

Massachusetts Alimony Reform Act: When Does my Alimony Obligation Terminate?

In March 2012, the Massachusetts Alimony Reform Act became effective. Under the Alimony Reform Act, a spouse's alimony obligation now has a termination date, whereas under previously Massachusetts alimony law, a spouse's alimony obligation could last forever.

To determine when your alimony obligation will terminate, you first must know what kind of alimony you are paying. There are four categories of alimony in Massachusetts: General Alimony, Rehabilitative Alimony, Reimbursement Alimony, and Transitional Alimony.

General Alimony

General Alimony is the most common type of alimony. Under this type of alimony, a spouse's alimony obligation lasts for a percentage of the length of the marriage.

- For marriages lasting 5 years or less, a spouse's alimony obligation lasts 50% the number of months the parties were married.
- For marriages lasting more than 5 years, but less than 10 years, a spouse's alimony obligation is 60% the number of months the parties were married.
- For marriages lasting more than 10 years, but less than 15 years, a spouse's alimony obligation is 70% the number of months the parties were married.
- For marriages lasting more than 15 years, but less than 20 years, a spouse's alimony obligation is 80% the number of months the parties were married.
- For marriages of 20 years or more, a spouse's alimony obligation can be indefinite.

In addition to the durational limits set on General Alimony, a spouse's alimony obligation also will terminate upon the death of the payor spouse, the death of the recipient spouse, remarriage of the recipient spouse, or retirement of the payor spouse. General Alimony may also terminate if the recipient spouse has been cohabitating with another person for 3 months or more.

Rehabilitative Alimony

Rehabilitative alimony cannot last more than 5 years, and shall terminate upon the death of the payor spouse, death of the recipient spouse, remarriage of the recipient spouse, or a specific date or event as defined and ordered by the court.

Reimbursement Alimony

Reimbursement alimony terminates upon death of the recipient spouse or a date certain as determined by the parties or by the Court.

Transitional Alimony

Transitional alimony may not last for more than 3 years from the date of the divorce. It also terminates upon the death of the recipient spouse or a date certain as determined by the parties or the Court.

As part of our ongoing effort to keep you updated with the law concerning issues that may affect you and your family please note the following...

Alimony Termination, Terminating Alimony, Alimony, Divorce Modification, Divorce, Rehabilitative Alimony, Transitional Alimony, Reimbursement Alimony, General Alimony, cohabitating and alimony, payor spouse, payee spouse, alimony obligation, limits on alimony, Alimony Representation,