about taking her to school this afternoon but she was still tired and worn down.

I'm sorry that Tues. is the only night left that Lauren and Sophie can finish their Science project. Holly invited us over to meet her parents and for dinner.

The girls will be home today. We just have to get some things at the library and Lauren has a job after school helping with kids. Thanks

General Email Etiquette

1. Begin with a greeting and end with a closing.
2. Use correct spelling and grammar.
3. The subject line should never be left blank and should reflect the content.
4. If you do not check your email daily, indicate that fact by using the “vacation responder” (gmail) or out of office assistant (outlook) to alert sender that emails are not checked often.
5. State the purpose of the message in the first line and the desired response. If no response is necessary let the recipient know by indicating NNR (no need to reply)
6. Use bullet points whenever possible.
7. Adjectives are rarely necessary
8. Do not put the address into the box until the message is completed and you are certain you want to send it out.
9. When copying others let them know why – if only for their information, tell the recipient that to cut down on extraneous messages.
10. Using all caps is yelling, using all lower case is lazy, using incomplete sentences is confusing.
11. Don't use return receipt (RR) on every email – intrusive and most likely ignored.
12. Keep in mind you have no idea where your email will end up and who will read it.
13. When forwarding email delete other email addresses, comments and headers.
14. Choose your email address carefully. sexymommy@gmail.com and spottingufo@aol.com reveal more than you should want the world to know.
15. Emails are not effective conversation. If you go back and forth more than twice it is time to pick up the phone or meet in person.

Nancy Zalusky Berg

April 3, 2010