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Family Law

TOP 10 TIPS for Keeping Legal Fees at a Minimum During Separation or Divorce

10. Do-It-Yourself – do the paperwork yourself. In Alberta, you can pick up a divorce kit at stationary stores. In Saskatchewan, you pick up an “uncontested divorce kit” at the Queen’s Bench. I recommend talking to a lawyer, even if only briefly, to ensure that this is the right course for you.
9. Hire a lawyer as a “coach” – you may need a lawyer to iron out the rough patches, but the rest of the divorce can be done on your own.
8. Consider using Collaborative Law – you and your spouse agree to work as a team in 4-way meetings with your lawyers to resolve your separation issues, instead of going to court.
7. Consider using Mediation – a mediator, as neutral 3rd party, will facilitate your discussions to assist you to achieve your own solution to your separation issues.
6. Attend the free Parenting After Separation course – learn about your kids’ needs after separation and about the legal process of divorce.
5. Attend divorce counselling – a professional counsellor will assist you to get a handle on the emotional side of divorce. Lawyers are not usually counsellors – keep the expertise separate.
4. Keep your emotions separate from the divorce process – the more fighting and emotions that arise, the more your fees will increase because your lawyer has to spend time resolving the matters.
3. Consolidate your phone calls or emails – most lawyers charge in 6-minute or 15-minute segments. Wait to contact your lawyer until you have 2 or 3 questions gathered together.
2. Talk to your lawyer’s assistant – many routine questions or information can be answered by a lawyer’s assistant, who will bill at a substantially lower rate, if at all.
1. Negotiate with your spouse – the more you and your spouse can work out together, the less your lawyer will have to assist you to work out.

Feel free to contact Stephanie to answer your questions.

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**COLLABORATIVE
PRACTICE**

Resolving Disputes Respectfully