

10 Questions for Choosing the Right Divorce Attorney



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*What doesn't kill you
makes you stronger.*

According to the Holmes and Rahe's Stress Scale, divorce is second on the list of the 43 life-changing events that affect your health. I remember myself as a 29-year-old, having survived 10 years of a rocky marriage with two small children in tow. Divorce was not easy or wanted, yet I found myself needing to make the decision to move out, find another place to live, and start the long, challenging road to divorce. As a legal secretary, I had access to the best attorneys, yet, looking back, I realize I lacked appropriate emotional advice and effective financial guidance and lived day to day feeling anxious and stressed. Under this stress, I needed to make life-altering decisions related not only to my well-being but the well-being of my children and our future. I didn't know where to turn and felt like I was at the mercy of my ex and our attorneys. Even though I had great attorneys, they could only respond to my directions and the Court's decisions. Somehow, I had to figure it out on my own and make the best decisions I could with the information I had at the time.

For 30 years, I have worked as a law office

paralegal and business manager. I am passionate about helping women take control of their emotional and financial futures, especially through divorce. After going through this heart-wrenching process alone, I realized we can do better. I now know the value of a financial planner who understands the legal and financial aspects of divorce. I realize the importance of a therapist who is there when the days are dark and emotions run high. And choosing the right attorney can have a lasting impact on the financial and emotional outcomes of a divorce.

Because of the need I saw among women going through this life transition, I cofounded Divorce U Solutions, a company dedicated to helping women navigate the divorce process in a safe, empowering way, while preserving the dignity and importance of their families. A support team can make life a little easier and less stressful, shorten the process, and save you money because everything is focused on your well-being and your wallet.

The most common question clients ask is, "How do I choose the right divorce attorney?" How do you know this attorney will fend for you and your rights during the divorce process? At Divorce U Solutions, we help clients communicate with their attorneys to ensure the

divorce process offers them the best possible outcome.

The right attorney is critical. You do have rights, and how well those rights are defended depends largely on the attorney you hire. Just because an attorney practices family law doesn't necessarily mean your rights will be protected or that your best interests will be the primary focus.

These 10 questions will help you choose an attorney who will support your specific needs during the divorce process:

1. How much do you charge, how frequently will you bill me, and when will payment be due? How much retainer do you require initially and on an ongoing basis?
2. What other fees, costs, and expenses will I have to pay?
3. Can you give me an approximate estimate of the total cost of the divorce?
4. Are there less experienced attorneys or paralegals who can perform some of the work at a lower hourly rate?
5. Will you provide a monthly progress report free of charge?
6. Will the progress report provide an update on the progress of the projected budget as well?
7. Will you personally handle my divorce negotiations?
8. Are you more likely to tell me what to do, or offer options and expect me to make a decision?
9. Will you be my day-to-day contact or will I mainly be working with

another attorney on your staff?

10. What is the best way to contact you and how quickly should I expect to receive a response?

The answers to these questions determine the type and quality of communication you'll have with your divorce attorney. While it can be very intimidating to sit face to face with an attorney, these questions are important to ask and will play a significant role in the longer-term relationship between the two of you.

If you feel uncomfortable asking these questions, have someone knowledgeable along to ask them for you.

A word of caution if you are consulting friends or family who've recently gotten divorced: Every situation is unique, and what may have worked for them may not be relevant to you and your family.

We created Divorce U Solutions because, having been through divorce, we understand your concerns. We have helped many clients be "in the know" and "prepared and organized" so they can move ahead with confidence. We guide you to state-specific resources. We help you gather the necessary paperwork and assist with pre-divorce budgeting so that you can be as prepared as possible before seeking legal advice. We help you ask the tough questions of both yourself and the attorney so you're informed during the journey. Taking these necessary steps goes a long way in creating your new life post-divorce.

We offer some helpful free resources at Divorce U Solutions, so, no matter how you proceed, you'll have the information you need before making any binding decisions. #UwillbeOK!

If you're thinking about divorce,
we want you to know one thing.

U
will be ok.

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