



A Better Outcome – Faster and Far Less Expensive

At Agreement House™ we firmly believe that the mediation process is what helps lead you to a better future. We believe that the process can educate you on how to reach agreements and how to better communicate with someone you may have seen as an adversary. So let's review some numbers, as we believe it is important to understand that not only will we help lead you to a more agreeable future, but that you will save a very significant amount of money as well.

Most people are shocked at how much it can cost to do a traditional divorce. Lawyers will undoubtedly work very hard on your behalf but at a substantial cost. Certainly, every divorce is different, but it is an unmistakable fact that it takes a lot of attorney hours to prepare a divorce case.

The services the attorney will perform for you may include:

- Meetings and phone calls with client
- Meetings and phone calls with opposing attorney
- Preparation of legal documents such as pleadings, motions, responses to pleadings and motions filed by the other party, subpoenas, discovery requests and responses, etc.
- Preparation for Court appearances

- Appearances in Court for temporary orders, oral arguments, settlement conferences, trial,
- Review of financial documents, property appraisals, and other discovery documents
- Preparation of final documents, property settlement agreements, parenting plan or review of such documents prepared by the opposing party
- Post trial motions or responses to post trial motions, Court appearances for oral argument on post trial motions

While the time spent varies widely, let's put some number to the process for the sake of creating an example of the cost that might be involved...

Wife's attorney -- \$300 per hour:

- *Initial consultation – “free”*
- *Client meetings, conversations w/opposing counsel, review of “discovery” and other documents – 12 hrs*
- *Preparation for trial, motions, etc. – 20 hours*
- *Trial – 6 hours*
- *Follow-up conversations, motions, filing – 6 hours*

Total for wife: 44 hours times \$300 = \$13,200

Husband's attorney -- \$400 per hour:

- *Initial consultation – “free”*
- *Client meetings, conversations w/opposing counsel, review of “discovery” and other documents – 12 hrs*
- *Preparation for trial, motions, etc – 25 hours*
- *Trial – 6 hours*
- *Follow-up conversations, motions, filing – 6 hours*

Total for husband: 49 hours times \$400 = \$19,600

GRAND TOTAL = \$32,800

TOTAL TIME = 5-12 months

Agreement House™ Mediation.... A better way...

Now let's consider a divorce where husband and wife can agree to mediation. With mediation, one mediator works to minimize conflict and to come up with creative solution to troublesome issues. The goal is not just to get a piece of paper signed, but to increase respect, understanding and communication, to move toward a more agreeable future.

Here's how that might work. (Again, as with the prior assumptions, these numbers are for the sake of an example, and can vary considerably.)

D.O.R.A. (Divorce Options Review & Assessment) – Preliminary meeting with attorney and non-attorney mediators, 60-90 minutes, to discuss options and to review a notebook of information needed for next steps -- \$495

Mediation, Standard (half-day to achieve Memo of Understanding) -- \$950 to \$1450

Document Preparation & Filing, Standard -- \$ 500 – 750 (+ court fees)

TOTAL COST: \$1,945 to \$2,695

TOTAL TIME: The court requires a minimum of 60 days, but the mediation process usually is completed in one or two sessions of four to five hours each (depending on couple's ability to reach agreement). Document preparation takes only a few weeks.

(Additional fees could be incurred for special paperwork/filings required for some retirement funds, for additional mediation beyond the half-day, for arbitration sessions, and for court fees)

And then...

While the cost savings with mediation can be huge, and the time and conflict can be dramatically reduced, we want to help make the ultimate outcome better. Sadly, litigation often leaves people angry and resentful. Mediation, in contrast, can help make them more successful in the future.

In a study undertaken for the Massachusetts legislature, ***the majority of people who'd gone through mediation felt they were better able to understand the other party,***

and

half said that the mediation experience had made them better able to conflict and seven out of ten reported that they'd been in fewer arguments in the months following mediation.

We don't just want to help you get to a signed document – we want to lead you get to a better future.

Call 480-496-2201 and schedule an appointment. We'll sit down with you and explain your options and you'll leave with a notebook full of information. You may even gain enough information and insights to reach agreement without a mediation session, and go right to document preparation. Either way, we have the resources to help you make a decision and move confidently forward.

From the Agreement House™ Team,
"Leading your to a more agreeable future,"

John Zarzynski, Georgia Wilder, Dale Dauten, Frank Gaunt, Paula Wigboldy.