E-FILED 2024 OCT 14 4:21 PM JEFFERSON - CLERK OF DISTRICT COURT

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF IOWA
IN AND FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY

Frederick Shaddock, **Petitioner,** ***pro se*** v. **Oksana Shemet Shaddock,** **Respondent**	**Case No. CDCV402015** **REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF ATTORNEY CONFLICT OF INTEREST RESTRICTION**

COMES NOW, Petitioner, Frederick Shaddock, and respectfully requests that the Court issue an order waiving the conflict of interest restriction preventing local attorneys from representing Petitioner due to Respondent, Oksana Shaddock, briefly interviewing with them in the past, but not engaging their services.

Respondent is represented by **Joseph Pavelich, Esq.,** while Petitioner has been forced to represent himself ***pro se*** due to Respondent's actions in consulting various local attorneys, creating an undue conflict of interest despite not retaining their services. This restriction has severely impacted Petitioner's ability to obtain proper legal representation as the final divorce hearing is scheduled for **January 30, 2025**, which is only a few months away. Petitioner urgently needs to prepare for this hearing as soon as possible to ensure a fair and comprehensive presentation of his case.

Fairfield is a small town of about 10,000 people, with a limited number of attorneys who handle family law and divorce cases. Respondent's consultations with local attorneys have effectively prevented Petitioner from securing legal representation. As a result, Petitioner has had to proceed ***pro se***, relying solely on **ChatGPT**, an Artificial Intelligence website that has no such attorney conflict of interest restrictions, to help prepare motions and navigate the legal process.

This conflict of interest restriction has placed Petitioner at a significant disadvantage. Without proper legal guidance, Petitioner has made filings and statements that a professional attorney might have advised against. The complexity of this divorce case requires professional legal support, which Petitioner has been unable to secure due to Respondent's brief consultations with local attorneys.

The limited attorneys in Fairfield who handle divorce cases include:

1. Brown Law Office
2. Foss, Kuiken, Cochran, Helling & Willman, P.C.
3. Miller Law Office
4. Morrissey Law Offices
5. Any other attorney Respondent may have interviewed, but with whom she did not sign a retainer agreement or contract, nor exchange payment.

Respondent's "shopping around" for legal representation has unnecessarily created conflict of interest barriers, preventing these attorneys from representing Petitioner, despite no formal attorney-client relationship being established. Additionally, Respondent would have to pay higher fees to hire attorneys from out of town, causing him financial hardship, which could be avoided if local attorneys were permitted to represent Petitioner.

Petitioner urgently requires legal counsel to adequately prepare for the upcoming final divorce hearing in January. Continuing ***pro se*** with only the assistance of ChatGPT would severely impair Petitioner's ability to properly present his case, for an equitable distribution of marital assets..

LEGAL BASIS FOR WAIVER

The primary purpose of conflict of interest rules is to protect clients' confidential information and avoid divided loyalties in legal representation. However, in this case, no attorney-client relationship was formed between Respondent and the attorneys she consulted, and no confidential information was exchanged. Therefore, there is no legitimate risk or reason to restrict these attorneys from representing Petitioner.

REQUEST FOR RELIEF

In light of the foregoing, Petitioner respectfully requests that the Court:

1. **Issue an Order waiving the conflict of interest restriction** for the attorneys in question, including any attorney Respondent may have interviewed but did not retain through a formal retainer or payment.
2. **Permit these attorneys to represent the Petitioner** in this divorce proceeding, allowing Petitioner the opportunity to prepare properly for the final divorce hearing scheduled for January 30, 2025.
3. **Enable Petitioner to move forward with professional legal representation** instead of continuing to represent himself **pro se** with only the robotic assistance of ChatGPT.
4. **Help Respondent avoid financial hardship** by allowing the Petitioner to hire local counsel, rather than forcing him to hire out-of-town attorneys who would charge more for travel time, creating an unnecessary financial burden.

This request is made in good faith to ensure that Petitioner is not unjustly disadvantaged due to the limited legal resources available in Fairfield and to facilitate a fair and just resolution of the divorce proceedings.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,
Frederick Shaddock, Petitioner, pro se
Date: October 14, 2024
cc: Joseph Pavelich, Esq., Attorney for Respondent (via electronic filing)
Oksana Shemet Shaddock, Respondent (via electronic filing)