



### **Question:**

My girlfriend left me and took our son to another city. The city is about an hour away. For three days now I have tried to contact her to set up visitation with our son, but she has broken all communication with me.

How should go about gaining visitation in this situation? I love my boy and I really need him in my life. Please help me.

### **Answer:**

Unless you already have a court order establishing your parental rights, the first step is to commence paternity proceedings. If she has relocated to another state, you may end up having to go to court where she now lives. You should consult an experienced family law attorney to ascertain how to proceed and whether paternity testing is appropriate to confirm that you are the father of the child.

Once you have a paternity case on file, you should be able to petition the court to set your

temporary and permanent visitation with your son, as well as other custodial rights. Of course, commencing paternity proceedings will also start your formal child support obligations, unless your support obligation has already been set by court or state agency action.

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Mr. Coffee has extensive domestic litigation trial experience representing clients in courts throughout Illinois on all aspects of domestic litigation, including the representation of clients who are current or retired military personnel with issues under the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act and the Uniformed Services Former Spouses' Protection Act, clients involved in state court jurisdictional disputes due to the relocation of one or both parties from or to Illinois, and clients with government or private pension benefit valuation and division issues.