

Working with Advising Attorneys

Here are some tips to help you get the most out of your consultation with an advising attorney:

1. Ask the Right Questions Upfront

When contacting an attorney, inquire about their hourly rate and ask for an estimate of the time needed to review your Settlement Agreement.

Let them know:

- You chose mediation to resolve your matter amicably.
- You are seeking legal advice, not full representation.
- You prefer to pay by the hour for your consultation and do not want to pay a retainer.

2. Be Prepared

- Share the draft of your Settlement Agreement, disclosure forms, and any relevant supporting documents.
- Write down questions you want the attorney to answer to ensure your concerns are addressed.

3. Send Documents in Advance

Provide the attorney with your documents at least five days before your appointment to allow for a thorough review.

4. Understand the Attorney's Role

The attorney's job is to provide legal advice, not to make decisions for you. Expect them to:

- Explain legal information and the potential consequences of your choices.
- Offer a realistic assessment of your rights and how a court might approach your issues.
- Suggest improvements to your Settlement Agreement.

Note: We provide a PDF of your agreement but do not share the original word processing file. Avoid converting the PDF to a Word document, as this often creates confusion and can increase your costs.

5. Take Notes

During your consultation, take notes or record the conversation (with the attorney's permission) to ensure you capture all key points.

6. Reflect on the Advice

After your consultation, evaluate the attorney's advice and decide what is most relevant to your unique situation. Remember, the decisions you make must work for you in the long term.

7. Prepare for Mediation Review

Use your notes and any advice from the attorney to mark your Settlement Agreement with proposed revisions or questions before your mediation review session.