

## Family & Divorce

Is this for me?

- Couples or partners who are divorcing, \* separating or considering either as an option
- Families needing help preventing or managing conflict related to divorce
- Post-divorce parents issues such as updating agreements or creating new plans including custody, financial issues, health insurance, vacations, holidays etc.

\* Cases that are strictly divorce are limited to Massachusetts only.  
Next Steps

Contact us at (617) 494-0444 Ext 317 or Ext 368 for a free and confidential consultation.

What to expect when you call us

Resources

Resources For Divorce and Family

General Mediation Information A smart way to build the future

Mediation is an effective and affordable approach to the resolution of separation, divorce and custody disputes. It can help people reach settlements without destroying important relationships and without the intervention of the court. With the help of a professional MFR mediator, couples in mediation create a personal agreement based directly on the needs of the couple and their children, The mediator is a neutral facilitator who helps parties in their own decision making process.

How Divorce Mediation Works

Time and Cost

Reasons to Mediate

Why Mediation?

Mediation helps keep you in control of your decisions and works on your schedule. It reduces tension. Mediation saves you money on legal fees. The result is an agreement that makes sense and that allows for a good working relationship for raising your children successfully. More good reasons

- Direct access to your mediator with individualized attention
- Help accessing legal information, recommended reading and resources on parenting and finance
- Income-based fees to make it affordable
- Ongoing access to staff by phone or email
- Documents that comply with the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- Referral panel of attorneys, financial advisors and therapists

Why MFR? MFR has a reputation for being approachable, supportive and interested in helping people find common-sense solutions to tough situations like divorce. Our divorce mediators are trained and experienced in working with couples in transition.

### What to Expect

When you contact us (or if we contact you by referral) we will:

- Listen confidentially to understand your situation, your immediate concerns and goals
- Explain how mediation works and answer your questions about fees, time, legalities etc.
- Determine with you if mediation is a good fit for your situation
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- Co-ordinate how the other party will be invited to mediation including the option for the mediator to contact the other party directly, if appropriate

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### How Long Does It Take and How Much Does it Cost?

The length and cost of mediation depends on the complexity of the situation and the flexibility of the participants.

Time: An average divorce mediation takes approximately 10-12 hours of meeting time (about 5 or 6 sessions) and this is usually spread out over a few months.

Professional Fee: Initial consultation is free. Mediation is billed at an hourly rate ranging from \$60-\$200/hour. The rate is calculated on a sliding scale, based on the income of each party. Unless otherwise agreed, fees are normally divided equally between both parties.

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## How Does Divorce Mediation Work?

Using mediation is hard work for both parties but very effective. When a couple decides to try mediation, they meet with our impartial mediator who works with you to craft a fair settlement. Together you usually follow a process similar to the one outlined below. Throughout the process both of you are given the opportunity and space to express your point of view.

- With the help of the mediator you identify your priorities, time lines and goals.
  
- You work to generate options for resolving the various issues without deciding or settling on anything until you are ready. You then select solutions that are fair, equitable and realistic.
  
- Usually the mediator assists the parties in recording the agreed upon solutions in a document called a Memorandum of Understanding. This normally covers such issues as custody, division of property, etc.
  
- Parties are encouraged to present this document to an attorney for review before signing. The document can form the basis of the final legal settlement with the courts.

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## What are the Benefits of Mediating Your Divorce?

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A chance for the divorcing couple to make their own decisions on their schedule

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Reduces the expenses to everyone, when compared to litigation and active conflict

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The entire process can move much faster than litigation, thus allowing you to get on with the rest of your life

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Creates clearer lines of communication, a cooperative atmosphere and a plan to handle future issues between parties

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Can provide a sense of personal control over your own life

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Reduces the tension and hostility for the couple and the family during a difficult time that makes the transition easier on you and your children

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Provides people with valuable legal, financial and parenting information

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Helps create a personalized, fair and doable settlement acceptable to both parties.

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