

Rule 1910.11. Office Conference. Subsequent Proceedings. Order.

(a) (1) The office conference shall be conducted by a conference officer.

(2) A conference officer who is a lawyer employed by a judicial district shall not practice family law before a conference officer, permanent hearing officer or permanent or standing master employed by the same judicial district.

Official Note

Conference officers preside at office conferences under Rule 1910.11. Hearing officers preside at hearings under Rule 1910.12. The appointment of masters to hear actions in divorce or for annulment of marriage is authorized by Rule 1920.51.

(b) If the defendant fails to appear at the conference before the officer as directed by the court, the conference may proceed without the defendant.

(c) At the conference, the parties shall furnish to the officer true copies of their most recent federal income tax returns, their pay stubs for the preceding six months, verification of child care expenses and proof of medical coverage which they may have or have available to them. In addition, they shall provide copies of their Income and Expense Statements in the forms required by Rule 1910.27(c), completed as set forth below.

(1) For cases which can be determined according to the guideline formula, the Income Statement must be completed and the Expense Statement at Rule 1910.27(c)(2)(A) should be completed if a party is claiming unusual needs and unusual fixed expenses that may warrant a deviation from the guideline amount of support pursuant to Rule 1910.16-5 or seeks apportionment of expenses pursuant to Rule 1910.16-6. In a support case that can be decided according to the guidelines, even if the support claim is raised in a divorce complaint, no expense form is needed unless a party claims unusual needs or unusual fixed expenses or seeks apportionment of expenses pursuant to Rule 1910.16-6. However, in the divorce action, the Expense Statement at Rule 1910.27(c)(2)(B) may be required.

(2) For cases which are decided according to *Melzer v. Witsberger*, 505 Pa. 462, 480 A.2d 991 (1984), the Income Statement and the Expense Statement at Rule 1910.27(c)(2)(B) must be completed.

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Rule 1920.31. Joinder of Related Claims. Child and Spousal Support. Alimony. Alimony Pendente Lite. Counsel Fees. Expenses.

(a) (1) Within thirty days after the service of the pleading or petition containing a claim for **[child or spousal support,]** alimony[, **alimony pendente lite**] or counsel fees, costs and expenses, each party shall file a true copy of the most recent federal income tax return, pay stubs for the preceding six months, a completed Income

Statement in the form required at Rule 1910.27(c)(1) and a completed Expense Statement in the form required by Rule 1910.27(c)(2)(B). If a claim for child support, spousal support or alimony pendente lite is raised in a divorce complaint, no expense form is needed in a support action that can be decided pursuant to the support guidelines unless a party claims unusual needs or unusual fixed expenses or seeks deviation pursuant to Rule 1910.16-5 or apportionment of expenses pursuant to Rule 1910.16-6.

(2) If a party fails to file the documents as required by subdivision (a)(1), the court on motion may make an appropriate order under Rule 4019 governing sanctions.

(3) In those counties in which the prothonotary's office does not automatically forward a divorce complaint containing claims for support or alimony pendente lite to the domestic relations section or other appropriate office, if a claim for support or alimony pendente lite is filed as a count in a divorce rather than as a separate action, the award shall be retroactive to the date the moving party delivers a copy of the complaint to the domestic relations section or other appropriate office with a demand for hearing.

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