

How to Prepare for Your Divorce

Going through a divorce is one of the biggest life changing events a person can go through. You want to think it through carefully and ensure you take the right steps. Here are some helpful tips.



Garneau Mediation Services

1. Educate yourself. If you have children, take free courses for parents who are separating such as the Parenting After Separation online seminar. Learn about the divorce process by calling your local court information services. They can advise you about which court applications to use and the court process. Find out your rights and responsibilities based on your specific situation so you can make informed decisions.

2. Gather information and documents. Think about who will make decisions for your children and what type of parenting schedules will be appropriate for them based on their age and needs. Collect your Notice of Assessments, T4s, and recent pay stubs so you can properly calculate child support and spousal support (if needed). Put together a list of your assets and debts and any financial papers associated with these such as mortgage, pensions, and investments.





3. Seek emotional support. When you go through a divorce you are going through a grieving process. Set-up a support system of family members, friends, and mental health professionals to help you work through this loss. Remind those close to you that you are looking for someone to listen to you rather than give you advice. A mental health professional such as a therapist, counsellor, pastor, or healing coach has the expertise to assist you and will keep your discussions confidential.

4. Set-up mediation. A mediator, who is neutral, will assist you to reach an agreement that can be made legally binding. This agreement can cover parenting, child and spousal support, and division of assets and debts. It is a private and affordable option that will take much less time than going through the courts. During mediation, communication and collaboration are used to work through any differences. Both parties have a say. The agreement you reach in mediation can be made legal through a lawyer or the courts. An application for divorce can be made once you have been separated the legally appropriate amount of time.

5. Plan for your future. When you are ready, start thinking about what your life will look like after your divorce. You may consider making a budget, setting goals, or exploring new opportunities.



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