

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

ANTIONETTE SHAW,

Plaintiff,

v.

SIDNEY MAYBELL SHAW,

Defendant,

**Case No. 2024 DRB 003290
Judge Kenia Seoane Lopez**

SCHEDULING ORDER AND ORDER FOR SERVICE BY POSTING

This matter came before the Court on June 17, 2025 for a status hearing on the Plaintiff's *Complaint for Custody* filed on October 3, 2024. Also pending before the Court was the Plaintiff's *Motion to Serve by Publication or Posting* filed on February 28, 2025. The Defendant Sidney Shaw did not appear. The Court granted the Plaintiff's *Motion to Serve by Publication or Posting* and set a hearing in this matter for July 31, 2025 at 3:45 PM.

The Plaintiff filed her complaint on October 3, 2024. On November 12, 2024, the Court granted the Plaintiff temporary sole legal and sole physical custody to ensure the safety of the minor child, who has medical conditions that have made his care very difficult without formal custody. The Plaintiff filed a *Motion for Alternative Service* on December 23, 2024, requesting that the Court allow her to serve her *Complaint for Third Party Custody* on the Plaintiff and the Defendant by posting, as she has been unable to find or serve the Plaintiff despite significant and diligent efforts to do so. The biological father in this case is unknown.

Before an order allowing service by publication or posting may be issued, the Intervenor

must demonstrate that they made a diligent but futile effort to locate the parties, 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 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 this case, the Court finds that the Intervenor has made diligent efforts to serve the Plaintiff, the only known parent in this matter. The Plaintiff has attempted to contact the Plaintiff herself, numerous relatives and known contacts, conducted searches to determine if the Defendant is incarcerated, sent requests to military institutions, contacted the Defendant's last known phone number, requested the Defendant's phone information from 411, and drove around where she believes she may be staying, but has not been able to locate the Defendant for service. The Plaintiff

Based on the foregoing, the Court finds that Plaintiff has made diligent efforts to locate parties. The Court next considers Plaintiff's request for service by posting, rather than publication. Pursuant to the Rules Governing Domestic Relations Proceedings, Rule 4(f), the Court may authorize service by posting notice in the Clerk's Office of the Family Court for a period of twenty-one (21) days if the cost of publication would impose a substantial financial hardship. *See* D.C. CODE § 13-340(a). The Plaintiff qualifies for as she has already been approved to file this case without paying any fees. Thus, the Court finds that publication would pose a financial hardship and authorizes service by posting of the below notice for a period of twenty-one (21) days in the Clerk's Office on the Court's website.

WHEREFORE, it is on this June 27, 2025, hereby

ORDERED, that Plaintiff's *Motion to Serve by Publication or Posting* is **GRANTED**. It is further

ORDERED, that prior to the next scheduled hearing, **Plaintiff must file an affidavit in compliance with the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act**, which includes certification from the Department of Defense Manpower Center that Defendant is not a current member of the military or contains facts from Plaintiff's personal knowledge that would support that finding. Plaintiff may contact the Family Court Self-Help Center at (202) 879-1212 for assistance with this obligation. It is further

ORDERED, that the attached notice shall be posted in the Clerk's Office of the Family Court of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia and on the Superior Court's website for a period of twenty-one (21) calendar days in order to serve the Plaintiff and the Defendant and notify them of the present action in which they are parties. It is further

ORDERED, that the parties shall appear for a status hearing on July 31, 2025 at 3:45 PM in Courtroom 104 of the Moultrie Courthouse, 500 Indiana Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20001. Failure to appear at a hearing may result in the issuance of a default judgment, dismissal of the complaint, or sanctions.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



KENIA SEOANE LOPEZ
D.C. SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE

Copies to:

Antionette Shaw

Via Email

Antionetteshaw63@gmail.com

Plaintiff

Sidney Maybell Shaw

Via U.S. Mail

4903 Just St. NE

Washington D.C., 20019

Defendant

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NOTICE OF COMPLAINT FOR THIRD PARTY CUSTODY

SIDNEY MAYBELL SHAW YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT a *Complaint for Third Party Custody* has been filed against you in the above captioned matter.

IF YOU WANT TO CHALLENGE THIS COMPLAINT, you must file a written objection with the Court within 21 days, and appear for the hearing scheduled for July 31, 2025 at 3:45 PM in Courtroom 104 of the Moultrie Courthouse at 500 Indiana Ave NW, Washington, DC 20001. If you do not file a written objection within 21 days or appear at the hearing, default may be entered against you and the status hearing may be converted to a default/*ex parte* proof hearing, and judgment entered without further proceedings. Your objection should be emailed to FamilyCourtCIC@dcsc.gov, and directed to the Domestic Relations Branch Clerk, Family Court, Superior Court of the District of Columbia, 500 Indiana Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20001.

IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO CHALLENGE THIS COMPLAINT, you may consent to the relief sought prior to the status hearing scheduled for July 31, 2025 at 3:45 PM in Courtroom 104. For more information on how to file a Consent Answer, please contact the Family Court Self-Help Center by telephone number (202) 879-0096.

FAILURE TO RESPOND IN THIS MATTER MAY RESULT IN THE ENTRANCE OF A PERMANENT CUSTODY ORDER WITHOUT YOUR PARTICIPATION.



KENIA SEOANE LOPEZ
D.C. SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE

Copies to:

Antionette Shaw

Via Email

Antionetteshaw63@gmail.com

Plaintiff

Sidney Maybell Shaw

By posting