

CHILD CUSTODY LITIGATION. WHO WINS?

Over the past 23 years I have represented both fathers and mothers in child custody litigation successfully. Where there is a practical alternative to litigation which will satisfy the needs of the children I always recommend against litigation. Because of the complex factual and emotional issues involved in custody battles, I have found this type of litigation to be extremely expensive financially, often \$10,000.00 to \$30,000.00 or more to each parent.

Custody battles are also extremely expensive emotionally both to the parents and the children. I would much rather not earn the large fee that child custody battles bring in, and see the parents work out an agreement in the best interest of the children involved. If the matter is litigated in court, and one of the parties is requesting joint custody, and all other things being equal the court must favor joint custody. In any case all rulings made by the court must be based on what the court believes is in the best interests of the children involved. Unfortunately, many couples end up in courtroom battles over child custody and visitation. Before the court will hear any issues involving child custody or visitation, the court will require that the parents meet with family court counselors. The counselors will try to help the parents settle their differences, and if unsuccessful will make a recommendation to the court on the way they believe custody and visitation should be handled.

There are however cases where for the protection of the children either emotionally or physically these issues must be fully litigated. For example where one parent is physically or emotionally abusive to the children, or where one parent abuses alcohol, or drugs, thereby placing the children at risk, or the parent with whom the children are living neglects them either physically or emotionally. In these cases the other parent must act to protect the well being of the children no matter what the cost financially or emotionally. At the Law Office of Ronald J. Pullen I have been successfully representing both fathers and mothers with these issues regarding child custody and visitation for over 23 years. (For a specific discussion regarding step parent visitation see my article on this web page entitled "Step Parent Visitation Rights In California."

The truth is nobody wins in a custody battle, not the winning parent or the children except where they are being protected from an abusive parent. The costs are enormous both financially, and emotionally. However, where a custody battle is necessary here at the Law Office of Ronald Pullen I give my client very aggressive representation. I can be reached by telephone at (619)425-0810, or E-mail me.