



## What to Do if Your Spouse Controls the Finances and Financial Records

It's quite common in a marriage for one spouse to be in charge of the finances and paperwork for every part of a family's life. The downside of this in a divorce is that if you are not the person keeping the information, you may encounter some problems in getting what you need.

Some spouses will attempt to hide asset information. Others will just be flat-out difficult when it comes to turning over records. There may be instances where a spouse will also completely refuse to comply with a request.

This is why it's best to gather as much information as possible before you make your spouse aware of your intentions. By law, you are entitled to see all of the pertinent documents during a divorce, but this doesn't mean they'll always be easy to obtain.

In an acrimonious divorce, you may need to rely on a formal discovery process, using subpoenas and interrogatories to fully uncover what you are entitled to see. In other instances, you may need to retain the services of a forensic accountant. A certified divorce financial analyst will also know what to look at and what to ask for that will have relevance to your situation.

It may be difficult, but it's best to keep an open line of communication with your spouse as you exchange information. Some couples find it impossible to talk to their spouses after an initial split, and that's understandable.

However, just because you've separated does not mean you are done in your relationship with that person. The better your communication and cooperation are, the quicker and easier your divorce will be.

## Ways to Protect Your Assets During a Divorce

- ✓ Know what you have
- ✓ Make Copies of Important Financial Records
- ✓ Begin to Establish Financial Independence
- ✓ Be Vigilant
- ✓ Don't Overlook Retirement Plans and Life Insurance
- ✓ Don't Make Emotional Decisions



## Don't Confuse Protecting Your Assets with Hiding Your Assets