



Family Law
Mediation &
Collaborative Divorce

DIVORCE MEDIATION PROCESS

Many clients have questions about what's involved in the divorce mediation process. Below are the general steps that will take clients from the start of the process to the finalized divorce:

Initial Steps: Mediation Fee Agreement & Filing Documents

- After agreeing to begin the divorce process and signing the Mediation Fee Agreement, Weber Dispute Resolution will prepare the following documents:
 - Summons and Petition
 - Family Law Certificate of Assignment
 - If there are minor children: Declaration Under Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act (UCCJEA)
- These forms are signed by the Petitioner and returned to Weber Dispute Resolution, along with a \$435 filing fee check, for submission to the court.
- If needed, Weber Dispute Resolution will also prepare the Response and Respondent's Declaration under UCCJEA, which will be signed by the Respondent, along with a second \$435 filing fee check.

Declarations of Disclosure

- By law, clients must complete declarations of disclosure to include an Income and Expense Declarations and a Schedule of Assets and Debts. The documents are signed by the clients under penalty of perjury.
- While sometimes tedious, the exchange of the disclosure forms is required before the Court will grant a divorce or legal separation.
- Weber Dispute Resolution will share a DropBox folder with the clients to help organize the mandatory forms and supporting documentation.

Mediation Sessions: Negotiating Agreements

- Clients will attend several mediation sessions to discuss and negotiate agreements on various issues (see the "Divorce Mediation Topics" handout for more details).
- The agreements will be compiled into a draft Marital Settlement Agreement (MSA).

Reviewing the Draft MSA

- Both parties will review the draft MSA and may choose to have independent counsel review it.

Additional Mediation Sessions (If Needed)

- If necessary, additional mediation sessions will be scheduled to address any proposed changes to the MSA.

Finalizing the MSA

- Once all agreements are finalized, Weber Dispute Resolution will complete the final version of the MSA.

Preparing the Judgment Packet

- Weber Dispute Resolution will also prepare any additional required court forms to accompany the MSA. These documents make up the “Judgment Packet.”

Signing the MSA & Court Forms

- Clients will coordinate with Weber Dispute Resolution to sign the MSA and the required court forms.
- Please note: The MSA requires original signatures and cannot be signed electronically or by fax.

Submitting the Judgment Packet to the Court

- Weber Dispute Resolution will submit the signed Judgment Packet to the court for review by the judge.
- Due to budget cuts and understaffing, court review times have increased, often taking 4-5 months. Rarely, the court may return the packet and request changes. If this happens, Weber Dispute Resolution will make the necessary revisions and resubmit.

Court Approval & Finalization Date

- Once the judge approves the Judgment Packet, the court will return the documents to Weber Dispute Resolution. These will then be forwarded to each party.
- The “Judgment of Dissolution” document will specify the date the divorce is finalized, which is at least six months from the date the Summons and Petition were served on the Respondent.

Notice of Entry of Judgment

- The court will send each party a “Notice of Entry of Judgment.” This form indicates the official date the divorce is finalized.
- Later, Weber Dispute Resolution will receive the filed judgment packet from the Court and share it with the clients.