

## FAMILY LAW PROCESS OPTIONS

	<b>Uncontested</b>	<b>Mediation</b>	<b>Litigation</b>	<b>Collaborative</b>
<b>Time</b>	Cases typically conclude in 2-4 months	Cases typically conclude in 1-3 months	Cases typically conclude in 12-24 months	Cases typically conclude in 4-6 months
<b>Professionals involved</b>	0 - 2 Attorneys	0 - 2 Attorneys, 1 Neutral Mediator	0 - 2 Attorneys, various experts as needed	2 Attorneys, 1 Neutral Financial Professional, 1 Neutral Mental Health Professional
<b>Professional Retainer Cost</b>	<i>Typically \$2,500 - \$5,000</i> Often a flat fee for the entire case.	<i>Typically \$2,500 - \$5,000</i> Initial retainer only, not total cost of case. Includes retainers for attorney(s) and mediator.	<i>Typically \$10,000 - \$20,000</i> Initial retainer for attorneys only. Does not include cost of experts and does not represent total cost of case.	<i>Typically \$15,000 -20,000</i> Initial retainer only, not total cost of case. Includes initial retainers for the entire team.
<b>Efforts</b>	Parties communicate directly to settle the issues. Attorney(s) (if any) act mostly in an administrative role to handle the court procedures and draft the necessary legal paperwork.	Parties (and attorneys, if any) negotiate case outcomes with the assistance of a neutral mediator to facilitate discussions.	Parties (and their attorneys, if any) work against each other to focus solely on their own best interests.	Parties and professional team members work together in a group effort to resolve all legal issues in the case.
<b>Information Sharing</b>	Transparency is mostly discretionary. Information is shared between the parties as they deem necessary.	Transparency is mostly discretionary. Information is shared between the parties as they deem necessary.	Transparency between the parties is discouraged. Information is shared only when required by law, or when doing so will serve the sharing party's best interest.	Transparency between the parties is required and necessary. Information is shared fluidly with the parties and the team members to achieve a mutually advantageous outcome.
<b>Privacy</b> <i>Per FL statutes, family law court files are public records.</i>	Details of your conflict remain private. Your family difficulties will not be made public in a courtroom.	Details of your conflict remain private. Your family difficulties will not be made public in a courtroom.	Details of your conflict are made public in motions and pleadings filed in the public court record. Court proceedings are open to the public and made part of the record.	Details of your conflict remain private. Your family difficulties will not be made public in a courtroom.
<b>Focus</b>	Individual Forward Focused. Each party is focused on finding outcomes that serve their personal interests.	Individual Forward Focused. Each party is focused on finding outcomes that serve their personal interests.	Backward Focused. The parties litigate the conflicts of the past in order to convince a judge how to rule on their favor.	Joint Forward Focused. The parties work together as a team to determine the best future for the whole family.
<b>Practicalities</b>	The attorney(s) role is limited. The clients are not provided any other professionals to help them work through the financial, social, emotional, and child custody aspects of their situation.	The mediator (and attorneys, if any) can help negotiate a settlement, but cannot make decisions for the parties. Settlement occurs only by agreement. Mediators cannot provide legal advice.	Attorneys are required to wear several hats: legal analysis, financial analysis, and children's issues. In some cases, the attorney must hire experts (at the client's expense) to assist as needed. There is no professional available to facilitate communications or navigate the emotional aspects of the case.	Parties have the benefit of attorneys to analyze the legal aspects of their case, a financial professional for financial issues, and a facilitator for communications and emotional aspects of the case.
<b>Parties' Control Over Outcome</b>	Parties control their case outcome, but may do so without full knowledge of all the factors that should be considered.	Parties control their case outcome, but may do so without full knowledge of all the factors that should be considered.	Parties control their case outcome, but are fully informed on all the issues and have the assistance of a team of trained professionals. Takes about 2 years for post final judgment in Some dissolution of marriages.	Parties do not control the outcome of their case. The case issues are submitted to a judge who makes all the decisions. Leads to less future Litigations.