

## **Important Records to Compile before the Divorce**

The most important step is to completely understand your financial situation. Second, you need to make sure copies of important records are in your control. You should obtain or consider:

- Birth certificates - You and the children
- Complete copies of tax returns for at least the last three years
- Copies of all deeds, stocks, bonds, brokerage statements, etc.
- Inventory all items in your safe deposit box
- Copies of all debt instruments - Loans, mortgages, leases, etc.
- Copies of wills, marriage certificate, trust agreements, marriage contracts, etc.
- Copies of insurance agreements - Life, auto, business, etc.
- Inventory of home and personal assets - Photos or video tapes will assist in establishing contents
- Copies of all monthly bank statements
- Copies of all retirement plans and statements
- Make sure all taxes are paid and up-to-date
- Personal auto - Make sure it is in good condition
- Family business - You need to be familiar with all aspects of the financial situation
- Do not sign blank documents
- Make sure you get a complete medical and dental check up. Determine if you and the children have health insurance coverage should you separate.
- Stash some cash. Have enough on hand or in traveler checks to get by on until your attorney can get the court to award temporary support.
- Copies of credit reports from the 3 major reporting companies.
- Contact all credit card companies, mortgage company and other debtors. Ask what type account you have. (Joint, individual, etc.)