

Our Mission

To improve the lives of children & strengthen society by protecting every child's right to the love & care of both parents after separation or divorce. We achieve this mission through three core program areas: research & reports, public awareness, and family court reform.



2025

Shared Parenting Report Card

Advancing children's well-being by championing equal shared parenting when families live apart.

www.sharedparenting.org



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Executive Summary

The National Parents Organization seeks to promote children's well-being by making equal shared parenting the norm when parents are living apart. There is a compelling and growing consensus among researchers that true shared parenting by separated parents is usually best for children, including infants and toddlers, even when there is (non-violent) conflict between the parents and even when the parents do not initially agree to shared parenting. And the benefits to children increase as they have more equal time with each of their fit and loving parents. All of this research supports the establishment of a rebuttable presumption of equal shared parenting when parents are living apart.

To determine the degree to which state legislatures had absorbed and acted on this consensus about what parenting arrangements work best for children when parents are living separately, in 2014 NPO undertook the first ever evaluation of states' statutory provisions promoting shared parenting. NPO issued an updated and enhanced report in 2019. This 2025 Report details the progress made since 2019.

A handful of states have made very significant progress in the past 6 years—enacting strong legal presumptions of equal shared parenting. Several others have taken positive, though less dramatic, steps toward improving outcomes for children of divorced and separated parents. Unfortunately, the current study found that, despite the research that now strongly supports the desirability of a legal presumption of equal shared parenting, most state legislatures have taken no significant steps toward protecting children's relationship with both parents when parents are living apart.

The 2025 NPO study shows significant improvement in states' shared parenting legislation:

SUMMARY: STATE GRADES				
Grade	2014	2019	2025	Change 2025 vs 2019
A	0	2	6	4
B	8	7	10	3
C	18	26	19	-7
D	23	14	14	0
F	2	2	2	0
Average	D+	C-	C	

NPO calls on those states with weak statutory provisions concerning shared parenting to review the [research on the well-being of children whose parents are separated](#) and to enact statutes creating a rebuttable presumption of equal shared parenting. Such presumptions are not only supported by the research on child well-being, they are also overwhelmingly supported by citizens and have proven successful and popular in the states that have adopted them. Children are entitled to the presumption that both of their fit and loving parents will continue to be fully engaged in their upbringing regardless of whether or not the parents are still living together.

Shared Parenting Trends

Single Parenting Versus Shared Parenting

Extensive research going back decades has found that the approximately 25% of children (more than 18 million) living in single parent families not only fare worse in terms of psychological and emotional well-being, physical and mental health, labor market and wealth accumulation outcomes, but are more prone to social pathologies such as child abuse, crime and substance abuse [1]–[9]¹.

Children raised with the active engagement of two fit parents are less likely than their peers raised with only one involved parent:

- to fail in school [10];
- to use illegal drugs [5], [11];
- to commit crimes [12]–[15];
- to become involved with gangs [16], [17];
- to experience sexual assault [18];
- to engage in early sexual activity [19];
- to become pregnant at an early age [19]; and,
- to die by suicide [20].

The societal cost of single-parent families is enormous. When two fit parents are willing to act as parents, keeping them both involved equally in the raising of their children is not only good for the children, it's good social and economic policy.

Shared parenting following divorce/separation has been consistently shown to produce better child outcomes than sole custody arrangements along multiple dimensions: academic or cognitive outcomes, emotional and psychological outcomes including depression, stress and self-esteem factors, behavioral problems including substance abuse, physical and mental health, and improved parent-child relationships [21]–[24].

For parents, shared parenting is significantly correlated with increased child support compliance and reduced parental conflict and domestic violence. (See [below](#).) Shared parenting allows both parents to pursue their careers, social lives and other interests without the burden of single-handedly raising a child.



¹Citations are indicated in brackets and references are listed below.

Social Science Consensus

The social science community has embraced shared parenting in increasingly stronger terms in recent years culminating in a recommendation for the adoption of a rebuttable legal presumption of shared parenting:

- **2013:** The Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC) published the recommendations of 32 family law experts. The group concluded, “Children’s best interests are furthered by parenting plans that provide for continuing and shared parenting relationships that are safe, secure, and developmentally responsive and that also avoid a template calling for a specific division of time imposed on all families” [emphasis added]. While these experts hedged their conclusions with many caveats and qualifications, they nevertheless stated that, “[c]onsidered as a body of work, the efficacy of shared parenting has been supported for children of preschool age and older.” They also stated, “Parents who choose these arrangements [shared parenting] have reported that their children are better adjusted across multiple measures than their sole-custody or step-family peers” [25].
- **2014:** Endorsed by 110 international experts, the “Warshak Consensus” paper concluded that “shared parenting should be the norm for parenting plans for children of all ages, including young children [recognizing] that some parents and situations are unsuitable for shared parenting” [26] (emphasis added).
- **2018:** Following the 2017 International Conference on Shared Parenting, twelve international experts published a paper stating: “The evidence is now sufficiently deep and consistent to permit social scientists to provisionally recommend presumptive SP [shared parenting] to policy makers ... these statements are explicitly made guardedly ... We might aptly characterize the current state of the evidence as “the preponderance of the evidence” (i.e., substantially more evidence for the presumption than against it). A great many studies, with various inferential strengths, suggest that SP will bestow benefits on children on average, and few if any studies show that it harms them” [27] (emphasis added).
- **2019:** Research published in the prestigious *Oxford Handbook of Children and the Law* provides compelling evidence that it is not only when parents agree to shared parenting that this parenting arrangement is in children’s best interest. The research shows that “a legal presumption of equal parenting time is in children’s best interest, because such a presumption is likely to strengthen the emotional security of children of divorced and separated parents and thereby have a widespread positive impact on public health” [28] (emphasis added).
- **2021:** Research from Arizona State University provides strong evidence that the better outcomes for children in shared parenting arrangements are *caused* by the sharing of parental responsibilities and not a result solely of the fact that parents who choose to engage in shared parenting are, in general, better educated and have higher family incomes [29], [30].
- **2023:** At its 6th International Conference on Shared Parenting, the [International Council on Shared Parenting](#) (ICSP) concluded: “On the basis of current research evidence, social scientists can now confidently recommend presumptive shared parenting to policy makers. Shared parenting now has enough evidence that the burden of proof should fall to those who oppose it rather than those who promote it” (“[Press Release and Conference Conclusions, May 12, 2023](#)”).
- **2023:** The most recent and thorough systematic review of research on children’s outcomes in post-separation living arrangements concluded that 75% of the studies conducted found that children raised in shared physical custody had outcomes equal to those raised in nuclear (intact) families.

Children raised in sole physical custody arrangements had the worst outcomes. They concluded that the better outcomes resulted from the children's relational and economic resources from both parents [23].

- **2024:** Groundbreaking research from Spain provides strong evidence that presumptions of shared physical custody reduce intimate partner violence between separating parents. Around 2010, five regions of Spain adopted presumptions of shared physical custody; other regions did not adopt similar presumptions. The results of this “natural experiment” were stunning! The researchers found that the presumption of shared physical custody “led to a large and significant decrease in intimate partner violence, with the largest effects among couples in which the mother was more likely to seek sole custody before the policy change” (p. 1, emphasis added). The policy “significantly decreased domestic violence, with IPV falling by almost 50%” (p. 3, emphasis added). And they also found “evidence of a significant reduction of the number of female homicides committed by intimate partners after the joint custody reform” (p. 3, emphasis added) [31].

As one leading researcher put it:

The evidence that is now available is compelling that failure to enact presumptions of equal parenting time risks unnecessary harm to children's emotional security with their parents, and consequently unnecessary harm to public health in the form of long-term stress-related mental and physical health problems among children of divorce. [28]

For links to recent, peer-reviewed research on child well-being and post-separation parenting arrangements, please visit [NPO's Shared Parenting Research Resources page](#).



Parental Alienation and Shared Parenting

Parental alienation is a mental condition in which a child—usually one whose parents are engaged in a high-conflict separation or divorce—allies strongly with an alienating parent and rejects a relationship with the other parent, the “target” parent, without legitimate justification. Alienating behaviors include: issuing poisonous messages to the child about the other parent, portraying that parent as unloving, unsafe, and unavailable; undermining the authority of the other parent; limiting contact and communication between the child and the targeted parent; erasing and replacing the targeted parent in the heart and mind of the child; encouraging the child to betray the targeted parent's trust; and, undermining the authority of the targeted parent [32]. (More information on parental alienation can be found at the site of the Parental Alienation Study Group, PASG, at www.pasg.info.)

Child victims of parental alienation experience disrupted social-emotional development, lack of trust in relationships, social anxiety, and social isolation. They are more likely than their peers to be truant from school or leave school early, be unemployed as adults, abuse alcohol and drugs, enter intimate partnerships earlier, get divorced, and become alienated from their own children. Because of this, many consider parental alienation to be form of child abuse [33], [34], [35].

Estimates of the number of children subjected to parental alienation vary widely, ranging from 11% to 40% of children in contested custody cases [36]. Recent research has estimated that “the number of alienated children ... represents about 1.3% of the total U.S. population,” [36] which would be approximately 4.5 million children. Because of the harm inflicted on children by parental alienation, South Dakota has explicitly recognized the harm of parental alienating behaviors by establishing as a negative factor in custody decisions “[w]hether a parent has intentionally alienated or interfered with the other parent’s relationship with the child” ([S.D. Codified Laws § 25-4A-24\(9\)](#)).

Shared parenting of children by separated parents can be protective against parental alienation. Joint legal custody combats messages that the target parent doesn’t have typical parental authority. Shared physical custody reassures children that both parents are safe, loving, and available to the child by ensuring the child sufficient time in the care of each parent to directly experience this.

Legal presumptions of shared parenting can be protective against parental alienation in another way, also. Sometimes a parent engages in alienating behavior as part of a campaign to ensure that the parent can retain custody of the child. Presumptions of equal shared parenting can alleviate the fear of losing one’s relationship with one’s child as a result of being designated a “noncustodial parent”.

Public Opinion Consensus

Public support for the practice of shared parenting and for a *legal presumption of shared parenting* is extraordinarily strong. Independent polling in 29 states has shown that, in every state polled [37]:

- At least 87% (and an average of 95%) of citizens believe it is “in a child’s best interest to spend as much time as possible with each parent” and that “children have a right to spend equal or nearly equal time with both parents” when the parents are divorced or separated.
- An average of 80% of citizens believe that “when there is conflict between parents, awarding sole custody of children to just one parent increases that conflict.”
- At least 80% (and an average of 86%) would support “a change in state law that creates a rebuttable presumption that shared parenting is in the best interest of a child after parental separation.”

For state-specific results, visit National Parents Organization’s “[Shared Parenting Polling](#)” page.

It is important to note that this level of support—extraordinary in a time of extreme political division—cuts across the divisions of American politics. Support for equal shared parenting and a legal presumption of equal shared parenting is extraordinarily strong regardless of race, age, political leanings, and (importantly) gender. These results are consistent with international polls, which show an average of 75% support for shared parenting [38].

Independent polling in Kentucky, after it enacted the nation’s first explicit presumption of equal parenting time, found that *those in the Bluegrass state were six times as likely to support the law as to oppose it* [39].

Finally, there is increasing evidence that shared parenting is becoming a voting issue. In every state polled since 2020, at least 80% (and an average of 93%) of respondents said that they would “be more likely to vote for a candidate who supports children spending significant, up to equal, amounts of time with each parent following separation or divorce” [38].

Reception by the Legal Community

While some in the legal community have resisted the enactment of presumptions of equal shared parenting, there is both research data and anecdotal evidence that, once enacted, such presumptions receive support from the legal community. In Arizona, approximately five years after enactment of its shared parenting law, researchers found that the law was evaluated positively by mental health practitioners, attorneys, judges, and conciliation court staff [40].

Judges in Kentucky were initially skeptical about its 2018 equal shared parenting law. But after operating under the law for six years, Judge Mica Wood Pence of Kentucky’s Barren County Family Court reports the following:

First of all, let me just warn you, we were not happy—as lawyers, as judges. That was the year I took the bench after ten years practicing custody and family law. But boy was I wrong! It has been an absolute blessing to be able to see people become more active in their children’s lives. What were we thinking before when using a system that only gave one parent every other weekend and one day a week? That’s just not enough time with your children—not if you’re a good parent. And oftentimes children do have two good parents that love them and want to spend time with them. ... One of the biggest benefits is how much the family can come together. ... I think it’s actually cut down on the time in court. ... Now we’ve seen that there’s not as much reason to fight. [41]

Legislative Changes Since 2019

There has been significant legislative activity concerning child custody in many states since the 2019 *NPO Shared Parenting Report Card*. The following milestones summarize the progress made in the adoption of shared parenting nationally since 2019:

- In 2021, Arkansas became the second state (after Kentucky) to enact an *explicit* rebuttable presumption that “joint custody is in the best interest of the child” ([A.C.A. § 9-13-101\(a\)\(1\)\(A\)\(iv\)\(a\)](#)). Existing statutes defined ‘joint custody’ as “the approximate and reasonable equal division of time with the child by both parents individually as agreed to by the parents or as ordered by the court” ([A.C.A. § 9-13-101\(a\)\(5\)](#)).
- In 2022, West Virginia created “a presumption, rebuttable by a preponderance of the evidence, that equal (50-50) custodial allocation is in the best interest of the child” and also stipulated that, when the presumption is rebutted, courts shall “construct a parenting time schedule which maximizes the time each parent has with the child and its consistent with ensuring the child’s welfare” ([W. VA. Code §48-9-102a](#)).

- In 2023, both Florida and Missouri enacted rebuttable presumptions of equal shared parenting.
 - Florida law now contains “a rebuttable presumption that equal time-sharing of a minor child is in the best interest of the minor child” ([FLA. STAT. § 61.13\(2\)\(c\)1.](#)). Florida law further specifies that a “court shall order that the parental responsibility for a minor child be shared by both parents unless the court finds that shared parental responsibility would be detrimental to the child” ([FLA. STAT. § 61.13\(2\)\(c\)2.](#))
 - Missouri law now specifies that “[t]here shall be a rebuttable presumption that an award of equal or approximately equal parenting time to each parent is in the best interests of the child ([MO. REV. STAT. § 452.375.2.](#))
- Several states made lesser but still significant steps toward promoting shared parenting.
 - **Minnesota:** As a result of National Parents Organization’s work with the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers and Minnesota State Bar Association, Minnesota enacted a statute that strengthens its policy statement on shared parenting and creates a new mechanism for enforcing parenting time orders that requires expedited hearings, presumptive compensating time for the children with the aggrieved parent, and a presumptive fine for the violating parent ([MINN. STAT. § 518.175.6.](#))
 - **New Hampshire:** As a result of NPO’s extensive work with both legislators and shared parenting advocates in New Hampshire, Governor Sununu signed into law HB185, which strengthened the state’s shared parenting laws ([N.H. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 461-A:2 & § 461-A:6,1-a.](#)). While the original version of the bill was, unfortunately, amended to significantly weaken it, the new law does require courts to make findings of fact to support their orders when they conclude that approximately equal parenting time is not in the best interest of children.
 - **Oregon:** In 2019 Oregon enacted SB318, which explicitly granted courts the power to award equal parenting time. It further specifies that: “If a parent requests that the court order equal parenting time in the parenting plan, the court may deny the request if the court determines, by written findings, that equal parenting time is not in the best interests of the child or endangers the safety of the parties” ([ORS § 107.102.](#))
 - **Texas:** In 2021, Texas enacted SB1936 that increased the standard parenting time order for parents living within 50 miles of each other so that the children have more than 40% of their time in the care of the noncustodial parent ([TEX. FAM. Code Ann. § 1153.3171.](#))
 - **Utah:** In 2021, Utah enacted SB122, which changed the advisory schedule that is presumed to be in children’s best interest to be “the *minimum* parent-time to which the noncustodial parent and the child shall be entitled” and explicitly allowed courts to order equal parenting time ([UTAH CODE ANN. § 81-9-206.](#)). In 2022, Utah enacted SB243, which increased the parenting time for the noncustodial parent in the advisory schedule, established an enhanced optional schedule, and provided a schedule for equal parenting time ([UTAH CODE ANN. § 81-9-3, § 81-9-302, and § 81-9-305.](#))



- Since January, 2019, there have been a total of 227 bills proposing significant advances in shared parenting legislation introduced in 41 states. Thirteen of those bills have been enacted into law.
- The average state grade of 'D+' in the *2014 Report Card* rose to 'C-' in 2019 and now stands at a 'C'. This indicates continuing progress in the role that state legislatures can play in reforming the norms of separated parenting to make shared parenting the norm.

SUMMARY: STATE GRADES				
Grade	2014	2019	2025	Change 2025 vs 2019
A	0	2	6	4
B	8	7	10	3
C	18	26	19	-7
D	23	14	14	0
F	2	2	2	0
Average	D+	C-	C	

- The 2025 Report card shows improved grades since 2019 for 8 states. Four of those changes resulted from reassessment of the 2019 grades. These changes were relatively minor. The improved grades for the other four states—Arkansas, Florida, Missouri, and West Virginia (highlighted in the table below)—resulted from significant positive legislation, moving each state from the 'C' range to the 'A' range.

SHARED PARENTING STATES WITH IMPROVED GRADES			
State	Grade		Reason
	2019	2025	
Arizona	A-	A+	Reassessment
Arkansas	C+	A-	Legislation
Florida	C+	A	Legislation
Missouri	C+	A-	Legislation
Tennessee	C	B-	Reassessment
Texas	C-	B-	Reassessment
Utah	C	B-	Reassessment
West Virginia	C-	A+	Legislation
Average	C+	A-	

- The states with the most shared parenting bills introduced during the period 2019-2025 are: Minnesota (22), Missouri (16), New York (13), Indiana (12), and Florida (11). Sixteen states had at least 5 shared parenting bills introduced in this period.
- The least active shared parenting states with no shared parenting bills introduced in the past 5 years are: California, Colorado, Delaware, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Nevada, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin. It should be noted that no shared parenting legislation was introduced in Kentucky

because, as a result of NPO's efforts led by Matt Hale, in 2018 Kentucky was the first state to enact an explicit presumption that equal shared parenting is in children's best interest

- The lowest ranked states with an 'F' grade remain Rhode Island and New York. Rhode Island has not, since 2014, introduced any shared parenting legislation that would have changed its grade in the NPO Report Card, whereas New York is one of the battleground states with 22 bills introduced since 2014 and, as mentioned, 13 since 2019.

The federal government does not track shared parenting statistics. However, survey data from the World Health Organization (WHO) suggests the prevalence of shared parenting in the US is in the 20-25% range [42]. Research papers indicate the prevalence of shared parenting at state level is: Wisconsin- 45%; Arizona - 44%; Washington - 34%; and California - 27 % [42].

Increased adoption of shared parenting in the US is part of a global trend in industrialized countries. In 2015, the Council of Europe (COE) passed a resolution encouraging European countries to adopt shared parenting legislation [43]. The state of affairs was summarized by the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe in 2018: "There is however an apparent, growing consensus that, when possible, shared parenting should be supported as part of separation and divorce arrangements" [44].

The [International Council on Shared Parenting \(ICSP\)](#) is preparing a European Shared Parenting Report Card modeled on this NPO Report Card. This will allow for more sophisticated comparative analysis of child custody statutes in other countries.

Subject Matter of the Report: Limitations and Caveats

Subject Matter

National Parents Organization is committed to promoting the well-being of children by working to ensure that equal shared parenting of children of separated parents is the norm. To contribute to that objective, we have undertaken a review of the shared parenting statutes of all 50 states and the District of Columbia. What is ultimately of most importance to children is how separated parenting is actually done, not what is enshrined in statute. But the statutes play a vital role in influencing the actual parenting arrangements of separated parents.

In every state, judges have the discretion to order shared parenting if they choose to. Unfortunately, they do this infrequently unless both parents present the same plan for shared parenting of their children. In most states, regrettably, custody decisions by the family courts are not properly reported, so information on the subject is often unreliable and incomplete. Thus, it is not possible to determine, with confidence and across all states, the actual prevalence of shared parenting orders.

But how separated parenting is actually done is strongly influenced by court decisions which, in turn, are strongly influenced by a state's case law and statutory provisions. Like NPO's previous Shared Parenting Reports, *this study is not a study of the actual parenting patterns of separated parents in each state. Nor is it a study of the actual court determinations or the case law (binding court decisions) of the states. Instead, it is a study of the statutory provisions relating to shared parenting of each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia.*

In short, this is a report card for state legislatures, not state courts.

Court decisions are (supposed to be) constrained by statutory provisions and binding case law. The role of case law in determining court decisions about parenting arrangements of divorced and separated parents varies from state to state. New York, for example, has no statutory provisions that allow for shared parenting. But a court decision in *Braiman v. Braiman* ([44 N.Y.2d 584](#); [378 N.E.2d 1019](#)) serves as legal precedent that has allowed family court judges to order this arrangement in some cases. This is less powerful than statute, since family court judges can depart from case law precedent if they can cite an allegedly relevant distinction between the precedent and the case at bar; it is more difficult to contravene an explicit statute.

It is important to recognize that there can be a gap between statutory provisions and actual court decisions. A state could have relatively weak shared parenting statutory provisions but, because of binding case law or the judgments of individual courts, a stronger practice of supporting shared parenting. Evidence from Wisconsin, for example, indicates increasing levels of shared parenting orders from courts even in the absence of new shared parenting legislation [45]. Conversely, we are aware that some states have relatively strong statutory provisions that are being diluted by the courts' use of their broad discretionary powers to limit shared parenting.

While there can be a gap between a state's shared parenting statutes and the actual decisions of courts in that state, the statutory provisions are extremely important, for at least two reasons. First, most courts do

follow the statutes of their states to the best of their ability. And, second, it is through its statutory provisions that a state speaks most directly and clearly to its citizens about how they will be treated in the courts and the legal expectations to which they will be subject. This is increasingly important as more and more parents come to domestic relations courts without legal counsel. These parents are unlikely to have sophisticated knowledge of legal precedents and court practices. But they can be informed about clear statutory provisions that promote equal shared parenting.

The *2025 NPO Shared Parenting Report Card* evaluates the shared parenting statutes of each of the states and the District of Columbia and grades them on the degree to which they foster children's best interest by promoting equal shared parenting. It does not evaluate a state's case law nor does it evaluate the actual custodial decisions of courts.



Limitations & Caveats

This report does not include two factors that are relevant to evaluating states' statutory support for shared parenting: (a) statutory provisions for addressing parenting time interference (interference with custody); and with one exception, (b) statutory provisions for addressing false allegations of family violence made knowingly or recklessly in order to affect custody decisions. The exception is this: the current study does score a state's statutes in part on whether, if they establish a presumption of shared parenting, they also provide a family court remedy for knowingly making false allegations of family violence. When state statutes do this, it is typically by making such actions a negative factor in custody determinations. Future NPO Shared Parenting Report Cards might include provisions for parenting time enforcement and expanded analysis of provisions for false allegations of family violence as grading factors. For this report, though, we offer some notes and examples of strong legislation to handle these issues.

Parenting Time Enforcement

A parenting time order fails to achieve its intended effect if there are inadequate legal tools for addressing the conduct of a noncompliant parent. Contempt actions against a parent for depriving a child of court-ordered time with one of their parents have proven ineffective; they are costly, time consuming, and seldom provide a significant deterrent unless the violations are egregious and repeated in the face of previous contempt findings. Clearly, a broader range of tools matched to the severity of the parenting time interference is required for timely and less costly enforcement to prevent a downward spiral in the relations between the parents.

For relatively minor cases, which can often be harbingers of much more severe cases, one tested approach is Family Access Motions, pioneered by Missouri ([MO REV STAT § 452.400](#)). These motions are designed to be filed pro se, must be acted on within 60 days, and include as potential remedies compensating time, a small fine, mandatory counseling, and more. By providing a right-sized tool for addressing common forms of parenting time interference, Family Access Motions establish an effective deterrent to misconduct. New Hampshire has also created Family Access Motions similar to Missouri's ([N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 461-A:4-a](#)).

Several states have provisions for remedies similar to Missouri's Family Access Motions, some including Missouri's expedited hearing requirement, but lack the pro se friendly approach that helps make Missouri's Family Access Motions effective. See, for example: Florida [FLA. STAT. § 61.13\(4\)\(c\)](#) (which also allows sanctions for parents who do not exercise their court-ordered parenting time), Illinois [750 ILL. COMP. STAT. § 607.5](#), Kansas [KAN. STAT. ANN. § 23-3401](#), and the recently enacted Minnesota [MIN. STAT. § 518.175.5](#).)

There are several other approaches for addressing relatively minor cases. For example, California empowers courts to award financial compensation "when a parent has been thwarted by the other parent when attempting to exercise custody or visitation rights contemplated by a custody or visitation order" ([CAL. FAM. CODE § 3028](#)). And Texas has enacted legislation empowering municipalities and counties to adopt ordinances that impose civil penalties for violations of the state's interference with custody laws ([TEX. FAM. Code Ann. § 157.551](#)). Several Texas cities, including Laredo, El Paso, and League City, have adopted such ordinances to help protect their children's right to their court-ordered time with each of their parents.

More egregious violations of parenting time orders should be met with more significant enforcement mechanisms, including criminal interference with custody actions. In most states, interference with custody is a crime, chargeable either as a misdemeanor or a felony.

Sometimes parenting time is interfered with based on false allegations of child maltreatment. Courts are understandably motivated to react quickly upon allegations of child abuse or neglect. In most states, when these allegations turn out to be false, the children never recover the time with the targeted parent. In 2024, Texas pioneered an innovative approach to addressing strategic use of false allegations of abuse to interfere with parenting time by enacting [SB718](#), the “Time Taken, Time Taken Back” law, which provides for compensating time when the children have been deprived of time with one parent because of false allegations of abuse ([TEX. FAM. Code Ann. § 157.168](#)).

False Allegations of Family Violence

NPO supports presumptions of equal shared parenting that are rebuttable, which also has support from the scientific community [29]. Descriptions of the presumptions of shared parenting supported by NPO as “*automatically* awarding shared parenting,” or “*requiring* courts to award shared parenting” are both inaccurate and highly misleading. What courts are required to do is begin with the presumption that equal shared parenting is in children’s best interest. This presumption can be rebutted on a variety of grounds—some mundane, like the distance between the parents’ homes, others are more significant, such as a history of family violence (both intimate partner violence and child maltreatment).



Courts are required, then, to identify cases involving family violence and act to protect potential victims. This, in turn, requires courts to determine the veracity of allegations of family violence. The frequency of false allegations of family violence is hotly debated. One large-scale study found that 25% of child maltreatment allegations in child custody cases were not only unfounded but made with malicious intent, meaning that they were intentionally reported by a person knowing the allegation was unfounded [46]. There is evidence that presumptions of equal shared parenting that can be defeated by concerns about family violence are likely to lead some parents, seeking to avoid sharing physical custody of their children, to lodge false allegations of family violence for strategic reasons [40].

The extant evidence indicates that presumptions of equal shared parenting are actually protective of potential victims of family violence [31], [47]. It is nevertheless vital for courts to identify abusive parents and protect potential victims. Part of doing so is ensuring the veracity of allegations.

Those who lie to the courts under oath are, of course, guilty of perjury. However, the threat of a perjury prosecution is not a credible deterrent for false allegations because such prosecutions are virtually never pursued for lies in domestic relations cases. Several states’ legislatures have recognized this and taken steps to effectively deter parents from knowingly making false allegations of family violence.

One approach is to explicitly list knowingly making a false allegation as a negative factor in custody determinations. Several states do this: Florida ([FLA. STAT. § 61.13\(3\)\(n\)](#)), Hawaii ([HAW. REV. STAT. § 571-46\(b\)\(16\)](#)), Maine ([ME. REV. STAT. TIT. 19-A § 1653.3.O](#)), Minnesota ([MINN. STAT. § 518.17\(b\)\(6\)](#)), North Dakota ([N.D. CENT. CODE. § 14-09-06.2.I](#)), and South Dakota ([S. D. Codified Laws § 25-4A-24\(14\)](#)).

NPO believes that including as a negative factor in custody determinations whether a parent has knowingly or recklessly made false allegations of intimate partner violence or child maltreatment helps to serve as an effective deterrent, which has several benefits. It lowers the level of conflict between the parents making shared parenting function better. It reduces the work on the courts pursuing false allegations made for

strategic reasons. And it enhances the credibility of such allegations when they are made. Additional tools are needed, though, to ensure that allegations known to be false and made for strategic reasons do not deprive children of contact with a fit and loving parent.

Finally, the “Time Taken, Time Taken Back” law in Texas discussed above ([TEX. FAM. Code Ann. § 157.168](#)) not only provides a remedy for the enforcement of parenting time but has the salutary effect of removing an incentive for making a false allegation of abuse.

Methodology

Process

In its *2019 NPO Shared Parenting Report Card*, National Parents Organization’s research team evaluated the child custody statutes of each state and the District of Columbia on 21 factors to evaluate the degree to which the statutes promote true shared parenting. The coded factors were converted to a shared parenting grade for each state using a weighted factors algorithm. This grade was reported for each state, together with the strengths and weaknesses of that state’s child custody statutes.

Because the metrics and methodology employed in this 2025 report are identical to those used in the 2019 report, the NPO research team reviewed the child custody statutes of those states that had enacted relevant legislation since 2019. To determine which states had updated their child custody statutes, the research team relied on data from the [National Conference of State Legislatures](#) and [Legiscan](#), as well as other sources. Several states were re-evaluated in light of newly acquired information concerning their custody statutes. The research team did not review legislation that did not create a significant change in the metrics used, which are outlined below.

Key Statutory Provisions

National Parents Organization’s research team looked at the complete language of the child custody statutes of each state that had changed their child custody laws since 2019. To arrive at a grade for each of these states, the research team employed the criteria used to evaluate states in the 2019 report.

- **Permission:** Do the statutes explicitly *permit* shared parenting?
- **Policy:** Do the statutes include a policy *encouraging* shared parenting?
- **Preference:** Do the statutes express a *preference* for shared parenting? Do the custody statutes recognize and reward a parent’s willingness and ability to facilitate and encourage a close and continuing relationship between the other parent and the child, which is known as the “Friendly Parent Factor”?
- **Presumption:** Do the statutes establish a *rebuttable presumption* that shared parenting is in children’s best interest even when parents do not agree?² If so, is there a clear exception for cases of domestic abuse? And are judges required to justify deviations from the rebuttable presumption? If there is a presumption in favor of shared parenting which is defeated by findings of domestic abuse, are there family-court-based provisions to deter maliciously motivated false allegations of abuse?

² A presumption in favor of shared parenting only when parents agree is really a presumption of the fitness of parents to determine how their children will be raised—an appropriate deference to parental judgment. It is not a presumption of shared parenting. Furthermore, a presumption in favor of shared parenting *when the court independently finds that shared parenting is in children’s best interest* is not a presumption about what is in children’s best interest. It is, in any case, an unnecessary presumption because courts are universally required to determine custody of children based on the best interest of the children.

Definitions

- **Best Interest of the Child:** This phrase is ubiquitous in family law but states have struggled to define it. Most states provide a list of factors that courts may, or must, consider in determining what post-separation parenting arrangement is in children's best interest. But they do not indicate the significance of each factor and courts have extremely broad discretion in determining what arrangements best promote the well-being of children. Different family courts, presented with the same facts, come to very different decisions about what promotes a child's best interest. And these decisions are too often not guided by a strong understanding of the research on the well-being of children of separated parents.

The strong emerging consensus in child development research changes this landscape. We can now say that shared parenting by fit parents living separately serves the best interest of children in most cases. And this determination is robust, based on a wide range of national and international studies, using different methodologies, and different accepted metrics of child well-being.



- **Equal Shared Parenting:** 'Equal shared parenting' refers to the separated parenting arrangement in which parents have joint legal custody and substantially equal parenting time (physical custody) of their children.
- **Frequent and Continuing Contact:** This phrase, and similar ones ("frequent and meaningful", "frequent and significant", etc.) occur frequently in family law. They express an intention of the court regarding contact between a child and each of its parents. Unfortunately, it has no identifiable meaning. In some cases, ongoing contact as little as one day per month between a parent and child, or one week during the summer, has been held to satisfy a requirement for "frequent and continuing contact."
- **Friendly Parent Factor:** Language in a custody statute that recognizes that a parent's willingness and ability to facilitate and encourage (in the absence of abuse) a close and continuing relationship between the other parent and the child promotes the best interest of the child.
- **Legal Custody:** A status conferred by the court that allows a parent, either solely or jointly, to make decisions concerning the best interest of the child. Most researchers recognize that legal custody without a very significant portion of physical custody is typically of little value to the child or the parent.

- **Maximizing Time Provision:** Several states seek to promote shared parenting by stating either a preference or presumption in favor of “maximizing each parent’s time with the children,” or words to this effect. Research indicates that in Arizona this provision is being interpreted strongly, as a presumption of equal physical custody [41]. However, it is not yet clear that courts in other states would treat it in this way.
- **Parental Equality:** Treatment of the parents as equals in terms of child-rearing rights and responsibilities, regardless of gender.
- **Physical Custody:** A status conferred by the court that allows a parent to participate in the residential parenting of their child, either solely or jointly.
- **Rebuttable Presumption:** In the context of this discussion, this phrase indicates statutory language that prescribes a particular arrangement for parenting children, but which can be overcome by a sufficient showing of evidence justifying a different arrangement. With respect to shared parenting, NPO endorses a rebuttable presumption that equal shared parenting is in children’s best interest so as to keep the focus of custody decisions on the best interest of children.
- **Shared Parenting:** National Parents Organization defines ‘shared parenting’ as an arrangement in which both parents have equal standing in the raising of their children, so that the children may benefit fully from the loving bonds shared with both parents. ‘Shared parenting’ also means that the children enjoy substantial parenting time (not less than one-third) with each parent.
- **Temporary Orders (Orders Pendente Lite):** Temporary orders are those issued by the family courts early in the divorce or separation process, before there has been an opportunity to hear evidence concerning the best interest of the child. They apply to the family during the pendency of the legal proceedings. Temporary orders are very important for at least three reasons. First, they are imposed at a critical period, when parents and, crucially, children are trying to figure out how post-separation parenting will happen. Second, while temporary orders do not establish a legal precedent for permanent orders, they do establish a *de facto status quo*. When courts impose sole custody during temporary orders and parents don’t agree on shared parenting, the parent wanting shared parenting is in the position of asking the court to impose permanent orders that have not been tried. Some courts are reluctant to do this. Finally, divorce actions can easily take six to 30 months or more to complete. What is temporary to the court, and to adults in general, will seem quite extended to children given their different perception of time.



About National Parents Organization

Mission

National Parents Organization's mission is to improve the lives of children & strengthen society by protecting every child's right to the love & care of both parents when divorced or separated.

Vision

The overarching goal of National Parents Organization (NPO) is to promote shared parenting by educating parents, divorce professionals, and legislators and by reforming family courts and laws in every state. We envision a society where:

- Shared parenting when parents are separated or divorced is the norm;
- Children's natural right to be nurtured & guided by both parents is fully honored;
- Society treats fathers & mothers as equally important to the well-being of their children;
- Children are happier & more successful because their loving bonds to their parents and extended family are protected after parental separation or divorce; and,
- The courts arrange finances after separation or divorce so that both mothers & fathers can afford to house and care for their children & themselves.

More information about National Parents Organization can be found at [SharedParenting.org](https://www.SharedParenting.org)



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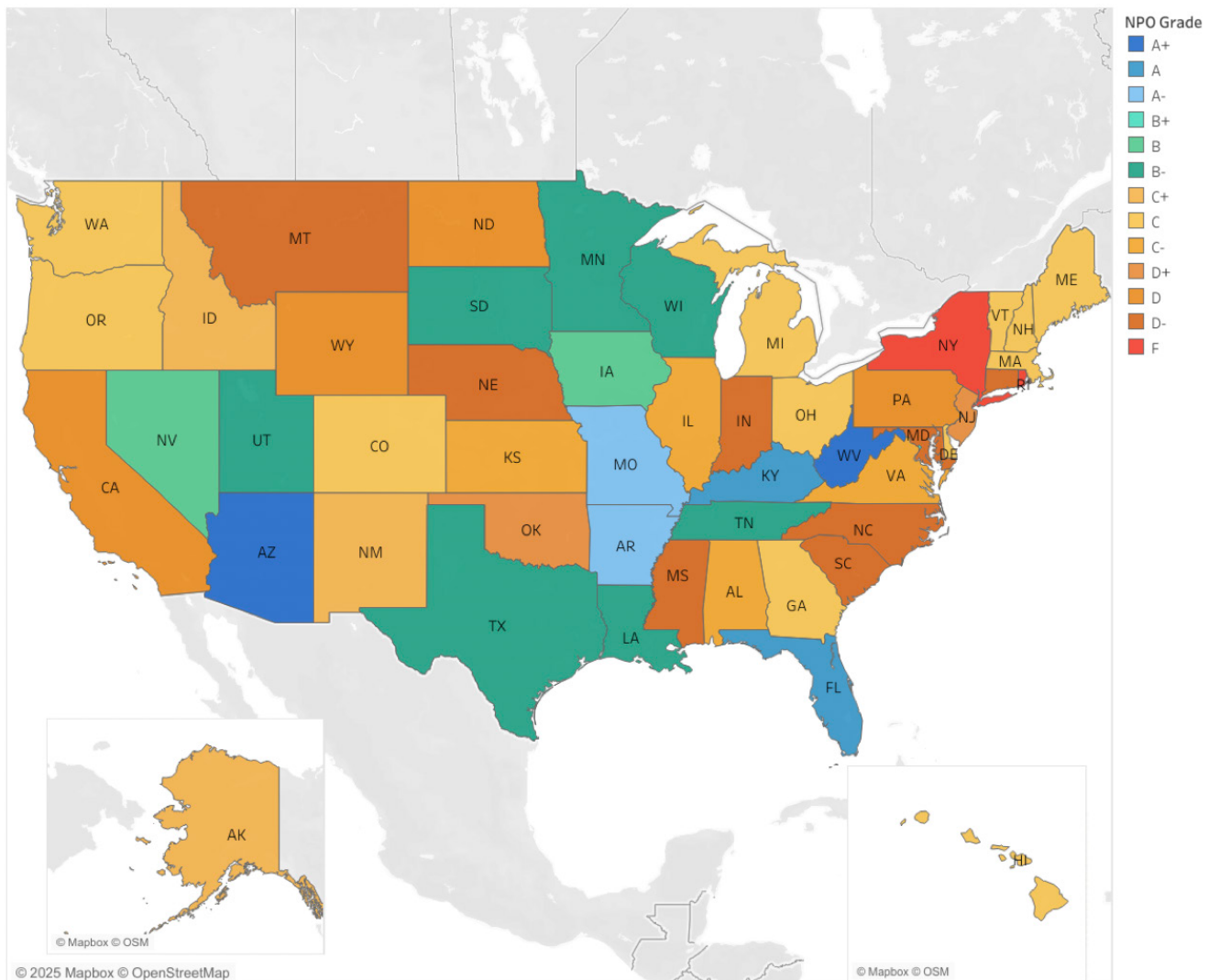
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Appendix A: Map - Grades By States

- 6 states received 'A's
- 10 states and the District of Columbia 'B's
- 19 states received 'C's
- 14 states received 'D's
- 2 states received 'F's



Appendix B: Listing – States by Grades

A+

[Arizona](#)

[West Virginia](#)

A

[Florida](#)

[Kentucky](#)

[Missouri](#)

A-

[Arkansas](#)

B+

[District of Columbia](#)

B

[Iowa](#)

[Nevada](#)

B-

[Louisiana](#)

[Minnesota](#)

[South Dakota](#)

[Tennessee](#)

[Texas](#)

[Utah](#)

[Wisconsin](#)

C+

[Alaska](#)

[Idaho](#)

[New Mexico](#)

C

[Colorado](#)

[Delaware](#)

[Georgia](#)

[Hawaii](#)

[Maine](#)

[Massachusetts](#)

[Michigan](#)

[New Hampshire](#)

[Ohio](#)

[Oregon](#)

[Vermont](#)

[Washington](#)

C-

[Alabama](#)

[Illinois](#)

[Kansas](#)

[Virginia](#)

D+

[New Jersey](#)

[Oklahoma](#)

D

[California](#)

[North Dakota](#)

[Pennsylvania](#)

[Wyoming](#)

D-

[Connecticut](#)

[Indiana](#)

[Maryland](#)

[Mississippi](#)

[Montana](#)

[Nebraska](#)

[North Carolina](#)

[South Carolina](#)

F

[New York](#)

[Rhode Island](#)

Appendix C: State Details

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Alabama ALA. CODE § 30-3-150 ALA. CODE § 30-3-152 ALA. CODE § 30-3-169.6</p>	C-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alabama explicitly permits joint custody in final orders. Alabama statutes include the following policy statement: “It is the policy of this state to assure that minor children have frequent and continuing contact with parents who have shown the ability to act in the best interest of their children and to encourage parents to share in the rights and responsibilities of rearing their children after the parents have separated or dissolved their marriage.” ALA. CODE § 30-3-150 Alabama requires courts to consider “friendly parent” factor in joint custody. ALA. CODE § 30-3-152 Alabama statutes treat false allegations specific to change of residence issues as punishable by non-monetary sanctions, fines, and court costs. ALA. CODE § 30-3-169.6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alabama has no explicit provisions for joint custody or shared parenting in temporary orders. Alabama’s policy statement concerning joint custody explicitly denies that joint custody includes equal physical custody. (“Joint custody does not necessarily mean equal physical custody.”) ALA. CODE § 30-3-150 Alabama has no statutory preference for or presumption of shared parenting (joint legal custody and substantially equal physical custody) in either temporary or final orders.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Alaska ALASKA STAT. § 25.20.060 ALASKA STAT. § 25.20.070</p>	C+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alaska explicitly permits shared custody “if shared custody is determined to be in the best interest of the child.” ALASKA STAT. § 25.20.070 Alaska requires that, in issuing temporary orders, “[u]nless it is shown to be detrimental to the welfare of the child ... or unless the presumption under ALASKA STAT. § 25.24.150(g) is present, the child shall have, to the greatest degree practical, equal access to both parents during the time that the court considers an award of custody.” ALASKA STAT. § 25.20.070 Alaska statutes require, except in cases of domestic abuse, consideration of a “friendly parent” factor: “the willingness and ability of each parent to facilitate and encourage a close and continuing relationship between the other parent and the child.” ALASKA STAT. § 25.24.150(c)(6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alaska has no policy statement concerning shared parenting. In Alaska, an award of shared custody in final orders requires only “frequent and continuing contact with each parent to the maximum extent possible.” ALASKA STAT. § 25.20.060 It does not require substantially equal time or equal access. Alaska has no statutory preference for or presumption of joint legal custody in either temporary orders or final orders. Alaska has no statutory preference for or presumption of substantially equal parenting time in final orders. Alaska does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Arizona ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 25-403 ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 25-403.02 ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 13-3620.01 ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 25-415</p>	A+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arizona statutes strongly encourage equal shared parenting and maximum practicable parenting time by requiring courts to “adopt a parenting plan that provides for both parents to share legal decision-making regarding their child and that maximizes their respective parenting time.” ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 25-403.02 Research indicates courts interpret maximum time provisions as implicit rebuttable presumption of equal parenting time. Arizona explicitly endorses a “friendly parent” rule. ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 25-403 Arizona explicitly requires courts to consider “[w]hether one parent intentionally misled the court to cause an unnecessary delay, to increase the cost of litigation or to persuade the court to give a legal decision-making or a parenting time preference to that parent.” ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 25-403 Arizona statutes provide sanctions for knowingly making false allegations of abuse. ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 13-3620.01 & ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 25-415 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arizona has no explicit provisions for shared parenting during temporary orders and, thus, no statutory preference for or presumption of shared parenting during temporary orders. Arizona’s statutes do not explicitly require courts to provide reasons for failing to adopt parenting plans that involve shared legal decision-making and maximization of both parents’ parenting time.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Arkansas ARK. CODE ANN. § 9-13-101</p>	A-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arkansas statutes establish "a rebuttable presumption that joint custody is in the best interest of the child" [ARK CODE § 9-13-101(a)(1)(A)(iv)(a)] and define 'joint custody' as "the approximate and reasonable equal division of time with the child by both parents." ARK CODE § 9-13-101(a)(5) If the presumption of joint physical custody is rebutted, Arkansas statutes require courts to "maximize the amount of time that each parent has with the child ... consistent with the best interest of the child." ARK. COD. § 9-13-101(b)(3)(B) Arkansas statutes allow (though they do not require) courts to consider a "friendly parent" factor in determining the best interest of a child. ARK. COD. § 9-13-101(b)(2) Arkansas statutes include an exception for cases of domestic violence. ARK. COD. § 9-13-101(c)(2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arkansas statutes do not specifically provide for shared parenting (joint legal custody and substantially equal parenting time) during temporary orders. Arkansas statutes do not specifically provide a presumption of joint legal custody (decision-making responsibility). Arkansas statutes do not require courts to consider a "friendly parent" factor in determining the best interest of a child. Arkansas does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action..

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>California</p> <p>CAL. FAM. CODE § 3040 CAL. FAM. CODE § 3080 CAL. FAM. CODE § 3027.1</p>	<p>D</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California statutes require courts to consider “friendly parent” factors in awarding sole custody. CAL. FAM. CODE § 3040 California statutes provide sanctions for knowingly making false allegations of abuse. CAL. FAM. CODE § 3027.1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting. The presumption (CAL. FAM. CODE § 3080) in favor of joint custody applies only when both parents agree to joint custody. This is not a shared parenting presumption; it is simply deference to fit parents’ joint decisions. California explicitly denies any preference or presumption concerning physical or legal custody: “[t] his section establishes neither a preference nor a presumption for or against joint legal custody, joint physical custody, or sole custody, but allows the court and the family the widest discretion to choose a parenting plan that is in the best interest of the child. CAL. FAM. CODE § 3040 California statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Colorado COLO. REV. STAT. § 14-10-124</p>	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colorado has a legislative declaration which states “in most circumstances, it is in the best interest of all parties to encourage frequent and continuing contact between each parent and the minor children of the marriage after the parents have separated or dissolved their marriage. In order to effectuate this goal when appropriate, the general assembly urges parents to share the rights and responsibilities of child-rearing and to encourage the love, affection, and contact between the children and the parents.” COLO. REV. STAT. § 14-10-124 Colorado requires courts to consider a “friendly parent” factor when allocating parental rights and responsibilities. Courts are to consider “[t]he ability of the parties to encourage the sharing of love, affection, and contact between the child and the other party.” COLO. REV. STAT. § 14-10-124 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colorado has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Colorado statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. Colorado does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Connecticut CONN. GEN. STAT. § 46B-56</p>	<p>D-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecticut specifically permits (but does not require) courts to consider a “friendly parent” factor in determining a parenting order. Courts are to consider “the willingness and ability of each parent to facilitate and encourage such continuing parent-child relationship between the child and the other parent as is appropriate, including compliance with any court orders.” CONN. GEN. STAT. § 46B-56 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecticut has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Connecticut statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. Connecticut does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Delaware DEL. CODE ANN. TIT. 13 § 722</p>	<p>C</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delaware statutes require consideration of the “friendly parent” factor. Delaware is a model for other states in this respect. The state requires courts to hold a hearing before denying or restricting parents’ “frequent and meaningful contact with the child” and to include in their judgment the facts and conclusions that justify such a decision. DEL. CODE ANN. TIT. 13 § 722 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delaware has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Delaware statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>District of Columbia D.C. CODE § 16-914</p>	<p>B+</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The District of Columbia has a statutorily mandated “rebuttable assumption that joint custody is in the best interest of the child or children” except when there are factors such as abuse and neglect. D.C. CODE § 16-914 The statute clearly distinguishes legal from physical custody and the language establishing the presumption of joint custody does not restrict it to legal custody. The District of Columbia has a strong “deference to parental agreement” statute requiring that: “[t]he Court shall enter an order for any custody arrangement that is agreed to by both parents unless clear and convincing evidence indicates that the arrangement is not in the best interest of the minor child. D.C. CODE § 16-914 The District of Columbia requires courts to consider a “friendly parent” factor. D.C. CODE § 16-914 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The District of Columbia does not prohibit a court from considering “race, color, national origin, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression of a party” as a factor in custody; it forbids only treating one of these factors as “a conclusive consideration.” D.C. CODE § 16-914 District of Columbia statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. District of Columbia does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Florida FLA. STAT. § 61.13(2)(c)(1) FLA. STAT. § 61.13(3)(a) FLA. STAT. § 61.13(3)n FLA. STAT. § 61.13(3)a.</p>	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Florida statutes establish "a rebuttable presumption that equal time-sharing of a minor child is in the best interests of the minor child." FLA. STAT. § 61.13(2)(c)(1) Florida statutes require courts to "make specific written findings of fact when creating or modifying a timesharing schedule" except when the court's orders are those agreed to by the parties. FLA. STAT. § 61.13(2)(c)(1) Florida statutes require courts to consider a friendly parent factor: "demonstrated capacity and disposition of each parent to facilitate and encourage a close and continuing parent-child relationship, to honor the time-sharing schedule, and to be reasonable when changes are required." FLA. STAT. § 61.13(3)(a) Florida statutes treat false allegations of abuse as a factor in custody decisions or provide for sanctions. FLA. STAT. § 61.13(3)n Florida statutes include an exception for cases of domestic violence FLA. STAT. § 61.13(2)(c)3.a. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Florida statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Georgia GA. CODE ANN. § 19-9-6 GA. CODE ANN. § 19-9-3</p>	<p>C</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Georgia statutes explicitly define “joint physical custody” as “substantially equal time and contact with both parents.” GA. CODE ANN. § 19-9-6 Georgia expressly encourages that minor children have “continuing contact with parents and grandparents who have shown the ability to act in the best interest of the child” and “parents to share in the rights and responsibilities of raising their children after such parents have separated or dissolved their marriage.” GA. CODE ANN. § 19-9-3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Georgia has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Georgia statutes do not require courts to consider “friendly parent” factors in awarding custody. Georgia does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Hawaii HAW. REV. STAT. § 571-46 HAW. REV. STAT. § 571-46(17)(b)(16)</p>	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hawaii considers “[e]ach parent’s actions demonstrating that they allow the child to maintain family connections through family events and activities,” each parent’s ability to “separate the child’s needs from the parent’s needs,” and “[a] parent’s prior willful misuse of the protection from abuse process ... to gain tactical advantage in any proceeding involving the custody determination of a minor,” as factors in determining what custodial arrangement is in a child’s best interest. HAW. REV. STAT. § 571-46 Hawaii meets the minimum threshold of encouraging shared parenting. Hawaii statutes treat false allegations of abuse as a factor in custody decisions. HAW. REV. STAT. § 571-46(17)(b)(16) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hawaii has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Hawaii statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. Hawaii’s definition of “joint custody” is weak. It requires joint legal custody but, with respect to physical custody, it requires only “frequent, continuing, and meaningful contact with both parents.” HAW. REV. STAT. § 571-46.1

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Idaho IDAHO CODE ANN. § 32-717B</p>	C+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Idaho statute requires that “[e]xcept as provided in subsection (5), of this section [concerning domestic violence], absent a preponderance of the evidence to the contrary, there shall be a presumption that joint custody is in the best interests of a minor child or children.” IDAHO CODE ANN. § 32-717B Idaho statutes require that “[i]f the court declines to enter an order awarding joint custody, the court shall state in its decision the reasons for denial of an award of joint custody.” IDAHO CODE ANN. § 32-717B Idaho statutes encourage shared parenting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Idaho’s definition of “joint custody” is weak. It requires joint legal custody but, with respect to physical custody, it requires only “frequent and continuing contact with both parents.” “Joint physical custody,” though, is defined more strongly as requiring “awarding each of the parents significant periods of time in which a child resides with or is under the care and supervision of each of the parents.” IDAHO CODE ANN. § 32-717B Idaho does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Illinois 750 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/602 Replaced by 5/602.7 750 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/602.1 Replaced by 5/602.7</p>	C-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illinois statutes allow a court to determine temporary custody under the standards and procedures that are used to determine permanent custody. This allows a court to award joint physical and legal custody during temporary orders. Illinois statutes include a statement of purposes that includes “secure the maximum involvement and cooperation of both parents regarding the physical, mental, moral and emotional well-being of the children during and after the litigation.” Illinois statute requires that “Unless the court finds the occurrence of ongoing abuse ..., the court shall presume that the maximum involvement and cooperation of both parents regarding the physical, mental, moral, and emotional well-being of their child is in the best interest of the child.” 750 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/602 Illinois requires a court, in determining the best interest of a child, to consider “the willingness and ability of each parent to facilitate and encourage a close and continuing relationship between the other parent and the child.” 750 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/602 Illinois statutes require a court to consider an award of joint custody upon the application by either parent. 750 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/602.1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illinois has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Immediately after establishing the presumption that “maximum involvement and cooperation of both parents regarding the physical, mental, moral, and emotional well-being of their child is in the best interest of the child,” the statute continues: “There shall be no presumption in favor of or against joint custody.” 750 ILL. COMP. STAT. 5/602 Illinois does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Indiana IND. CODE § 31-17-2-15 IND. CODE § 31-33-22-3</p>	D-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indiana statutes explicitly permit a court to award joint legal custody even if the parents do not both agree to it, though agreement by the parents is an important factor. IND. CODE § 31-17-2-15 Indiana statutes treat false allegations of abuse as a factor in custody decisions. IND. CODE § 31-33-22-3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indiana has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Indiana statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. IND. CODE § 31-17-2-15 Indiana statutes state explicitly that joint legal custody “does not require an equal division of physical custody of the child.” Indiana statutes do not require courts to consider “friendly parent” factors in awarding custody.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Iowa IOWA CODE § 598.41</p>	<p>B</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lowa has a strong presumption of joint legal custody. lowa statutes require that “On the application of either parent, the court shall consider granting joint custody in cases where the parents do not agree to joint custody. If the court does not grant joint custody under this subsection, the court shall cite clear and convincing evidence, pursuant to the factors in subsection 3, that joint custody is unreasonable and not in the best interest of the child to the extent that the legal custodial relationship between the child and a parent should be severed.” IOWA CODE § 598.412.a. lowa statute requires that “[i]f the court denies the request for joint physical care, the determination shall be accompanied by specific findings of fact and conclusions of law that the awarding of joint physical care is not in the best interest of the child.” IOWA CODE § 598.41.5.a. lowa statutes state courts “may provide for joint custody” ...to “assure the child the opportunity for the maximum continuing physical and emotional contact with both parents.” lowa statutes specify a “friendly parent” factor in awarding custody. IOWA CODE § 598.41.1.c. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lowa statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. lowa’s presumption of joint physical custody is not as strong as its presumption of joint legal custody. lowa does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Kansas KAN. STAT. ANN. § 23-3206 KAN. STAT. ANN. § 23-3203 KAN. STAT. ANN. § 23-3208</p>	C-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas statutes express a preference for joint <i>legal</i> custody. KAN. STAT. ANN. § 23-3206 • Kansas statute requires courts to consider “friendly parent” factors. “[T]he court shall consider all relevant factors, including, but not limited to: ... the willingness and ability of each parent to respect and appreciate the bond between the child and the other parent and to allow for a continuing relationship between the child and the other parent.” KAN. STAT. ANN. § 23-3203 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. • Kansas statutes, though they express a preference for joint legal custody, do not establish a rebuttable presumption that shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) is in a child’s best interest. • Kansas has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared physical custody for temporary or final orders. • Kansas statutes have only a weak presumption with respect to parenting time. “A parent is entitled to reasonable parenting time unless the court finds, after a hearing, that the exercise of parenting time would seriously endanger the child’s physical, mental, moral or emotional health.” KAN. STAT. ANN. § 23-3208 • Kansas does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Kentucky KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 403.270 KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 403.280 KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 403.315</p>	<p>A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In two major legislative changes, spearheaded by NPO, Kentucky statutes now contain a rebuttable presumption “that joint custody and equally shared parenting time is in the best interest of the child” barring issues of domestic violence and abuse for both temporary and permanent orders. KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 403.270 KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 403.280 KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 403.315 These provisions subsume a shared parenting policy, “friendly parent” factors, and maximum parenting time provisions. Legislative changes have propelled Kentucky from one of the lower ranked shared parenting states to the top tier. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kentucky has no explicit provisions for domestic relations courts to deal with a false allegation of abuse to block shared parenting. Kentucky does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Louisiana LA. CIV. CODE ANN. ART. 132 LA. CIV. CODE ANN. ART. 134 LA RS TIT. 9, § 335</p>	<p>B-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Louisiana statute has a strong presumption of joint custody. It requires courts to award custody according to the agreement of the parents, unless that is not in the best interest of the child. “In the absence of agreement, or if the agreement is not in the best interest of the child, the court shall award custody to the parents jointly; however, if custody in one parent is shown by clear and convincing evidence to serve the best interest of the child, the court shall award custody to that parent.” LA. CIV. CODE ANN. ART. 132 Louisiana statute requires courts to consider the “friendly parent” factor in determining a child’s best interest. LA. CIV. CODE ANN. ART. 134 Louisiana has a preference that “physical custody of the child should be shared equally.” LA RS TIT. 9, § 335 Louisiana language strongly encourages shared parenting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is unclear whether the presumption of joint custody, which can be overcome only by clear and convincing evidence, extends to physical custody. Louisiana statutes do not specifically require courts to justify, in writing, their deviations from the presumption of joint custody. Louisiana statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. Louisiana does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Maine ME.REV.STAT.TIT.19-A § 1653 ME.REV.STAT.Tit.19-A 1658</p>	<p>C</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maine statutes declare: “The Legislature finds and declares that, except when a court determines that the best interest of a child would not be served, it is the public policy of this State to assure minor children of frequent and continuing contact with both parents after the parents have separated or dissolved their marriage and to encourage parents to share the rights and responsibilities of child rearing in order to effect this policy.” ME.REV.STAT.TIT. 19-A § 1653 Maine mandates that courts consider a “friendly parent” factor. One factor in determining whether custodial arrangements are in the best interest of a child is, “[t]he capacity of each parent to allow and encourage frequent and continuing contact between the child and the other parent, including physical access.” ME.REV.STAT.TIT. 19-A § 1653 Maine statute provides for the appointment of “parenting coordinators” to resolve conflicts between parents. ME.REV.STAT.Tit.19-A 1658 Maine statutes treat false allegations of abuse as a factor in custody decisions. ME.REV.STAT.TIT. 19-A § 1653.3.O. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maine has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Maine statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Maryland MD. CODE ANN. FAM. LAW § 5-203</p>	<p>D-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maryland statutes permit a court to award joint custody. MD. CODE ANN. FAM. LAW § 5-203 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maryland has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Maryland statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. Maryland statutes do not require courts to consider “friendly parent” factors in awarding custody. Maryland statute does not contain any policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting. Maryland does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Massachusetts MASS. GEN. LAWS CH. 208 § 31</p>	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massachusetts statute has a rebuttable presumption of shared legal custody of children during temporary orders; deviations from this require a finding that shared legal custody is not in the best interest of the child and the court must provide written findings supporting such a determination. MASS. GEN. LAWS CH. 208 § 31 Massachusetts statutes explicitly define “shared legal custody,” “sole legal custody,” “shared physical custody,” and “sole physical custody.” MASS. GEN. LAWS CH. 208 § 31 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massachusetts statute does not contain any policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting. Massachusetts has no statutory preference for shared legal or physical custody for temporary or final orders and explicitly denies a presumption for shared legal or physical custody in temporary or final orders. MASS. GEN. LAWS CH. 208 § 31 Massachusetts defines ‘shared physical custody’ weakly: “a child shall have periods of residing with and being under the supervision of each parent.” MASS. GEN. LAWS CH. 208 § 31 Massachusetts does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Michigan MICH. COMP. LAWS § 722.26A MICH. COMP. LAWS § 722.23 MICH. COMP. LAWS § 722.27a</p>	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michigan statutes require parents in dispute about custody to be “advised of joint custody” and if requested by either parent, “the court shall consider an award of joint custody, and shall state on the record the reasons for granting or denying a request.” MICH. COMP. LAWS § 722.26A Michigan statutes require that the “friendly parent” factors be considered in determining the best interest of the child. MICH. COMP. LAWS § 722.23 Michigan statutes meet minimum threshold of a shared parenting policy requiring that “parenting time shall be granted to a parent in a frequency, duration, and type reasonably calculated to promote a strong relationship between the child and the parent granted parenting time.” MICH. COMP. LAWS § 722.27a Michigan statutes allow a court to deny parenting time only when there is “clear and convincing evidence that it would endanger the child’s physical, mental, or emotional health.” MICH. COMP. LAWS § 722.27a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michigan has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Michigan statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. Michigan’s statutory definition of “joint custody” is weak. It requires only that the order specify at least one of the following: “[t]hat the child reside alternately for specific periods with each of the parents” and/or “[t]hat the parents shall share decision-making authority as to the important decisions affecting the welfare of the child.” MICH. COMP. LAWS § 722.26A Michigan does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Minnesota MINN. STAT. § 518.17</p>	<p>B-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minnesota statutes require a court “use a rebuttable presumption that upon request of either or both parties, joint legal custody is in the best interest of the child.” MINN. STAT. § 518.17 Minnesota statutes specify that “[d]isagreement alone over whether to grant sole or joint custody does not constitute an inability of parents to cooperate in the rearing of their children.” MINN. STAT. § 518.17 Legislation enacted in 2024 strengthened Minnesota’s child custody policy statement to endorse “frequent and substantial” contact with both parents in place of the previous “frequent and continuing” contact provision (MINN. STAT. § 518.17(11)) and to emphasize that the presumption of a minimum of 25% of the parenting time to each parent was a floor, not a ceiling (MINN. STAT. § 518.175.1(g)) Minnesota statutes give courts the power to grant or enhance parenting time using a “best interest” standard and specify that increasing the parenting time of a parent with less parenting time to near equality does not constitute a “restriction on the other parent’s parenting time.” Minnesota statutes require courts to justify any custody decision (sole or joint) imposed over the objections of one of the parents- Minnesota statutes require courts to consider a “friendly parent” factor in determining the child’s best interest. Minnesota statutes clearly indicate the content of parenting plans designed to facilitate shared parenting. Minnesota has statutory provisions for the enforcement of parenting time and resolving disputes over parenting time. These include provisions for <i>pro se</i> legal actions. Violations result in compensating time and may include fines and attorney’s fees. MINN. STAT. § 518.17 Minnesota treats false allegations of abuse as a best interest factor with violations punishable as a misdemeanor. MINN. STAT. § 609.507 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minnesota has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared physical custody for temporary or final orders. Indeed, such a preference or presumption is specifically denied. MINN. STAT. § 518.17.1(b)(7) Minnesota statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Mississippi MISS. CODE ANN. § 93-5-24</p>	<p>D-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mississippi statutes list joint legal and physical custody of children first in the list of legal options. MISS. CODE ANN. § 93-5-24 Though this does not establish a legal preference or presumption, it might draw attention to this option. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mississippi has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Mississippi statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. Mississippi statutes do not require courts to consider “friendly parent” factors in awarding custody. Mississippi statute does not contain any policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting. Mississippi does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Missouri MO. REV. STAT. § 452.375</p>	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missouri statutes establish "a rebuttable presumption that an award of equal or approximately equal parenting time to each parent is in the best interests of the child." MO. REV. STAT. § 452.375.2 Missouri statutes require courts to consider a "friendly parent" factor in determining the child's best interest. MO. REV. STAT. § 452.375.2(4) Missouri statute includes a declaration of public policy that "frequent, continuing and meaningful contact with both parents" is in the best interest of the child except for specified cases such as abuse. It directs the courts to select a custody arrangement that will best assure such contact. MO. REV. STAT. § 452.375.4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missouri statutes do not identify false allegations of abuse as a factor in determining custody. Missouri does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Montana MONT. CODE ANN. § 40-4-212</p>	<p>D-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Montana statutes list as a factor courts may consider in determining a child's best interest "whether the child has frequent and continuing contact with both parents, which is considered to be in the child's best interests unless the court determines, after a hearing, that contact with a parent would be detrimental to the child's best interests." MONT. CODE ANN. § 40-4-212 Unfortunately, the language is permissive, not mandatory, so a court can ignore this factor without violating any specific statutory requirement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Montana has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Montana statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. Montana does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Nebraska NEB. REV. STAT. § 42-364 NEB. REV. STAT. § 43-2923</p>	<p>D-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nebraska permits courts to award shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nebraska has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. • Nebraska statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. • Nebraska statutes do not require courts to consider “friendly parent” factors in awarding custody. • Nebraska statute does not contain any policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting • Nebraska does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Nevada NEV. REV. STAT. § 125C</p>	<p>B</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nevada statutes include a policy statement encouraging “parents to share the rights and responsibilities of child rearing.” NEV. REV. STAT. § 125C.001 • Nevada statutes establish a rebuttable presumption of joint legal custody when “a parent has demonstrated, or has attempted to demonstrate but has had his or her efforts frustrated by the other parent, an intent to establish a meaningful relationship with the minor child. NEV. REV. STAT. § 125C.002 • Nevada statutes establish a preference of joint physical custody when “a parent has demonstrated, or has attempted to demonstrate but has had his or her efforts frustrated by the other parent, an intent to establish a meaningful relationship with the minor child. NEV. REV. STAT. § 125C.0025 • Nevada statutes require a court to consider a “friendly parent” factor in determining the best interest of a child. NEV. REV. STAT. § 125C.0035.4(c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nevada statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. • Nevada statutes do not define ‘joint physical custody’ as requiring any minimum level of parenting time for each parent. The statutes do not require courts to presume equal parenting time or to attempt to maximize the children’s time with each parent. • Nevada statutes do not establish a rebuttable legal presumption of joint physical custody. • Nevada does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>New Hampshire N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 461-A:6 N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 461-A:2 N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 461-A:8</p>	<p>C</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Hampshire statutes require a court to consider a “friendly parent” factor in determining a child’s best interest. N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 461-A:6 • New Hampshire statutes include a detailed policy statement encouraging parents to share parental rights and responsibilities and to support frequent and continuing contact with both parents. N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 461-A:2 • Legislation enacted in 2024 strengthened New Hampshire’s policy statement to “Encourage approximately equal parenting time between each child and both parents if it is in the best interest of the child.” N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 461-A:2 The same legislation requires a court to make findings supporting its orders when it “concludes that approximately equal parenting time between each child and both parents is not in the best interest of the child.” N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 461-A:6 • New Hampshire statutes concerning temporary orders allow for the allocation of parental rights and responsibilities during the pendency of the legal action to be determined on the same basis as for permanent orders. This <i>should</i> imply that joint legal and shared physical custody can be part of temporary orders. N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 461-A:8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Hampshire has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. • New Hampshire statutes may imply courts can order shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) during temporary orders but they do not explicitly state this. • New Hampshire statutes specifically authorize courts to modify the original allocation of parental rights and responsibilities if it finds that they are not working <i>but only if the original allocation involved “substantially equal periods of residential responsibility.”</i> This considers awards that involve substantially equal periods of residential responsibility as less legally stable than other allocations of parental rights and responsibilities. • New Hampshire statutes explicitly designate “a parent with 50 percent or more of the residential responsibility” as a “custodial parent” and “a parent with less than 50 percent of the residential responsibility” as a “noncustodial parent.” • New Hampshire does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>New Jersey N.J. STAT. ANN. § 9:2-4</p>	<p>D+</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Jersey statutes include the following policy statement: “The Legislature finds and declares that it is in the public policy of this state to assure minor children of frequent and continuing contact with both parents after the parents have separated or dissolved their marriage and that it is in the public interest to encourage parents to share the rights and responsibilities of child rearing in order to effect this policy.” N.J. STAT. ANN. § 9:2-4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Jersey has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. New Jersey statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. New Jersey statutes do not require courts to consider “friendly parent” factors in awarding custody. New Jersey does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>New Mexico N.M. STAT. ANN. § 40-4-9.1</p>	C+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Mexico statutes create a presumption that “joint custody is in the best interest of a child in the initial custody determination” and defines “joint custody” so as to require that “each parent shall have significant, well-defined periods of responsibility for the child.” N.M. STAT. ANN. § 40-4-9.1 New Mexico statute requires that a court, when either granting or denying a joint custody request, “state in its decision its basis for granting or denying the request for joint custody” and explicitly denies that a mere “statement that joint custody is or is not in the best interest of the child” is sufficient. N.M. STAT. ANN. § 40-4-9.1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Mexico statute does not interpret “joint custody” to require equal, or substantially equal, division of a child’s time. The language used (“significant, well-defined periods of responsibility for the child”) leaves great room for courts to use their discretion in inconsistent ways. New Mexico statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. New Mexico statutes do not require courts to consider “friendly parent” factors in awarding custody. New Mexico statutes do not include a policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting. New Mexico does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>New York N.Y. DOM. REL. LAW § 240</p>	<p>F</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New York has no explicit statutory recognition of shared parenting, joint legal custody, shared residential custody, or similar concepts. In New York, joint custody decisions are based on case law, in particular, <i>Braiman v. Braiman</i> (44 N.Y.2d 584; 378 N.E.2d 1019). • New York has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. • New York statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. • New York statutes do not require courts to consider “friendly parent” factors in awarding custody. • New York statutes do not include a policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting. • New York does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>North Carolina</p> <p>N.C. GEN. STAT. § 50-13.2</p>	D-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Carolina statutes require courts to consider awarding joint custody if either parent requests it. Furthermore, courts may support their custody orders with findings of fact. N.C. GEN. STAT. § 50-13.2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Carolina has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. North Carolina statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. North Carolina statutes do not require courts to consider “friendly parent” factors in awarding custody. North Carolina statute does not contain any policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting. North Carolina does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>North Dakota N.D. CENT. CODE § 14-09-06.2</p>	<p>D</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Dakota statutes require a court to consider a “friendly parent” factor in determining the best interest of a child. N.D. CENT. CODE § 14-09-06.2.1(e). North Dakota statutes treat false allegations of abuse as a factor in custody decisions. N.D. CENT. CODE § 14-09-06.2.1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Dakota has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. North Dakota statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. North Dakota statute does not contain any policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting. North Dakota statutes explicitly designate “a parent with more than 50 percent of the residential responsibility” as a “custodial parent” and “a parent with less than 50 percent of the residential responsibility” as a “noncustodial parent.” N.D. CENT. CODE § 14-09-06.2.1(e) This fails to resolve the terminology when each parent has 50 percent of the residential responsibility.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Ohio OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3109.04</p>	<p>C</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ohio statutes require a court to consider issuing a shared parenting order if either parent requests it and submits a parenting plan. If the court determines that a filed shared parenting plan is in the best interest of the children, the court may allocate the parental rights and responsibilities for the care of the children to both parents and issue a shared parenting order requiring the parents to share all or some of the aspects of the physical and legal care of the children in accordance with the approved plan for shared parenting. Ohio statutes mandate consideration of a “friendly parent” factor in determining a child’s best interest. OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3109.04(F)(1)(f) Ohio statutes include a policy statement encouraging the sharing between the parents of the rights and responsibilities of raising their children and setting up a task force to make recommendations for improving family statute in Ohio. OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3109.0401 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ohio has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Ohio statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. Ohio statutes do not <i>mandate</i> that a court award shared parenting even in a case where <i>the court finds that the submitted shared parenting plan is in the best interest of the children</i>. The language of the statute is permissive (“the court may”) not mandatory (“the court shall”). OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3109.04 Ohio statute has not been significantly revised in light of the recommendations of the task force set up to reform family law in Ohio. OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3109.0401 Ohio does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Oklahoma OKLA. STAT. TIT. 43, § 110.1 OKLA. STAT. TIT. 43 § 112 OKLA. STAT. TIT. 43, § 107.3.D</p>	D+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oklahoma statutes include a friendly parent factor that does not quite rise to a shared parenting policy statement: encouraging “parents to share in the rights and responsibilities of rearing their children after the parents have separated or dissolved their marriage provided the parents agree to cooperate and that domestic violence, stalking, or harassing behaviors ... are not present in the parental relationship.” OKLA. STAT. TIT. 43, § 110.1 Oklahoma statutes specifically permit (but do not require or prefer) shared physical custody in temporary orders. OKLA. STAT. TIT. 43, § 110.1 Oklahoma statutes treat false allegations of abuse as a factor in custody decisions or provide for sanctions. OKLA. STAT. TIT. 43, § 107.3.D 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oklahoma has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Indeed, Oklahoma has explicit language denying any such presumption: “There shall be neither a legal preference nor a presumption for or against joint legal custody, joint physical custody, or sole custody.” OKLA. STAT. TIT. 43 § 112(C)2.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Oregon OR. REV. STAT. § 107.102 OR. REV. STAT. § 107.137 OR. REV. STAT. § 107.149 OR. REV. STAT. § 107.169</p>	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oregon statutes contain the following provisions. “In developing a parenting plan under this subsection, the court may order equal parenting time. If a parent requests that the court order equal parenting time in the parenting plan, the court may deny the request if the court determines, by written findings, that equal parenting time is not in the best interests of the child or endangers the safety of the parties.” OR. REV. STAT. § 107.102(5)(c) Oregon statutes contain a policy statement encouraging “parents to share in the rights and responsibilities of raising their children after the parents have separated or dissolved their marriage.” OR. REV. STAT. § 107.149 Oregon statutes require courts to consider a “friendly parent” factor in determining a child’s best interest. OR. REV. STAT. § 107.137 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oregon has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Oregon statutes effectively give one parent a veto over shared parenting. OR. REV. STAT. § 107.169(3). Oregon statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. Oregon does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Pennsylvania</p> <p>23 PA. C. S. A. §5328</p>	<p>D</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pennsylvania statutes include a “friendly parent” factor for courts to employ in a custody determination. 23 PA. C. S. A. §5328 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pennsylvania has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. • Pennsylvania statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. • Pennsylvania statute does not contain any policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting. • Pennsylvania does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Rhode Island</p> <p>R.I. GEN. LAWS § 15-5-16</p>	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhode Island has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. • Rhode Island statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during either temporary or final orders. • Rhode Island statutes consistently speak of “the custodial parent” and “the noncustodial parent.” • Rhode Island statutes do not contain any policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting. • Rhode Island statutes do not mandate consideration, or even enumerate as a possible factor, a “friendly parent” factor in determining a child’s best interest for purposes of determining custody. A “friendly parent” factor is mandated by case law (<i>Pettinato v. Pettinato</i>, 582 A.2d 909, 913-14 (R.I. 1990).) • Rhode Island does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>South Carolina S.C. CODE ANN. § 63-15-30 S.C. CODE ANN. § 63-15-40 S.C. CODE ANN. § 20-3-160</p>	D-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Carolina statutes specify a “friendly parent” factor as one possible factor relevant to determining a child’s best interest when making custody decisions. S.C. CODE ANN. § 63-15-40(B)6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Carolina has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. South Carolina statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during either temporary or final orders. South Carolina statute does not contain any policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting. South Carolina statutes do not mandate that a court consider a “friendly parent” factor in determining a child’s best interest when making custody decisions. S.C. CODE ANN. § 63-15-40(B)6 South Carolina does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>South Dakota S. D. Codified Laws § 25-4A-13 S. D. Codified Laws § 25-4A-24 S. D. Codified Laws § 25-5-8 S. D. Codified Laws § 25-5-7.1 S.D. Codified laws 25-5-10.1</p>	<p>B-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Dakota statutes empower a court to order joint legal custody so that both parents retain full parental decision-making authority or to divide decision-making authority between the parents. S. D. Codified Laws § 25-5-7.1 South Dakota statutes have been strengthened to effectively establish a presumption in favor of equal parenting time during temporary orders. S. D. Codified Laws § 25-4A-13 South Dakota statutes expressly permit the court to "order joint physical custody in such proportions as are in the best interests of the child, notwithstanding the objection of either parent." S. D. Codified Laws § 25-5-7.1 South Dakota statutes direct courts in ways that are designed to promote joint custody. Courts are required to consider "friendly parent" factors (including whether a parent has alienated a child from the other parent) and "[w]hether the psychological and emotional needs and the development of the child will suffer due to lack of active contact with, and attention from, both parents if joint physical custody is not granted. S. D. Codified Laws § 25-4A-24 South Dakota statutes treat false allegations of abuse as a factor in custody decisions. S. D. Codified Laws § 25-4A-24 <p>(Continued on next page.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Dakota has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. S. D. Codified Laws § 25-4A-26 South Dakota statute does not contain any policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting. <p>(Continued on next page.)</p>

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>South Dakota (cont'd) S. D. Codified Laws § 25-4A-13 S. D. Codified Laws § 25-4A-24 S. D. Codified Laws § 25-5-8 S. D. Codified Laws § 25-5-7.1 S.D. Codified laws 25-5-10.1</p>	<p>B-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Dakota statutes provide that, while an unmarried mother is entitled to custody of the child, this does not create a presumption that it is the child's best interest and a change of this initial custody determination does not require a change in circumstances. S.D. codified laws 25-5-10.1 South Dakota statutes specify that "[w]hether a parent has intentionally alienated or interfered with the other parent's relationship with the child" is a negative factor in a custody determination. S.D. Codified Laws 25-4A-24(9) South Dakota statutes specify that "[w]hether a parent has attempted to influence a custody determination by alleging, falsely or without good cause, that the child or the sibling of the child has been subjected to physical or sexual abuse or abuse and neglect" is a negative factor in a custody determination. S.D. Codified Laws 25-4A-24(14) South Dakota statutes specify that "[a] parent's opposition to joint physical custody is not determinative in itself, but only one factor for the court to consider" in a custody determination. S.D. Codified Laws 25-4A-24(14) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Dakota statutes specify that "[t]he husband and father, as such, has no rights superior to those of the wife and mother in regard to the care, custody, education, and control of the children of the marriage, while such husband and wife live separate and apart from each other. S. D. Codified Laws § 25-5-8 There is no similar provision specifying that the wife and mother, as such, has no rights superior to those of the husband and father in these respects.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Tennessee TENN. CODE ANN. § 36-6-101 TENN. CODE ANN. § 36-6-106 TENN. CODE ANN. § 36-6-114</p>	<p>B-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tennessee statutes require courts to consider a “friendly parent” factor in determining a child’s best interest for custody decisions. Tennessee statutes define a non-custodial parent’s rights to receive school and medical records for the child and to have unimpeded telephone and mail contact with the child. TENN. CODE ANN. § 36-6-106 A Tennessee statute that “permits both parents to enjoy the maximum participation possible in the life of the child” encourages shared parenting. TENN. CODE ANN. § 36-6-106 Tennessee statutes require courts to include written findings of fact and conclusions of law for custody orders unless both parents have agreed to the parenting plan. TENN. CODE ANN. § 36-6-101(a)(2)(A)(i) Tennessee statutes treat false allegations of abuse as a factor in custody decisions or provide for sanctions. TENN. CODE ANN. § 36-6-114 Tennessee statutes require that “[w]hen a child has been removed from the home of one (1) parent and is in the care, custody, or guardianship of the department, the department shall consider and evaluate the child’s other natural or adoptive parent, if available, for placement before considering any other relative. TENN. CODE ANN. § 37-2-414(d) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tennessee has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Indeed, Tennessee statutes explicitly reject any such preference or presumption TENN. CODE ANN. § 36-6-101. (It is only when the parents agree to joint custody that Tennessee presumes that joint custody is in the child’s best interest.) Tennessee statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. “Maximum participation” can be broadly interpreted and does not rise to the level of a maximum parenting time provision. Tennessee has conflicting clauses which promote “maximum participation” on one hand but, on the other, state “neither a preference nor a presumption for or against joint legal custody, joint physical custody or sole custody is established, but the court shall have the widest discretion to order a custody arrangement that is in the best interest of the child.” TENN. CODE ANN. § 36-6-101

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Texas</p> <p>TEX. FAM. Code Ann. §153.001</p> <p>TEX. FAM. Code Ann. §153.013</p> <p>TEX. FAM. Code Ann. §153.134</p> <p>TEX. FAM. Code Ann. §153.135</p>	<p>B-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas statutes provide for a presumption of joint legal custody. • Texas statutes include a policy statement encouraging “parents to share in the rights and duties of raising their child after the parents have separated or dissolved their marriage.” TEX. FAM. Code Ann. §153.001 • Texas statutes establish a “Alternative Beginning and Ending Possession Time” schedule, available at the option of either parent that places the child in the care of each parent approximately 40% of the time, creating a default presumption of substantial shared physical custody. TEX FAM. Code Ann. §153.311 & §153.317 • Texas statutes require a court to provide, upon the request of the parent, written specific reasons for a custody order that varies from the standard possession order. TEX FAM. Code Ann. §153.258 • Texas statutes explicitly allow a court to order joint custody (called “joint conservatorship”) in the absence of agreement between the parents on joint custody. TEX FAM. Code Ann. §153.134 • Texas statutes treat false allegations of abuse as a factor in custody decisions or provide for sanctions. TEX. FAM. Code Ann. §153.013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, equal shared physical custody for temporary or final orders. • Texas statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during temporary orders. • Texas statutes do not require courts to consider “friendly parent” factors in awarding custody. • Texas statutes explicitly deny that an award of joint legal custody (“joint managing conservatorship”) entails “the award of equal or nearly equal periods of physical possession of and access to the child.” TEX. FAM. Code Ann. §153.135

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Utah UTAH CODE ANN. § 81-9-205 UTAH CODE ANN. § 81-9-205(1)(a) UTAH CODE ANN. § 81-9-204(11)</p>	B-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utah statutes allow an order of shared parenting if the court finds it to be in the best interest of the child even if only one parent requests it. UTAH CODE ANN. § 81-9-205(1)(a) Utah statutes specify a “friendly parent” factor in determining a child’s best interest for custody decisions but courts are not explicitly required to consider it. UTAH CODE ANN. § 81-9-204(4)(c)(ii) Utah statutes incorporate a shared parenting policy. UTAH CODE ANN. § 81-9-204(11) Utah statutes establish a rebuttable presumption of joint legal custody. UTAH CODE ANN. § 81-9-205(2)(a) Utah statutes’ “minimum schedule for parent-time for children 5 to 18 years of age” allows the noncustodial parent to opt for a slight amount of additional parenting time than is provided by the standard schedule. UTAH CODE ANN. § 81-9-302 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utah has neither a preference nor a presumption for or against joint physical custody or sole physical custody. UTAH CODE ANN. § 81-9-204(7)(b) Utah does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Vermont VT. STAT. ANN. TIT. 15 § 650 VT. STAT. ANN. TIT. 15 § 665A</p>	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vermont statutes include a policy statement that “after parents have separated or dissolved their civil marriage, it is in the best interests of their minor child to have the opportunity for maximum continuing physical and emotional contact with both parents, unless direct physical harm or significant emotional harm to the child or a parent is likely to result from such contact.” VT. STAT. ANN. TIT. 15 § 650 Vermont statutes require a court to consider a “friendly parent” factor in determining a child’s best interest for custody purposes. VT. STAT. ANN. TIT. 15 § 665A Vermont statutes require that parties filing affidavits be notified it is a crime to make false allegations of abuse. VT. STAT. ANN. TIT. 15 § 1106(b)(2)(C) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vermont has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Vermont statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during either temporary or final orders. Vermont statutes direct a court to award parental rights primarily or solely to one parent when the parents cannot agree to divide or share parental rights and responsibilities. This <i>de facto</i> parental veto of shared parenting serves to negate the otherwise strong maximum contact provisions. VT. STAT. ANN. TIT. 15 § 665A Vermont does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Virginia VA. CODE ANN. § 20-124.3 VA. CODE ANN. § 20-124.2</p>	C-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virginia statutes require a court to consider a “friendly parent” factor in determining a child’s best interest for custody purposes. VA. CODE ANN. § 20-124.3 Virginia statutes state: “The judge shall communicate to the parties the basis of the decision either orally or in writing. Except in cases of consent orders for custody and visitation, this communication shall set forth the judge’s findings regarding the relevant factors set forth in this section.” VA. CODE ANN. § 20-124.3.10 Virginia explicitly permits joint legal or physical custody for temporary orders. VA. CODE ANN. § 20-124.3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virginia has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Virginia statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during either temporary or final orders. Virginia statute does not contain any policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting. The requirement to “consider” maximum parenting time is weakly suggestive and overly broad. Virginia does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Washington WASH. REV. CODE § 26.09.194 WASH. REV. CODE § 26.09.187(3)</p>	<p>C</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Washington statutes allow each parent to submit a temporary parenting plan with a motion that it be incorporated into temporary orders. This plan will include all aspects of decision-making authority as well as residential arrangements for the child. This, in effect, permits joint legal custody and shared physical custody during temporary orders. WASH. REV. CODE § 26.09.194 Washington statutes recognize three methods a court may use to settle decision-making authority in permanent parenting plans: allocation of decision-making authority; sole decision-making authority; and mutual decision-making authority. WASH. REV. CODE § 26.09.194 Washington statutes contain language encouraging shared parenting. WASH. REV. CODE § 26.09.187(3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Washington has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Washington does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>West Virginia W. VA. CODE § 48-9-102a W. VA. CODE § 48-9-101 W. VA. CODE § 48-9-206 W. VA. CODE § 48-9-207 W. VA. CODE § 48-9-209</p>	<p>A+</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Virginia statutes establish "a presumption, rebuttable by a preponderance of the evidence, that equal (50-50) custodial allocation is in the best interest of the child.W. VA. CODE § 48-9-102a (See, also, W. VA. CODE § 48-9-206.) When the presumption of equal shared parenting is rebutted, West Virginia statutes require courts "to construct a parenting time schedule which maximizes the time each parent has with the child and is consistent with ensuring the child's welfare. W. VA. CODE § 48-9-102a West Virginia statutes explicitly establish for temporary orders "a presumption in favor of equal (50-50) physical custody which is rebuttable by a preponderance of the evidence. W. VA. CODE § 48-9-204(e) West Virginia statutes include the following provision: "A parent who has sought and been denied equal (50-50) physical custody, or who has been denied any physical custody, may file an interlocutory appeal with the West Virginia Intermediate Court of Appeals as to the temporary custodial allocation of the child or children, and the Intermediate Court of Appeals shall provide an expedited review of the order." W. VA. CODE § 48-9-203(f) <p>(Continued on next page.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Virginia statutes have no negatives related to shared parenting.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>West Virginia (Cont'd.) W. VA. CODE § 48-9-102a W. VA. CODE § 48-9-101 W. VA. CODE § 48-9-206 W. VA. CODE § 48-9-207 W. VA. CODE § 48-9-209</p>	<p>A+</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Virginia statutes have explicit domestic violence provisions: the presumption of equal physical custody is refuted “[i]f one of the parties has committed an act of domestic violence against the party making the allegation or a family or household member of either party and such allegations are or have been proven in an adversarial evidentiary hearing on the record by a preponderance of the evidence” W. VA. CODE § 48-9-203 & § 48-9-205 West Virginia statutes include the following presumption: “If each of the child's legal parents has been exercising a reasonable share of parenting functions for the child, the court shall presume that an allocation of decision-making responsibility to both parents jointly is in the child's best interests.” This presumption is overcome if there is a history of domestic abuse. W. VA. CODE § 48-9-206 West Virginia statutes treat false allegations of abuse as a factor in custody decisions or provide for sanctions. W. VA. CODE § 48-9-209 	

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Wisconsin WIS. STAT. § 767.41</p>	<p>B-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wisconsin statutes contain a presumption that joint legal custody is in the best interest of a child. “Except as provided in par. (d) [concerning domestic abuse], the court shall presume that joint legal custody is in the best interest of the child.” WIS. STAT. § 767.41(2)(am) Wisconsin statutes contain a strong “friendly parent” provision. They state: “Except as provided in par. (d) [concerning domestic abuse], the court may not give sole legal custody to a parent who refuses to cooperate with the other parent if the court finds that the refusal to cooperate is unreasonable.” WIS. STAT. § 767.41(2)(c) Wisconsin statutes contain explicit provisions which “maximizes the amount of time the child may spend with each parent.” WIS. STAT. § 767.41(4)(a) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wisconsin has no statutory preference for, or presumption of shared physical custody for temporary or final orders. Wisconsin statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during either temporary or final orders. Wisconsin statute does not contain any policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting. Wisconsin does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.

State	Grade	Positives	Negatives
<p>Wyoming WYO. STAT. ANN. § 20-2-201</p>	<p>D</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wyoming statutes mandate that courts consider a “friendly parent” factor in determining a child’s best interest concerning custody. Courts shall consider “The ability and willingness of each parent to allow the other to provide care without intrusion, respect the other parent’s rights and responsibilities, including the right to privacy.” WYO. STAT. ANN. § 20-2-201 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wyoming has no statutory preference for, or presumption of, shared parenting (joint legal custody and shared physical custody) for temporary or final orders. Wyoming statutes do not explicitly provide for shared parenting during either temporary or final orders. Wyoming statutes consistently speak of “the custodial parent” and “the noncustodial parent.” Wyoming statute does not contain any policy statement or other language encouraging shared parenting. Wyoming does not have a specific statute for false allegations of abuse in a family law action.



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