

## **MEDIATION: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **1. What is mediation?**

Mediation is a process in which an impartial third party facilitates communication and negotiation and promotes voluntary decision making by the parties to the dispute.

### **2. What is family/divorce mediation?**

Family and divorce mediation is a process in which a mediator, an impartial third party, facilitates the resolution of family disputes by promoting the participants' voluntary agreement.

### **3. What is the primary goal of family/divorce mediation?**

To provide a safe, balanced and confidential environment while assisting parties reach mutually acceptable resolutions to one or more disputes in a cost-effective manner while avoiding court involvement and high attorney's fees.

### **4. What are some of the possible benefits of family/divorce mediation?**

- An increase in the self-determination of participants and their ability to communicate;
- To be able to promote the best interests of children; and
- To reduce the economic and emotional costs associated with the resolution of family disputes.

### **5. What is the role of the family/divorce mediator?**

To assist in communication, encourage understanding and to focus the participants on their individual and common interests. The mediator works with the participants to explore options, make decisions and reach their own agreements.

### **6. What if either one or both of us do not understand various aspects of the matter, such as finances or child development?**

Oftentimes, one or both parties do not understand various aspects of their case, be it taxes, child development, special needs of children or financial issues. Mediation offers a wide array of creative solutions to complex topics such as these. For example, reference materials that are on-point can be referenced, such as child development books. Or, a person with specialized training, such as a financial analysis or a mental health professional, with mediation training, can be involved as necessary. These ideas can be discussed and, if agreed upon by the parties, incorporated into the mediation process.

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