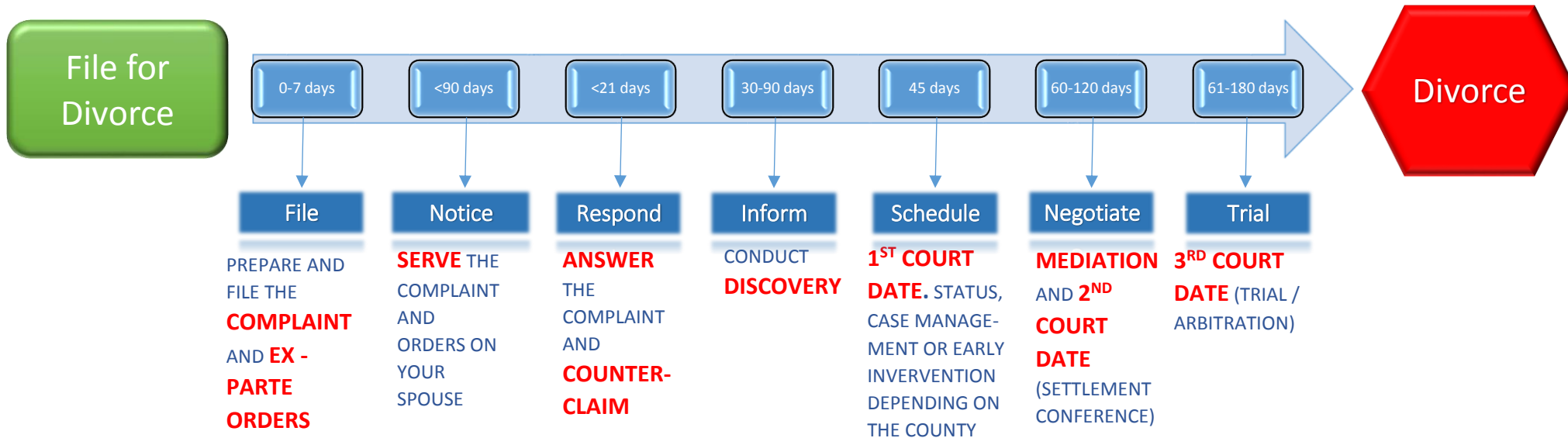


The DETAILED Divorce Process



Definitions:

Complaint: The formal divorce lawsuit which is filed with the court. **Counterclaim:** A counterclaim for divorce is a lawsuit against the party who filed first.

Ex Parte Orders: Optional Orders submitted with the complaint. Typically to preserve property and maintain the financial status quo during the divorce process.

Serve: Placing your spouse on legal notice of the divorce. Typically by a process server. Service must be completed within 90 days of filing the complaint.

Discovery: The process of "discovering" the nature and extent of the marital estate and contested issues. (e.g. Interrogatories, Subpoenas and Depositions)

Mediation: A facilitated settlement meeting with a neutral 3rd party.

Settlement Conference: A court appearance where the court may try to facilitate settlement if mediation was unsuccessful.

Trial / Arbitration: A Trial is before a Judge. Arbitration is before a private judge. Parties must agree to arbitration and the right to appeal is limited.

Key learnings: Most cases settle before trial. A case can settle at any time during the process. The statutory waiting period for a divorce without minor children is 60 days and 180 days with minor children. Most divorce cases (with and without children) are completed in six months or less. Complex cases may take longer.