

About Family Mediation

Please Note: This information has been taken from the pamphlet entitled Facing Divorce by **Family Mediation Canada**.

Family Mediation is a cooperative process in which a neutral third party professional helps separating couples develop solutions to the issues facing them.

The goal of mediation is a settlement that you, the separating couple, achieve, that considers the interests of the family members and will be lasting, because you are responsible for it.

In mediation ...

you and your (common law) spouse work together with a professional family mediator to reach agreement on:

- how and when to separate
- parenting plans
- child and spousal support
- division of property

and other important issues.

With the help of the mediator, all options available to you and relevant to your situation, will be discussed in a respectful and open way.

Through mediation couples are encouraged to separate their (common law) spousal role, which is ending, from their parental role (where applicable), which is continuing. Clients learn how to assess their present financial situation and how to provide for their future needs.

Finding a mediator...

Mediators are professionals with specific training in mediation, who come from a variety of backgrounds including law, social work, education and psychology. Mediation services are offered by private practice mediators, a number of mental health and human service agencies, and, in some areas of the country, through government funded court-related services. Mediators in private practice charge an hourly rate which is usually shared by both (common law) spouses.

Your lawyer's role...

The mediator does not take the place of your lawyer. You will be encouraged to maintain independent legal advice throughout the process and you must review the final mediated agreement with your lawyer prior to signing.

The benefits of mediation...

- promotes communication and cooperation
- allows you to control the decisions that affect your life
- is typically less costly than litigation
- benefits children and others by reducing conflict
- is confidential, avoiding public disclosure of personal problems

Research also shows compliance with mediated agreements is higher than with imposed court judgments. The result is less post-divorce litigation.

For more general information regarding family mediation, please visit **Family Mediation Canada** on-line....