



# Family Law Attorney Checklist

## INTRODUCTION

There are a number of considerations in deciding which family law attorney will best suit your needs. Among those considerations are experience, ability to recognize and pursue your interests, communication style, affordability, as well as your overall comfort level with that attorney. It is suggested that you write out a list of the issues in your case, and provide it to the attorney at your initial interview.

The following are some questions to ask a family law attorney, the answers to which may assist in your selection process:

- 01 Have you personally been involved in a divorce? If so, was it handled through negotiation, mediation, collaborative divorce or litigation? Reflecting back on it now, what, if anything, would you have done differently?
- 02 Is there a way of proceeding that would both allow me to protect my interests and minimize the amount of hurt to everyone, including my spouse?
- 03 Can you assist me in determining which issues are worth pursuing, and which are not?
- 04 How can we effectively proceed in the easiest and quickest possible way?
- 05 Talk to the attorney about what you understand about the legal area involved, whether it be divorce, paternity, or something else. Based upon that understanding, explain what you want and expect.
- 06 What time frame am I realistically looking at from start to finish?
- 07 What is your hourly rate and how do you bill for your services?
- 08 How much might I expect to spend on this matter?
- 09 What, if anything, can be done to decrease the cost without harming myself?
- 10 What percentage of your cases go to trial? What percentage of your cases are resolved without any court intervention at all?

- 11 What percentage of your practice is dedicated to family law? How much actual courtroom experience do you have? Are you a certified specialist in family law? Will you personally be handling my case?
- 12 How many cases have you handled with issues similar to mine?
- 13 Do you have any client testimonials you can show me? Will any of those clients be willing to talk with me about their experience with you?
- 14 Do you have an overall philosophy in your approach?
- 15 What mediation training, if any, have you received?
- 16 What do you know, if anything, about the other attorney involved in this case? (If another attorney is already involved.)
- 17 What are your thoughts on your ability to achieve my goals?
- 18 Please tell me your understanding of the issues most important to me, so that I know that you heard me properly.