



The Institute of Family Living

FAMILY MEDIATION

Family mediation is a constructive, non-adversarial way to resolve family and parenting issues that inevitably accompany separation or divorce. It can help to reduce the pain, the time, and the expense of finding solutions. A professionally trained, impartial mediator assists you and other involved family members to define new relationships, roles, and responsibilities.

While family mediation is not itself a therapy, it is a therapeutic means of resolving contentious family issues. It provides couples the opportunity to face each other without risk and to identify and address the unresolved conflicts that can get in the way of negotiating a successful post marriage agreement.

For example, family mediation can help you determine how and when to separate; how to let go of the past and to develop an effective parenting plan for your children; how to address and resolve difficult financial issues; how to make appropriate personal decisions; how to reduce stress, conflict, and the threat associated with litigation; and how to ensure private and confidential resolution of your issues. It can also help you create a written "Memorandum of Understanding" outlining your agreement, which can then be legally finalized by your lawyers.

Lawyers, clergy, social workers, psychologists, and marriage and family therapists who refer their clients to a trained mediator can help people in crisis deal with the overwhelming transition, which separation and divorce can be. During the mediator's brief intervention, clients benefit from the continued involvement of their primary helping professional. The overall goal is to help divorcing couples evolve successfully from the role of partner and to focus on their continuing relationship as parents for their children.



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