

## **Your Attorney Interview Cheat Sheet**

### **Find out the attorney's background.**

- How long has he/she practiced?
- How much of his/her practice is devoted to Family Law?
- How much practice has he/she conducted in the particular court where this action will be maintained?
- Does he/she believe there is time in his/her schedule to adequately conduct this case?
- (Hint: Check your state's supreme court website. You may find attorney directories with information on date of bar admission and professional complaints).

### **What credentials does the attorney hold?**

- Membership in Family Law Section of the Bar Association?
- Certification training for domestic relations mediation?
- Certification training for attorney ad litem appointment?

### **How does he/she work administratively?**

- Is there a legal assistant with whom you will be working?
- What is his/her return call procedure?
- Does he/she personally answer emails?
- Who takes care of email and phone calls when the attorney is out? Is it the assistant?

### **Fee**

- What is the retainer requirement for a case like yours?
- Does the attorney have a written fee agreement or letter of engagement?
- What is the hourly rate for attorney service?
- What is the hourly rate for legal assistant service?
- What is the practice for billing for phone calls?
- What is the practice for billing for emails?
- How often will you be billed? (this is important to keep you from being blindsided by a huge bill when you did not realize your retainer was going or gone).

### **Case progress custom**

- Does the attorney usually present documents for review of the client prior to filing or sending to other side? (Understanding that there are factors, such as time constraints, where this is not possible).

- Does the attorney make a practice of immediately forwarding communications, pleadings and other documents which are received from the other side?

**With respect to Family Law Cases, particularly:**

- Does the attorney recommend and participate in the mediation process?
- What has been his/her experience with mediation in domestic relations cases? Has it been helpful?
- Are there any programs to cover mediation costs in cases like yours?
- Has he or she worked with attorneys ad litem?

During this conversation, you should tell your attorney (and you will be prompted by him/her) all the pertinent facts of your case. You should be discerning whether this is a person with whom you feel you can comfortably work.