

# All's Fair in Love and COVID: Marriage and Divorce in a Pandemic

*Marriages & divorces dropped off at the start of the pandemic and haven't bounced back as expected as states have lifted restrictions. by Catherine Kimble*

HOUSTON, TEXAS, UNITED STATES, April 16, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A study by Bowling Green State University's Center for Family and Demographic Research analyzed the marriage and divorce rates in five states- Florida, Arizona, New Hampshire, Missouri, and Oregon. According to the study, if these trends "were repeated nationwide, the U.S. had an estimated 'shortfall' of 339,917 marriages and 191,053 divorces, according to the paper by Bowling Green's Wendy Manning and Krista Payne. In 2019, there were roughly 2.2 million marriages in the U.S., and about 1 million divorces."



Maria S. Lowry, Houston, Texas Family Law Attorney

Having a decrease in marriages and divorces in March and April 2020 was expected with the shutdowns and stay-at-home orders. However, when many states started reopening in the summer and fall, there was not an influx of marriages and divorces that would indicate that people were waiting until reopening occurred.

“

There are many times when an in-person hearing or trial is still preferable.”

*Maria S. Lowry, Houston Family Law Attorney*

However, this was not the case everywhere. According to Bloomberg Wealth, “One exception is Arizona, where divorce numbers did bounce back over the summer to bring the state slightly above expected levels.”

While divorces were actually down, "In the first half of 2020, there were signs of an impending spike in divorce, with reports of a surge of filings in China as it came out of quarantine, and a disturbing rise in domestic violence arrests and calls to the police while U.S. cities were under stay-at-home orders in March" according to Bloomberg Wealth.

Even though the divorce rate is down, it does not necessarily mean that couples are happier in their marriages. According to Wendy Manning, a sociology professor who is the director of the Center for Family and Demographic Research, "Divorce can be expensive, and couples may be reluctant while facing economic uncertainty and/or health issues. These folks may feel 'stuck' and they could be delaying divorce until life feels more normal."

With having to spend more time together, problems about the other person that could have been ignored or at least tolerated before the COVID-19 lockdown are coming to the surface.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, some people are getting divorced over Zoom. One unexpected advantage of going to court proceedings over Zoom is that it can save time. In the past, you may have had to wait around the courthouse for an hour to see a judge for a five-minute proceeding. Zoom calls eliminate that wait. According to [Houston family law attorney Maria S. Lowry](#), most divorce cases are currently being handled remotely, and even mediation is being held via Zoom. This is a good solution, says Lowry, and for many families, it is superior to being in person. As the Harris County courts open up, Lowry expects them to continue to hold some proceedings via Zoom. "Of course," says Lowry, "there are many times when an in-person hearing or trial is still preferable."

Even though Zoom meetings may be saving time, it is not making the emotional toll of divorce any easier. Divorced parents are unsure how to deal with co-parenting and schooling during the pandemic with some places doing virtual schooling or a hybrid of in-person and virtual schooling. Also, there could be struggles if the couple has different views on COVID-19 restrictions and how to deal with them.

Even if you do not have kids, splitting up during the pandemic can still be difficult. For one thing, establishing a separate residence during the pandemic is no easy feat. Even absent the threat of COVID-19, attorney Lowry has found that many families continue to live in the same house even though separated (Lowry notes that Texas does not have "legal separation" as some other states do). This may be because money is tight or to enable the parents to co-parent and keep the family unit as stable and consistent as possible. If there are children, Lowry explains that the parents can go ahead and settle custody and support issues while staying in the same home and waiting on the actual divorce. "Another option," says Lowry, "is a cohabitation agreement that sets out some rules such as how bills will be handled, decisions about personal property, and whether the parties will be allowed to date or have overnight guests."

Speaking of dating post-divorce, finding new love in the midst of a lockdown can be challenging, to say the least. The prospect of not meeting someone new might be another reason couples are

holding off from filing for divorce until restrictions are eased.

Some people do not like doing their divorce proceedings over Zoom. They would rather have their lawyer there next to them. This helps to have a human connection and to make the person feel like they are not alone. Meeting with your lawyer privately during a divorce mediation can also be difficult without the right technology and careful planning in advance of the mediation.□

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed how we do just about everything, including marriage and divorce. It is still too early to determine how the pandemic will affect these institutions long-term.

Maria S. Lowry

Law Offices of Maria Lowry, PLLC

+1 713-850-8859

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/538722082>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2021 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.