



DEBRA BLOCK DIVORCE COACH

Helping you cope with divorce and thrive

Interview Questions to Help You Choose a Good Divorce Attorney

If you are facing divorce, you need good legal representation. It is important to interview at least two or three divorce lawyers to gauge their ability to help you and their fit with the tone you want to set for your divorce. While you should get the best legal help that you can afford, there is good legal representation available to fit most budgets.

Here is a great starting list of interview questions to ask to determine which lawyer would best represent you. I've grouped the questions by purpose.

To assess the [general suitability of the attorney's style with yours](#): (You may have an immediate impression if styles will align.)

- Please describe your style and approach to the divorce process.
 - Describe your level of aggressiveness.
 - Do you prefer to file first?
 - Do you prefer to present the settlement first?

To qualify that there are no conflicts of interest:

- Do you know my spouse?
- Do you know my spouse's attorney?
 - What is your track record with them?

To get a more detailed sense of the attorney's style and fit with your goals:

- What do you advise financially?
 - Division of checking accounts?
 - What do you advise to prevent my spouse from creating new debt?
- What percentage of your divorce cases go to trial?
- How many divorce cases have you handled in the past year?
- What are your experiences with pre-trial conferences and four-way meetings? (Especially important if [considering collaborative divorce](#).)
 - How do you prepare you clients for such meetings?
- Please describe your relationships with the judges and court room clerks in the courthouse my case will be heard? (Having an attorney that has been able to establish relationships within the court house will improve your time there.)
- What percentage of your cases involve your primary concern?

Continued on reverse



Interview Questions to Help You Choose a Good Divorce Attorney, continued

To assess the attorney's availability:

- Please describe your style and approach to the divorce process.
- Will anyone else be assisting you with my case?
 - Can I meet them?
 - Who will be negotiating my case?
- How easy is it to get in touch with you?
 - What is your primary source of communication (phone vs. email)?
 - Will I be able to leave you confidential voicemails?
 - What is your call return and email response policy?
- What are your office hours?

To understand fees and fee policies:

- What is your hourly rate?
 - Rate for associates?
- What is your retainer?
 - Is the retainer refundable or prorated?
- Is your trial fee different? If so, what is it?
- What happens when the retainer is exhausted?
- What happens if I fall behind?
- Can you collect from my spouse?
- Will I receive a monthly statement? If not, how do you bill?
- What extra fees should I expect?
- Will I be billed for phone calls?
- Do you have a minimum unit of time?

To understand the attorney's (preliminary) view of your case:

- How involved will I be in defining the strategy for my case?
- Will you notify me of all developments?
- What problems do you foresee?
- Temporary Order – concerns?
 - Can I get support money during the period of separation?
- Will I have to pay support during the period of separation?
- What are your personal feelings on custody?
- How long do you estimate this process to take?
- How much do you expect my case to cost?
- How do you advise clients to communicate with their spouses? (Especially important to your approach to your divorce.)
- How will you support me if negative communication becomes an issue? (Your attorney should have a proven strategy to handle this.)
- Do you have a relationship with a parent coordinator?