

10 Questions to Ask Before Hiring a Divorce Attorney

Don't hire anyone until you have the answers to these.



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1. What is your experience with cases like mine?

Look for an attorney who regularly handles divorces similar to yours; whether that involves children, significant assets, a business, or a high-conflict spouse.

2. Do you offer mediation or Collaborative Divorce?

Not all attorneys are trained in out-of-court options. If keeping costs down and preserving your relationship with your co-parent matters to you, this is essential to ask.

3. What is your overall approach; litigation or settlement?

Some attorneys default to aggressive litigation. Others prioritize negotiated solutions. Make sure their philosophy matches your goals and your needs.

4. How do you communicate with clients, and how quickly do you respond?

Poor communication is the #1 complaint about attorneys. Clarify upfront: Will you speak with the attorney directly, or mostly with paralegals? What is the preferred method of communication?

5. What are your fees, and how are they structured?

Ask about the retainer, hourly rate, and what services are billed separately. Request a written fee agreement and review it carefully before signing anything.

6. What is a realistic timeline for my case?

An honest attorney will give you a range based on the complexity of your situation, not just what you want to hear. There are never guarantees but an honest assessment is more than fair to ask for.

7. What are the likely outcomes in my case?

Beware of attorneys who make promises. A good attorney will explain the range of outcomes honestly, based on New York law and the facts of your case, but will never guarantee anything.

8. Who else in your office will work on my case?

Understand the full team. Will associates or paralegals handle portions of your file? What are their qualifications? Will the managing attorney be appearing in court or will another attorney?

9. Have you worked with the courts or judges in my jurisdiction?

Local knowledge matters. An attorney familiar with New York courts and judges can help you navigate the system more effectively. This is especially true if you will be litigating your divorce.

10. What do I need to do to prepare for my divorce?

A good attorney will guide you on gathering financial documents, protecting your credit, and protecting yourself legally, before the process even begins. You deserve an attorney who respects your time and money.

This information/chart is intended for educational purposes only. **** Not legal advice. ****

