

**SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FAMILY DIVISION
DOMESTIC RELATIONS BRANCH**

SANTHMORTHY RAMASAMY
NATESAN

v.

SHARECE S. PHILLIPS

:
:
:
:
:
:
:
:
:
:

Case No. 2021 DRB 001623
Judge Carmen G. McLean

**ORDER PERMITTING SERVICE BY PUBLICATION AND SETTING REMOTE
STATUS HEARING**

This matter came before the Court on September 23, 2021 for a remote Initial Hearing on Plaintiff Santhmorthy Natesan’s Complaint for Absolute Divorce, filed July 29, 2021. Plaintiff Natesan appeared and represented himself. Defendant Phillips did not appear.

On August 24, 2021, the Court issued Order Setting Remote Initial Hearing and mailed it to Ms. Phillips to the address on file with the Court. The Order was later returned to the Court on September 13, 2021. Additionally, in Mr. Natesan’s Affidavit of Service, filed September 22, 2021, he certified that Ms. Phillips was served a copy of the Complaint at her last known address by certified mail and attached a copy of the green card. The letter was later returned to Mr. Natesan. Mr. Natesan made an oral motion to serve Ms. Phillips by alternative means.

Before an order allowing service by publication or posting may be issued, Plaintiff must demonstrate that he made a diligent but futile effort to locate the defendant, and must furnish the Court with the following:

- (1) the time and place at which the parties last resided together;
- (2) the last time the parties were in contact with each other;
- (3) the name and address of the last employer of the Defendant either during the time the parties resided together or at a later time if known to the Plaintiff;
- (4) the names and addresses of those relatives

known to be close to the Defendant; and (5) any other information which could furnish a fruitful basis for further inquiry by one truly bent on learning the present whereabouts of the Defendant. From such basic information, the Plaintiff should then detail for the Court the particular efforts which [sic] have been made in the effort to ascertain the Defendant's present address.

Bearstop v. Bearstop, 377 A.2d 405, 408 (D.C. 1977).

In the case at hand, the Court finds that Mr. Natesan has performed a diligent search for Ms. Phillips. Mr. Natesan testified that he has had no contact with Ms. Phillips since they separated in 2015, and does not know her current whereabouts or how to contact her. Mr. Natesan testified he last saw Ms. Phillips in passing in 2017. Mr. Natesan hired a professional to locate Ms. Phillips and tried to locate her using multiple databases and social media sources, but was unsuccessful. Mr. Natesan does not have the contact information for any of Ms. Phillip's friends or family. Mr. Natesan does not know when Ms. Phillips was last employed besides an internship she had in 2013.

The Court concludes that Mr. Natesan made a diligent effort to locate Ms. Phillips and meets the requirements to complete service by an alternative method. *See* D.C. SCR-Dom. Rel. Rule 4(c)(3)-(4), (f), and (g); D.C. Code 13-336, 13-338, 13-340; *see generally Bearstop v. Bearstop*, 377 A.2d 405, 408 (D.C. 1977) (Plaintiff must exhaust all fruitful bases "for further inquiry by one truly bent on learning the present whereabouts of the defendant"). The Court also finds that Mr. Natesan has met the "substantial hardship" requirement in Superior Court Domestic Relations Rule 4(c)(3)(D). The Court now issues this Order authorizing Ms. Natesan to serve process on Ms. Phillips by posting the following Order in the Clerk's Office of the Family Division of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

The Court will also set this matter for a remote Status Hearing.

Accordingly, it is this 29th day of September 2021, hereby

ORDERED, that the parties shall appear for a remote (by video or phone) Status Hearing on **January 10, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.** This hearing may last until 10:45 a.m. Instructions for how to participate in the hearing are attached. Also attached is information regarding remote locations you may be able to use to attend the hearing. Failure to appear may result in the issuance of a default, a dismissal, or sanctions. It is further

ORDERED, that the Clerk's Office of the Family Court of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia shall post the following Order in its office and on the Court's website for a period of twenty-one calendar days.

Superior Court of the District of Columbia

Case No. 2021 DRB 001623

Santhmorthy Natesan, Plaintiff

Versus

Sharece Phillips, Defendant,

Plaintiff Santhmorthy Natesan filed a Complaint for Absolute Divorce on July 29, 2021.

The Court will hold a remote hearing on this request on January 10, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. by going to the website <https://dccourts.webex.com/meet/ctbjm16> and entering Meeting ID: 129 384 9145 or calling (202) 860-2110 or 844-992-4726 and entering Meeting ID:129 384 9145##. If Defendant Sharece Phillips does not appear at the hearing or otherwise respond to Plaintiff's Complaint for Absolute Divorce, the Court may enter default against Ms. Phillips and proceed without her.

So ordered on September 29, 2021.

Judge Carmen G. McLean, Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



Judge Carmen G. McLean

Copies to:

Santhomrthy Natesan
shanthi.natesan@leidos.com
Via Email
Plaintiff

Sharece Phillips
3731 Donnell Drive, Apt. 303
District Heights, MD 20747
Via First Class Mail
Defendant

Instructions to Attend Remote Hearing or Trial in Remote Courtroom JM16

If you are able to do so, please participate by video. If you are unable to participate by video, you may participate by telephone.

Please note:

- If you are placed in the courtroom lobby, please wait until the Court admits you to the remote courtroom.
- When you reach the remote courtroom, there may already be a hearing in progress. Please wait for the judge or courtroom clerk to address you before you speak.
- Before and during your hearing, please mute your video/phone whenever you are not speaking. Doing so makes it easier for the Court to understand those speaking.

To access the remote courtroom by computer with video (two options):

(1) Open Web Browser in Google Chrome and enter:

<https://dccourts.webex.com/meet/ctbjm16>. Select Join Meeting.

OR

(2) Open Web Browser in Google Chrome and enter: <https://dccourts.webex.com>. Select Join Meeting, enter Meeting ID: 129 384 9145.

To access the remote courtroom by smartphone or tablet with video:

Go to App Store, Download WebEx App (Cisco WebEx Meetings), select Join Meeting, enter: <https://dccourts.webex.com/meet/ctbjm16>, enter your name and e-mail.

To access the remote courtroom by phone, no video (or with video on mute):

Call 1 (202) 860-2110 or 844-992-4726 and enter Meeting ID:129 384 9145##.



District of Columbia Courts



Tips for using DC Courts Remote Hearing Sites

Remote hearing sites are available in various locations in the community to help litigants participate in scheduled remote hearings when they may not have computer devices or internet service to connect from home.

The District of Columbia Courts have established five remote access sites throughout the community which will operate: **Monday – Friday, 8:30 am – 4:00 pm.**

The remote site locations are:

Remote Site - 1

Balance and Restorative Justice Center
1215 South Capitol Street, SW
Washington, DC 20003

Remote Site - 2

Balance and Restorative Justice Center
1110 V Street, SE
Washington, DC 20020

Remote Site - 3

Balance and Restorative Justice Center
118 Q Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Remote Site - 4

Balance and Restorative Justice Center
925 Rhode Island Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Remote Site - 5

Reeves Center
2000 14th Street, NW, 2nd Floor – Community Room
Washington, DC 20009



If you want to use a remote site location for your hearing, call **202-879-1900** or email DCCourtsRemoteSites@dcsc.gov **at least 24 hours before your hearing to schedule a remote access computer station.** If you require special accommodations such as an interpreter for your hearing, call **202-879-1900 24 hours in advance of your hearing.**

You should bring the following items when you come to your scheduled site location

1. Your case number and any hyperlinks provided by the Courts for your scheduled hearing
2. Any documentation that might help you talk to the judge during your hearing, including exhibits, evidence, receipts, etc.
3. Materials for notetaking, including pen and paper
4. A facial covering will be required for entry into the remote hearing location; if you do not have a facial covering one will be provided.

Contact information to schedule your remote access computer station:

Call: **202-879-1900**

Email: DCCourtsRemoteSites@dcsc.gov