



FAMILY LAW

*Written by John Stocks
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Client: I finally got my significant other to propose to me after 4 years of waiting, and he did so romantically at the Seahawks game in front of 50,000 people. Now, he wants me to sign a prenuptial agreement before we set a date. Come on, is this right?

Lawyer: Prenuptial agreements (“Prenups”) are more common today than before— also called antenuptial or premarital agreements. A prenup typically lists all of the property and debts of each person and specifies what each person’s property rights will be after the marriage. One goal of a prenup is to avoid potential arguments in a divorce by specifying in advance how property will be divided and whether alimony shall be received. Prenups are not just for the wealthy. Sometimes, parents approaching their second marriage want to be sure to spell out in writing what will happen to their property when they die to ensure that their children from the prior marriage receive something. Without a prenup, a surviving spouse might claim the bulk of the other spouse’s property. Prenups can also be used to protect one from another’s debts. Because you are in the anticipatory “honeymoon stage” of your relationship, you should be careful and consult a lawyer as you might agree to terms that are not in your best interests, clouded by falling in love; you may not be too concerned about the financial aspects of a breakup because you do not envision the marriage ending.

Lawyer, John S. Stocks, answers questions posed to him by clients and/or by e-mails on the subject of FAMILY LAW.

Feel free to submit your family law question to John via e-mail. There is no charge for this and your question may appear in a future column. E-mail your question to: jstocks@vansiclen.com



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