



Hiring the Right Attorney

1

How many areas of law do you/your firm practice?

Think of a law firm like a doctor's office. If you want an annual check up, you may go to your general medical practitioner; however, if you require heart surgery, you will want to go to a heart surgeon (not your general medical practitioner). Law firms work a lot in the same way. There are attorneys/law firms that practice a lot of areas of law, and therefore, they are generally considered a general legal practitioner. If you want to make sure the legal 'dissection' of your family and finances is in good hands, then you likely want to go to an attorney/law firm that is focused on the area of law in which you need assistance: *Family Law*.

2

Do you have experience with cases like mine and are you comfortable handling such a case?

After explaining your story, ask if the attorney and/or their team is comfortable handling such a case. It is possible that you have arrived at a family law firm for your initial consultation; however, utilize that consultation to make sure you have found the right fit. Trust your gut. For example: some family law attorneys do not like to handle domestic violence matters, and you wouldn't want to end up with such an attorney. Finding an attorney is like shopping for shoes, just because the shoe is in your size that does not mean you find the right pair of shoes for you.

3

How is a legal case handled by your team?

Depending on the firm structure & the attorney you are speaking to at the consultation, your case may actually be "handed-off" to another attorney and rarely reviewed with the attorney that you met with initially. You may expect one attorney to be the lead attorney on your case, but then you end up talking to or appearing in court with another attorney for the duration of your case. Yes, emergencies and unique circumstances happen where the attorney will need another attorney to fill in, but you, the client, should always know how your case will be handled once you retain representation.

4

How much are your fees?

No attorney can predict how much a family law matter will cost (if someone acts like they do, run); however, understanding a law firm's fee structure can give you a better idea of what you are signing up for. Such fees include an initial consultation fee, a hiring fee, an administration fee, an attorney's hourly rate, a support staff member's hourly rate, travel fees, supplies fees, and the firm may charge back every single expense on a case back to the client (for example: copy charges, postage, faxes, research database charges, etc.). Knowing how this firm is setup can help you prioritize and know what to expect.

5

What is your payment structure?

What happens if I begin to run out of money to pay for legal services? Some law firms or attorneys will run invoices weekly, biweekly or monthly, and then expect immediate payment. Others may give some grace period. Some law firms also may charge additional fees if invoices remain unpaid. Details such as this will likely be found in the fee engagement contract, but you want to be clear on it. At no time should you feel like you're being taken advantage of financially; rather, there should be an open and ongoing discourse between you and the attorney/law firm. Get ahead of it when you can.

www.PeaceofMindDivorce.info

DISCLAIMER: The information provided does not act as legal, financial or psychological advice. While the insights may have wide applicability, readers should consult with an attorney, CPA, financial advisor, therapist or coach in your state to obtain advice with respect to your particular issue and/or case.

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FAMILY LAW ATTORNEY INTERVIEW WORKSHEET

Speaking to: _____

Firm: _____

How many areas of law do you/your firm practice?

What experience do you have working with divorce cases like mine?

Are you comfortable handling such a case?

FAMILY LAW ATTORNEY INTERVIEW WORKSHEET

How is a legal case handled by your team?

Who else may work on my case within your firm? What roles do they perform?

Do they also have experience with cases like mine?

FAMILY LAW ATTORNEY INTERVIEW WORKSHEET

How much are your fees?

What is your payment structure?

Additional Questions:
