

Virtual Visitation Rights and Child Custody Laws in Utah

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Virtual Visitation & How Electronic Device Communications Relate to Child Custody



Thanks to modern technologies, it's easier than ever to stay connected with loved ones, whether we are in the same city or across county lines — and now the state of Utah recognizes that. New virtual visitation laws in Utah are hearkening in a new era of parent and child communication in regard to child custody orders. Virtual visitation rights are particularly a great option for those parents who must move away from their child for work or other reasons — or for non-custodial parents whose child is moved away from them. Sound familiar? ***The following is a quick look at what every separated parent should know about virtual child visitation laws*** and how our virtual visitation attorneys in Utah at Wall & Wall Attorneys at Law can help.

What is Virtual Visitation?

The term 'virtual visitation' is a broad phrase that refers to any use of technology that a parent uses to keep in contact with his or her child. This may include any number of different ***electronic communication types, including email, instant messaging, or video messaging, such as a mandated weekly facetime child custody order.*** Which type of electronic visitation a family is to partake in will generally be detailed as part of either the parenting agreement or court child custody order.

Who Petitions for Electronic or Internet Visitation?

Generally, the non-custodial parent will be the one petitioning for virtual visitation rights as part of their parenting plan agreement in lieu of or in addition to in-person visits. The most common reasons behind requests for virtual visitation involve either the custodial parent seeking to relocate or move away from the area with the child or the non custodial parent needing to move away from the child due to work or life needs. The request for this type of court ordered visitation rights non custodial parent or custodial parent may apply to either ***new or existing*** child custody requests, include child custody and visitation in non-divorce situations, and visitation requests by either unmarried mothers or unmarried fathers.

Understanding Parent-Child Virtual Visitation

In 2004, Utah was uniquely the first state to enact laws allowing courts to order online or virtual parent-time in custody matters. Today, many parents have pursued parental visitation rights with their virtual visitation attorney in Utah and have enjoyed ***continuing a positive relationship with their child or children no matter the distance between them.*** A few examples of how court ordered facetime and other online virtual communications include:

- Using video chat to read a child a bedtime story
- Having a child use facetime to show their parent an award, drawing, or other achievements
- Sharing news and day-to-day events via social media sites
- Live streaming sporting events, drama performances, and other events
- Using cloud-based services like Google docs to help a child understand and work through homework queries and special school projects.

As you can see, the flexibility and ease of online communications make virtual visitation an exciting and attractive opportunity for non custodial parents. However, it is important to note that ***while this type of communication is beneficial in situations where parents must be physically separated from their child at great distances, it should not be viewed as a replacement for regular in-person child visits.*** An experienced virtual visitation attorney in Utah understands that and will help their clients seek internet and electronic communication rights as a supplement to routine in-person visits and communications.

Have More Questions About Your Virtual Visitation Rights? Talk to a Utah Divorce Attorney Today

Parent-child virtual visitation might not offer the same experience as seeing a child in-person, but it is a great supplement and alternative for situations in which in-person visitation is nigh impossible. Learn more about the virtual visitation laws in Utah and your

parental rights by contacting one of our experienced SLC divorce attorneys at Wall & Wall Attorneys at Law today. Give us a call at **801-441-2388** to schedule a ***free 30-minute consultation***.