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# Legal Options For Divorce

**ProBono (Do It Yourself)** - Dissolution process with little or no help from a solicitor:

- Determine points of agreement, including custody of children, child support, spousal support and marital property.
- Get affordable divorce forms.
- Research state laws.
- Consult a court clerk, who will explain the filing fees, copies to make, where to file the petition, and any other requirements specific to your situation.
- Complete and file the forms.

**Mediation** - The couple, along with the help of a mediator, works out agreements on the following issues:

- Distribution of assets and property
- Child custody and parenting time
- Child support/maintenance
- Retirement
- Taxes

**Collaborative** - A method in which both spouses hire attorneys who practice collaborative law, and the parties and attorneys sign an agreement that requires them to negotiate the divorce through a series of four-way meetings. Includes:

- Full disclosure of assets and income
- Lawyers will draft legal documents that detail agreements
- Participants only see the inside of a courtroom to formalize the final agreements reached by the parties
- Control remains in the hands of the parties themselves, and is never abdicated to a judge

**Court Litigation** - Adversarial process in which each party and their attorney advocating for their separate interests, and both parties go to trial and have the Family Court Judge make the decision

- Petition for divorce: This must be filed in the country of your residence.
- Serving the petition: The other party is served with petition and is required to file an answer or counter-petition.
- Temporary orders: Upon filing the petition, either party may request temporary orders to permit or prohibit certain actions from one or both parties, such as unnecessary spending or interfering with property.
- Discovery: Process of documenting the facts pertinent to the case, followed by mediation and disposition.
- Final preparation for trial: Both parties submit documents to the court which set out how they want various issues.
- Trial: Each party presents evidence on the contested issues in the case, and the judge announces the decision on each of the disputed issues.
- After trial: The attorney for one of the parties must prepare a Final Decree of Divorce.