

# Divorce Mediation Process Map

With or without minor children, for a **divorce mediation** in California.

**Free Consultation – then:**

## **DECIDE TO MEDIATE**

Each family is different, so we will mix, match, and adapt the items in the following plan to meet your family's unique situation. We may spend one session per topic, or more, or combine two or more topics in each session.

**Sign an "Agreement to Mediate"**



## **BUILDING THE FOUNDATION FOR MEDIATION**

How to Prepare / What to Prepare  
Topics to Consider  
What to Expect  
Telling Your Children

**1+ sessions**



**If you have minor children:**

## **DEVELOPING YOUR PARENTING PLAN**

Joint Custody / Legal Custody / Physical Custody  
Parenting Time  
Developmental Considerations

**1+ sessions**

**Homework:** Bring requested information of "Income and Expenses" that is relevant for child support, and for spousal support if spousal support is needed or requested.



Mediating In-Person and Online

**626.441.1900 | 844.983.1900**  
Georgia@GeorgiaDaniels.com

**DISCUSS CHILD SUPPORT and/or SPOUSAL SUPPORT (as needed)**

This may take more than one session - OR - It may be combined with another topic

½ session to 1+ sessions

**Homework:** Prepare a draft list of assets and debts.



**START WITH A LIST OF WHAT YOU HAVE and WHAT YOU OWE**

Good decisions come from careful consideration of good information.

Do you need any expert opinions of values or issues?

1+ sessions

**Homework:** Obtain appraisals, etc., if needed.



**DIVIDE, SELL, or SHARE**

Begin discussions of who needs what, why, and how to make it happen.

This may be what you think of first, when you think "mediation."

1+ sessions

**Mediator's Homework:** Prepare Draft Agreement for review.



**READ THROUGH DRAFT AGREEMENT**

Propose changes, if needed.

1+ sessions

**Homework:** Optional but recommended — Take Draft Agreement for review by a Mediation-Friendly Attorney. May then renegotiate some items.



**READ THROUGH FINAL AGREEMENT & SIGN IT**

**Celebrate!** But it's not over until the court paperwork is completed, so read through to the COURT TRACK below to see what happens there.

You may complete your mediated agreement before opening a court file, but most families choose to open the court file, complete their mediated agreement during the court's mandatory 6-month waiting period, and then complete the forms needed for the court's judgment that the divorce is final.

# Overview of Court Process for a Mediated Divorce in California

As a Legal Document Assistant, (Los Angeles County #2019060225), I am not a California attorney. I cannot give you legal advice, but at your direction, I can prepare your court documents, so that you can represent yourself for an uncontested California divorce.

## **PETITION and SUMMONS**

You provide the information, and at your request, I will put it into the required court forms for a PETITION and SUMMONS to open the court file for your divorce.



## **SERVING the SUMMONS ON YOUR SPOUSE**

Serving the petition and summons by mail is the “kinder, gentler” option chosen by most of my clients. The receiving spouse then returns a “Notice and Acknowledgment of Receipt” by mail.



## **RESPONSE**

The spouse who receives the petition is the “Respondent”, who may choose to file a response, or may choose not to. This is a legal decision, on which I cannot advise you. I can offer a referral list of “Mediation-Friendly Attorneys” who will support your desire to mediate and/or represent yourself, and who can advise you on this decision.



## **FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES**

The “Petitioner” who initiates the court file must prepare and serve financial disclosures on the other spouse. In mediation, both parties will complete the disclosures so that both parties have good information with which to make the decisions expressed in the mediated Marital Settlement Agreement.



## **SUBMISSION OF JUDGMENT PACKAGE**

California has multiple forms that must be completed to obtain a judgment. You can direct me, your LDA, to prepare the JUDGMENT forms. Relevant factors include whether the Respondent filed a Response, and whether there is a Marital Settlement Agreement. The court will provide a date on which the marriage terminates that is at least six months after the Respondent was served.