

## Benefits Of Divorce Mediation

Divorce is an unfortunate situation that all too many couples face. Fortunately, more and more people are seeing the benefits of divorce mediation, and settling their divorce in a fair, civil and collaborative way.

**Mediation** means that couples work with a trained, neutral facilitator to help them reach mutually acceptable agreements related to finances and co-parenting. They are in control, not the courts or attorneys.

**Divorcing couples should consider mediation for a number of reasons:** Issues are resolved rather than escalated. Mediators are experts at keeping the decision process constructive in order to produce compromise and resolution. Disagreements will be inevitable, but mediators help the parties work through them to keep the process moving forward.

**All aspects are considered.** Some divorcing couples try to resolve all the separation details between the two of them. In spite of these best intentions, significant matters they didn't anticipate often come up down the road and what might have appeared fair and equitable at the time of divorce suddenly leads to financial ruin. A mediator can make sure all issues are addressed from the start with no surprises later.

**Solutions can be explored.** Florida law protects the confidentiality of mediation sessions. As a result, divorcing couples can openly express long-term financial concerns, ask questions, and explore creative alternatives in mediated settings without fear that details will be revealed in court or legal documents. Mediation encourages dialogue; litigation tends to discourage it.

**Mediation is cost-effective.** The mediation process enables the two parties (rather than the courts or attorneys) to essentially control the costs related to the divorce.

**Emotional costs are minimized.** Mediators do not let conflicts drag on. They defuse tension and do not allow abusive confrontations. Mediators create a neutral atmosphere of understanding and support. Finding mutually agreeable solutions is what matters.

**Mediation is a "civilized" alternative.** Mediation has been called an "adult approach" to divorce. After all, what is a better message, expressed or otherwise, to send to the children involved... "I won in court" or "Mom and Dad worked this out?"

**Parties tend to have a greater stake in a mediated outcome.** Face to face discussions mediated by a professional lead to outcomes that both parties have ownership in and are more likely to honor.

**Mediation fosters co-parenting.** Mediators assist parties to come up with workable, constructive solutions that are in the best interests of their children. The collaborative mediation environment makes it more likely that the parents will continue to put the needs of their children first.

**Mediation takes a long-term view.** Mediation looks to the future, so another priority throughout this process is the consideration of the long-term financial welfare of all parties. This includes tax planning and the financial security of all those impacted—including the children.