

COLLABORATIVE DIVORCE TEAM IN FOCUS COUNSELING

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Participation Agreement

Goal of the Collaborative Divorce Team

The goal of the Collaborative Divorce Team is to assist the divorcing couple in achieving a successful resolution of various issues related to their marriage and family in such a way as to minimize the negative economic, social and emotional consequences that families often experience in the traditional adversarial divorce process.

In order to achieve this goal, professionals from several independent disciplines work together as a team to integrate the legal, emotional, and financial aspects of a divorce. In addition to you and your family, your divorce coach may work with your attorneys, the financial specialist, and the child specialist.

ROLE OF THE DIVORCE COACH

The divorce coaches will work with the couple to:

- Identify and prioritize the concerns of each person
- Resolve conflict effectively
- Develop and support effective co-parenting skills
- Enable the family and involved professionals to enhance communication and to reduce misunderstandings
- Keep the collaborative process moving toward resolution
- Refer the client to an appropriate professional if therapy or counseling is warranted or desired

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ROLE OF THE COLLABORATIVE ATTORNEY

Collaborative attorneys will:

- Represent the best interests of his/her respective client, while maintaining the overall goal of a collaborative process
- Work collaboratively with the other collaborative divorce attorney and the rest of the team

ROLE OF THE FINANCIAL SPECIALIST

The financial specialist will:

- Provide ongoing practical financial guidance including planning support budgeting throughout the divorce process
- Gather and document income and expenses, assets, and debts

ROLE OF THE CHILD SPECIALIST

The child specialist will:

- Provide the child with an opportunity to voice concerns regarding the divorce
- Provide parents with information and guidance to help their children through the process
- Support an effective co-parenting plan by providing information to the divorce coaches

ROLE OF THE CLIENT

Each client working with the Collaborative Divorce Team agrees to:

- Work for the best interests of the family as a whole
- Communicate openly and honestly with his/her divorce coach
- Support discussions among members of the team regarding relevant content and process

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CONFIDENTIALITY

You will be asked to sign a consent form allowing the Collaborative Divorce Team to speak freely with each other. This enables the team to facilitate a satisfactory divorce.

What you talk about will remain confidential within the team. Information will not be disclosed to others outside the team without your consent. The exceptions to this latter provision are as follows: (a) if your divorce coach believes that you may harm yourself; (b) if you express an intention to harm someone else; (c) if there is reasonable suggestion of child abuse or neglect; (d) if required by a judge.

If you or your spouse choose to end the Collaborative Divorce process and begin a traditional adversarial divorce, all materials from coaching sessions remain confidential and may not be used in any Court proceedings.

FEES

All meetings with a divorce coach or child specialist are billed at **\$150.00** per hour and are due at the time of service.

After the initial meeting, a **retainer of \$500.00** is due and payable by the time of the next meeting. This retainer will be held throughout the collaborative divorce process and is used to cover the costs of team consultations. Should this retainer fund be depleted before the divorce process is completed, you may be required to pay up to an additional \$500.00 to maintain this fund. After the final services are rendered and the divorce process is completed, this fund can apply to any unpaid services rendered. If your account is paid in full, any unused portion of your retainer will be refunded within ten (10) working days of the termination of the collaborative divorce process.

Since there may be times when you will need to speak with your divorce coach, or child specialist, the following fee applies to extended phone conversations (over five minutes):

\$25.00 in ten-minute increments.

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ADDITIONAL FEES

If you are required to take one of the following questionnaires, the fees are as follows:

MMPI-2	\$ 75.00
MIPS, Myers-Briggs	\$ 60.00
Piers-Harris, BASC, Other Inventories	\$ 30.00

There is a **\$250.00** fee for a written report if one is required.

Telephone consultation with other professionals (not part of your Collaborative Divorce Team), such as previous therapists, physicians, etc., are billed in ten-minute increments at **\$25.00**.

CANCELLATIONS

A **24-hour advance notice** of cancellation is required for all coaching meetings. Because of extended time frames required for child evaluations, a **48-hour advance cancellation notice** is required for all child specialist meetings. Since appointment times are reserved exclusively for you, you will be charged the full hourly fee for a late cancellation or missed appointment.

Failure to pay fees in a timely fashion may result in unnecessarily delaying the divorce process and Psychological Services staff reserves the right to withdraw from the case.

ELECTION TO TERMINATE

If the client decides that the Collaborative Divorce process is no longer viable and elects to terminate the status of the case as a Collaborative Divorce matter, he/she agrees, in writing, to immediately inform the other party, the Divorce Coaches, and the attorneys.

Under no circumstances will the Divorce Coach testify on behalf of or against any party who has been named in this agreement. The client hereby waives any right to have the Divorce Coach testify in any Court of Law. The client agrees that he/she will not subpoena the Coach to Court.

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LIMITATIONS

The Collaborative Divorce process is a positive method toward a cooperative solution to divorce; it is not a guarantee of success and cannot eliminate past disharmony and irreconcilable differences.

Other organizations using the collaborative divorce process operate independently from the Psychological Services Collaborative Divorce Team and have no legal relationship with us.

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE STATEMENT IN ITS ENTIRETY, UNDERSTAND THE CONTENT, AND AGREE TO ITS TERMS.

(Client printed name)

(Date)

(Client signature)

(Divorce Coach/Child Specialist printed name)

(Date)

(Divorce Coach/Child Specialist signature)