

- family counseling or mediation services between you and your parents
- living with another responsible adult (aunt, uncle, grandparent, or family friend)
- seeking assistance from public and private agencies
- an informal agreement with your parents allowing you to live outside your home

# EMANCIPATION PAMPHLET

*This pamphlet provides only basic information  
about emancipation proceedings.  
If you need additional information, you may  
wish to consult an attorney.*

## WHAT IS EMANCIPATION?

Emancipation is a legal procedure that frees children from the custody and control of their parents or guardians before they reach the age of majority. (In California, this is age 18.) If you become emancipated, you will be able to do certain things without your parent's consent, such as:

- consent to medical treatment
- apply for a work permit
- enroll in school or college

*You will also give up your right to be supported by your parents.*

Even if you are emancipated:

- You must still attend school.
- You cannot get married without parental consent.
- You probably will remain under juvenile court jurisdiction, if you commit a crime.

## IF YOU HAVE A LEGAL GUARDIAN:

All references in this pamphlet to parent or parents include legal guardians or guardians.

## HOW DO I BECOME EMANCIPATED?

There are **three** ways you can become emancipated:

1. You can get married (This requires parental consent and permission from the court.)

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## WHAT DO I DO IF THE JUDGE GRANTS MY PETITION FOR EMANCIPATION?

If the judge grants your petition for emancipation after a hearing is held or without a hearing, you must take your papers back to the clerk's office and file them. The clerk will file the original declaration of emancipation, and give you copies to keep as proof of emancipation. You may need to show these copies to employers, landlords, doctors, school officials, or others who would otherwise require parental consent.

If you want to notify the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) about your emancipation, complete an Emancipated Minor's Application to California Department of Motor Vehicles (MC-315) form and take it to the DMV along with a certified copy of the declaration of emancipation.

## IS EMANCIPATION PERMANENT?

Emancipation is usually permanent. However, if there are statements on your petition that are not true, or if you become unable to support yourself, the court may set aside the declaration of emancipation.

## DO I HAVE CHOICES OTHER THAN EMANCIPATION?

Emancipation is only one of several alternatives available to you if you feel you cannot live with your parents. You may want to consider other options such as:

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- set a hearing on your petition to be conducted within 30 days thereafter.

The clerk will provide you with an endorsed filed copy of the judge's order.

### **Declaration of emancipation without hearing**

If the judge finds that all notice and consent requirements have been met or waived, and that emancipation is not contrary to your best interests, the judge may grant your petition without a hearing.

### **Setting a hearing and giving notice**

If the judge wants more information, a hearing will be held within 30 days of the order prescribing notice and setting for hearing. If the judge orders the matter set for hearing, the clerk will notify the district attorney of the time and date of the hearing. The judge may require that you give notice to your parents and other people of the time and place of the hearing. This is very important, because the judge may be very strict about making sure that your parents were given proper notice before granting an emancipation petition.

Notice is provided by giving or mailing a copy of the emancipation petition to each person the judge lists for you. An adult, 18 years or older, must personally give or mail the copies for you as soon as possible after the hearing date is set, and complete a *Proof of Service* form to be filed with the clerk.

2. You can join the armed forces. (This requires parental consent and acceptance by the service.)
3. You can obtain a declaration of emancipation from a judge.

This pamphlet tells you only about how to be declared emancipated by a judge. If you want to be declared emancipated by a judge, you must convince the judge that you meet **ALL of the following requirements:**

1. You are at least 14 years old.
2. You willingly want to live separate and apart from your parents with the consent or acquiescence of your parents. (Your parents do not object to you living apart from them.)
3. You can manage your own finances.
4. You have a source of income that does not come from any illegal activity.
5. Emancipation would not be contrary to your best interests; it is good for you.

### **HOW DO I GET DECLARED EMANCIPATED BY A JUDGE?**

You will need to complete certain forms and file them with the court. You can get blank forms to fill out from the court clerk's office. The forms you *must* fill out are:

- *Petition for Declaration of Emancipation of Minor, Order Prescribing Notice, Declaration of Emancipation, and Order Denying Petition* (MC-300)
- *Emancipation of Minor—Income and Expense Declaration* (MC-306)

- *Notice of Hearing* (MC-305)
- *Declaration of Emancipation of Minor After Hearing* (MC-310)

### **Emancipation petition**

You must file a *Petition for Declaration of Emancipation of Minor* form (MC-300) in the county in which you live. (Check with your local clerk's office to find out which division of the court handles emancipations. If you are a dependent or ward of the juvenile court, the petition must be filed in juvenile court.) Only you may petition the court for emancipation. You will be asked to provide a verifiable residence address. You must also complete and attach to the petition an *Emancipation of Minor—Income and Expense Declaration* form (MC-306).

### **Filing fee or waiver**

You may be required to pay a fee to file your emancipation petition. Ask the clerk if a fee is required. If you cannot afford to pay the fee, you can file an application to have the fees waived, including an *Application for Waiver of Court Fees and Costs* form and an *Order on Application of Court Fees and Costs* form. Unless waived, the petitioner shall pay the filing fee as specified. The ability or inability to pay the filing fee is not in and of itself evidence of the financial responsibility of the minor as required for emancipation.

### **Filling out the forms**

- Print or type ALL information requested on the forms.
- Sign and date the petition.
- Include a statement explaining your living situation,

why you want to be emancipated, and how you are supporting yourself. If you have children, tell how you are supporting them. You could also include letters from your employer and your landlord.

- If you do not know where your parents or guardians live, you must tell the court when you last saw your parents and what efforts you have made to find out where your parents live.
- If you know where your parents live, but they refuse to sign the consent, you must get a hearing date from the clerk, and give notice of the hearing to your parents.
- If you know where your parents live, but you do not wish to notify one or both of them about this petition, you must state ALL your reasons and request the court to waive notification to your parents.

### **Filing the petition and the other forms**

After you have completed the forms and all necessary attachments, and obtained your parents' signatures (if possible), take the forms and the attachments to the clerk's office for filing. (When you pick up the blank forms, ask the clerk how many copies of each form you will need to bring with you. Be sure to keep a copy for yourself.) When you get to the court, tell the clerk that you are filing a petition for emancipation and show the clerk your papers. The clerk will keep at least one copy of your petition. The clerk will either give or direct you to give the petition to the judge. Within 30 days from the filing of the petition, the judge will either

- grant your petition; or
- deny your petition; or