

Rule 17.200—Form 204: Original Notice for Personal Service

Petitioner must serve the Petition on Respondent within 90 days after filing the Petition. Failure to meet this deadline may result in the court dismissing the divorce case.

Read the [Guide to Representing Yourself in an Iowa Divorce Case with Children](#) on the Iowa Judicial Branch website for additional important instructions. Iowa divorce forms are available free of charge on the [Iowa Judicial Branch website](#).

-  If filing electronically, **Petitioner** must complete this form.
-  If filing in paper, Petitioner must use form 204a.

If you do not understand how to use this form, or if you should use this form, talk to an attorney.

In the Iowa District Court for _____ County
County where Petition is filed

Upon the Petition of

Petitioner *Full name: first, middle, last*

and concerning

Respondent *Full name: first, middle, last*

Original Notice for Personal Service

To Respondent Named Above

- Petitioner (your spouse) has filed a divorce lawsuit naming you as Respondent.
- A copy of the Petition for Dissolution of Marriage with Children is attached to this Notice.
- Petitioner asks for a divorce.

Petitioner's contact information during the divorce case: _____
Petitioner's name

Mailing address *City* *State* *ZIP code*

(_____) _____
Phone number *Email address*

Important instructions for Respondent on next page

If you need assistance to participate in court due to a disability, contact the disability coordinator at: (_____) _____. Persons who are hearing or speech impaired may call Relay Iowa TTY (1-800-735-2942). **Disability coordinators cannot provide legal advice.** Disability coordinator contact information available at: http://www.iowacourts.gov/Administration/Directorries/ADA_Access/.

Instructions to Respondent

- A. You **must** file an Answer or a Motion with the clerk of court in the above county within **20 days** after you receive this Original Notice. If you do not file an Answer or Motion within **20 days** after receiving this Original Notice, the **court may enter a judgment against you** giving Petitioner what he or she asked for in the Petition.
- B. For help in your divorce case, and for forms that you must use if you choose to represent yourself without an attorney, visit the Iowa Judicial Branch website at <http://www.iowacourts.gov/> and click on “Court Rules & Forms” or on “For the Public.”
- C. If you received Petition form **201**, you may use Answer form **215**.
- D. This case has been filed in a county that uses electronic filing. You must register to eFile through the Iowa Judicial Branch website at <https://www.iowacourts.state.ia.us/Efile> and obtain a log in and password for filing and viewing documents in your case and for receiving service and notices from the court.
 - For general rules and information on electronic filing, refer to the Iowa Court Rules Chapter 16 Pertaining to the Use of the Electronic Document Management System, available on the Iowa Judicial Branch website.
 - For court rules on the Protection of Personal Privacy in court filings, refer to Division VI of the Iowa Court Rules Chapter 16.
 - If you are unable to proceed electronically, you must receive permission from the court to file in paper. Contact the clerk of court in the county where the petition was filed for more information on being excused from electronic filing.
- E. If you electronically file your Answer or Motion, it will be served automatically on Petitioner or on Petitioner’s attorney(s). A Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) will tell you if the court has excused Petitioner from electronic filing. If the court has excused Petitioner from electronic filing, you must mail a copy of your Answer or Motion to Petitioner.

Important Notice to Respondent

You should talk to an attorney at once to protect your interests.