DIVORCE AND SEPARATION | WORKSHEET 1 OF 3

First 30 Days After Separation Plan

A week-by-week first-response plan for safety, children, money, documents and communication.

BEST USED WHEN	Use this immediately after separation or when you are preparing to separate.

ALBERTA LEGAL CHECKPOINT

You do not need a court order to separate. If you rely on one year of separation as the ground for divorce, you may start the case before the year is complete, but the divorce cannot be granted until you have lived separate and apart for at least one year. Parenting, support, property, safety and deadline issues may need attention much sooner.

Primary source: Justice Canada: How to apply for a divorce

PREPARED FOR ______________________ DATE ______________________

1 Complete what you know	2 Mark gaps and assumptions	3 Attach supporting records

THE PRACTICE LENS

The first week is when preventable problems tend to compound: an essential payment is missed, a joint balance changes or a temporary parenting pattern starts without a review date. We designed this plan to separate urgent stabilization from decisions that should wait for better information.

A CONCRETE EXAMPLE

The child's medication and Monday school pickup may need an answer today; a house buyout usually does not. A dated bank-and-mortgage snapshot plus a four-week parenting plan can preserve options without forcing a permanent settlement in the middle of a crisis.

First 48 hours: stabilize

Tick completed items. Circle anything that needs a document, follow-up or legal advice.

- [ ] Identify any immediate safety concern and whether emergency help or a protection order may be required.
- [ ] Confirm where each child will sleep, attend school or childcare and obtain medication during the next seven days.
- [ ] Preserve access to identification, medication, keys, devices and essential personal records.
- [ ] Record current balances for joint bank, credit, mortgage and investment accounts without moving money impulsively.
- [ ] Choose one written communication channel for necessary parenting and financial messages.

Days 3 to 10: preserve the record

Tick completed items. Circle anything that needs a document, follow-up or legal advice.

[ ] Download recent bank, credit-card, mortgage, loan and investment statements.

[ ] Save the last three years of tax returns and notices of assessment.

[ ] Copy employment, benefit, pension, insurance and corporate records available to you lawfully.

[ ] Create a dated list of property and debt, including items held in only one name.

[ ] Write a neutral chronology of separation, parenting arrangements and important financial events.

Days 11 to 30: make a workable interim plan

Use short factual notes. If an answer is uncertain, write what would confirm it.

1. What parenting arrangement can work for the next four weeks without deciding the permanent result?
2. Which household expenses must be paid, by whom and from which account?
3. Is temporary child or spousal support needed, and what income information is missing?
4. Which property, deadline or business issue could be harmed by waiting?
5. Which process - direct negotiation, lawyer negotiation, mediation, arbitration or court - is realistic now?

BRING THIS TO YOUR CONSULTATION

You do not need every blank filled. Mark the three items that matter most, attach the records you relied on and use this handoff to identify the next decision.

STATUS	[ ] Ready to discuss [ ] Missing records [ ] Deadline or urgent issue
NEXT REAL DEADLINE	
RECORD OR ANSWER STILL NEEDED	
DECISION I NEED HELP WITH	

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