

Lori Loughlin might walk away from her 28-year marriage with nothing. Divorce lawyers explain why.

By Taryn Ryder 10/22/25

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Lori Loughlin at "A Time For Heroes Celebrity Carnival" benefitting the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation. Wadsworth Theater, Los Angeles, CA. 06-08-08. ID 30010704 © Sbukley/Dreamstime.com

After three decades — and one very public fall from grace — Lori Loughlin and Mossimo Giannulli's marriage may be reaching its final act.

The couple, who tied the knot in 1997 and share two daughters, announced their separation. Behind the scenes, tensions are reportedly high. The exes are "living apart and moving on with separate priorities," a source tells People, adding that "Lori feels betrayed."

"It's not a happy situation for her," the insider says. "They're in very different places right now, and it's unlikely that they'll find their way back together."

To make matters more dramatic, it's been reported that Loughlin signed a prenuptial agreement that could leave her walking away with none of her husband's reported \$100 million fortune.

Separate Property Regime

But after decades of marriage, shared homes and a scandal that sent both to prison, divorce lawyers say it may not be so cut and dried.

"You can sign away everything with a prenup," celebrity divorce attorney [Chris Melcher](#) tells Yahoo, saying "it's possible" Loughlin walks away with nothing. "But when someone's getting nothing, they have nothing to lose."

I spoke with three legal experts to break down what this could mean. 28 years, zero dollars? What a prenup really means.

The Loughlin–Giannulli prenup reportedly created what's called a "separate property regime" — a legal setup that keeps everything earned before and during the marriage completely divided.

"It's actually quite common," [top family law attorney](#) Chris Melcher explains. "The main reason for a [premarital agreement](#) is to avoid having a shared community estate. When you have two spouses, each with their own careers, savings or success, they may want to say, 'Let's keep everything separate, other than maybe a shared home.'"

That's the rationale behind most [prenups](#) with at least one high-earning individual, which are designed less for romance and more for protection — especially when both parties are already successful. In 1997, when the couple married, Giannulli had already built his multimillion-dollar fashion empire, while Loughlin was a *Full House* star on the rise.

No Sunset Clause

Still, after three decades together, two children and multiple homes, it's hard to imagine a California judge simply calling it even.

"Under California law, there's no 'sunset clause' that makes a prenup disappear after a certain number of years," Melcher says. "But there might be rights to alimony or spousal support that come into play, even if the prenup waives it. After a long marriage, a judge would likely order some support because if there's no property to divide, how else would she survive?"

Duration of Marriage Matters

That's where duration matters most. A 28-year marriage carries weight in family court, especially when lifestyle, children and reputation have been intertwined for decades.

"If this were litigated in a California courtroom," Melcher says, "a judge would likely order spousal support because with a long marriage and high lifestyle, the support could be significant."

And while it would be difficult for Loughlin to challenge the prenup outright — particularly because California laws in the late '90s were much more favorable to enforcing them — Melcher reinforces one area remains open: spousal support.

Again, it's hard to challenge a prenup, as Kevin Costner's ex-wife Christine Baumgartner learned, and Melcher believes it would be "difficult" for Loughlin to make a case in this instance.

"It would be tough to challenge the property provisions that keep their estates separate," Melcher says. "But it might be easier to challenge any waiver or limitation on support. That's where long marriages tend to shift the conversation."

College Admissions Scandal

The estranged couple has weathered many storms. In 2020, the couple admitted to paying \$500,000 to help get their daughters into USC as part of the "college admissions scandal," a

scheme that led to wire and mail fraud charges. Loughlin served two months behind bars, while Giannulli spent five months in prison.

"The fact that both of them went to prison is a sad chapter in their story, but I don't think it helps or hurts either of them in terms of the agreement's validity," Melcher says. "It could, however, influence a judge's view on spousal support, particularly if the scandal disrupted Lori's ability to earn income."

Can divorce deals be rewritten? Inside the quiet art of renegotiation.

Even the most ironclad prenup can bend under pressure ... particularly when money, family and public image intersect.

"A prenup can be renegotiated prior to a divorce," family law attorney Gray Ellis tells Yahoo, "but for the new agreement to be enforceable, it has to be signed with the same formalities — in front of a notary — as the original."

And sometimes, that's exactly what happens.

"A desire to maintain image and privacy could motivate someone to give more than required," Ellis continues. "An NDA [nondisclosure agreement] is often used to protect someone's image and privacy, and when used, it may include providing more than the prenup requires.

Sometimes, people who are divorcing just want to do what they consider the morally right thing."

PR Strategy

That moral calculus — and the PR strategy that often accompanies it — can redefine how celebrity divorces unfold. A high-profile split like Loughlin and Giannulli's doesn't just involve lawyers; it involves legacy, reputation and the ripple effect on their adult children, daughters Olivia Jade and Isabella Rose, who grew up in the public eye.

"That could motivate the more monied spouse to give more than legally required, particularly if the other party was a stay-at-home parent," Ellis says. "Sometimes a party may be willing to renegotiate and give more because they want to maintain a good relationship for the children and ensure the kids are well cared for financially at both parents' homes."

Even mediators, Ellis says, often encourage settlements that go beyond the strict letter of the contract. "Prenups aren't always ironclad, so mediators may encourage parties to do something different because enforcement can be an all-or-nothing proposition," he explains.

That can happen, Ellis adds, when there's an argument to set aside the agreement. For example, if one spouse claims they weren't given full financial disclosure before signing or that they felt pressured into the deal. In those cases, a private settlement that gives a little more to the other party can help avoid a drawn-out legal fight — and keep the details out of the courtroom.

Lori's Net Worth Now

What's Lori's net worth now — and does it even matter?

After nearly three decades in the public eye, Loughlin's earnings are nothing to sneeze at. With decades of work on *Full House*, *Fuller House* and *When Calls the Heart*, she's accumulated steady income streams through residuals and royalties, plus real estate investments and

comeback projects since the college-admissions scandal. But as family law attorney Renée C. Bauer explains, those earnings only tell part of the story.

How Much Wealth Grew During the Marriage

“Residual income absolutely matters,” Bauer says. “It can be viewed as part of ongoing earning capacity if it’s substantial and predictable. All income sources are examined in a divorce — what each spouse has earned, what they could earn and what future cash flows might be.”

Still, Loughlin’s wealth pales next to Giannulli’s. If his fashion fortune — once estimated near \$100 million — was protected by the 1997 agreement, Bauer says her team faces an uphill battle claiming a share. “The real analysis isn’t just who made what before the marriage,” she says, “but how much wealth grew during it, and how each contributed. That’s where the real tug-of-war happens in high-asset divorces.”

Intangible Assets

Some of those contributions may not be financial at all. Loughlin’s name and reputation — even after a scandal that landed both spouses behind bars — helped shape the couple’s brand and lifestyle. In Hollywood, that kind of currency matters.

“Celebrity divorces rarely come down to just splitting houses and bank accounts,” Bauer says. “The real value is often in intangible assets — intellectual property, royalties, image rights, brand equity, even social media value. A name, a face or a reputation can be worth millions.” That means “getting nothing” is almost never literal. “It could mean she ends up with only what the prenup guarantees,” Bauer says, “which might be modest compared to what she could have negotiated otherwise.”

Behind closed doors, the lawyers are likely debating what wealth was truly accumulated during the marriage — and what a fair split looks like.”

And in a family that’s already survived national scandal, two prison sentences and decades under the spotlight, a low-drama resolution might be worth more than any payout. “Sometimes peace of mind is worth more than money,” Bauer says. “Paying extra can buy privacy, protect your reputation and get you out of the tabloids faster.”

For Loughlin, who’s quietly rebuilt her career since the college-admissions fallout, that may be the best deal of all: walking away not with nothing, but with her image — and independence — intact.