Mediation FAQs

1. **What is Mediation?**

ANSWER: Mediation is a way to resolve disputes. The Mediator is neutral, experienced professional who helps guide both parties to an agreement that both parties approve. Parties who "agree on everything," typically do not need a mediator. Parties who have a basic agreement at the outset usually can use Streamline Divorce or another procedure in which at attorney helps "write up" their agreement and handle the court process.

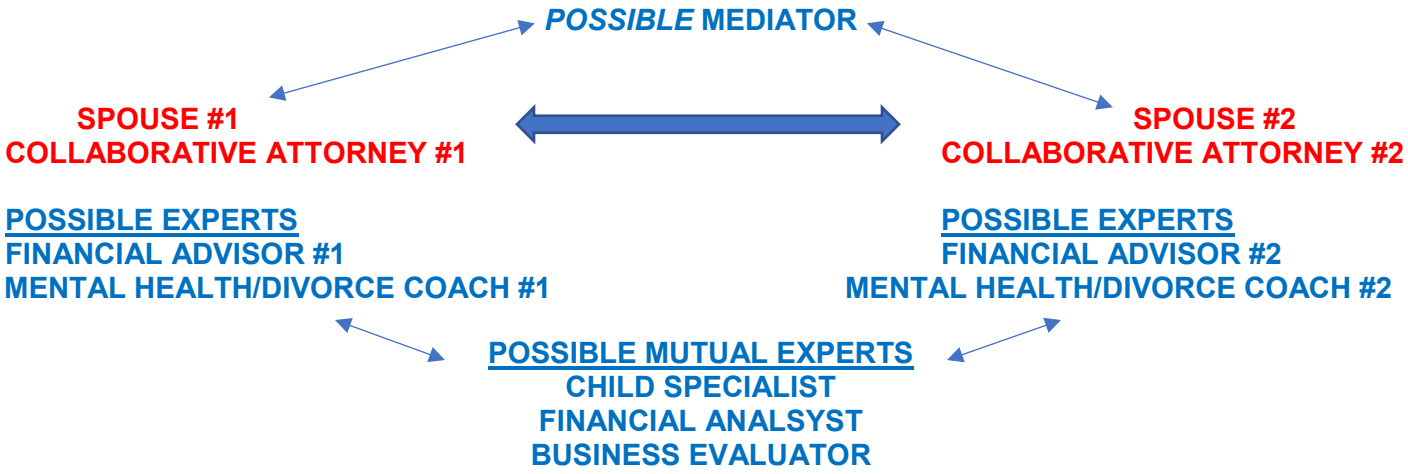
2. **Can we mediate instead of going court?**

ANSWER: In Michigan divorce cases, there always must be a court filing. If you and your spouse reach an agreement in mediation, it still will be necessary to have the final court (and Friend of the Court) orders drafted and handled under court processes. Mediation typically helps parties eliminate or reduce the costly and stressful "fighting" and trial preparation which is associated with a traditional divorce lawsuit.

3. **Can we use your office to mediate our case and then handle the court filing?**

ANSWER: No, the mediator is a neutral professional, who helps both parties arrive at a mutually-acceptable settlement. Ethically, the mediator cannot "wear two hats" in one case. One attorney (or one law office) can serve either as your mediator or as a party's attorney, *but not both.*

Collaborative Divorce FAQs



1. **We want a "collaborative divorce?" Can you help us?**

ANSWER: Yes. At Couling Law we are certified in Collaborative Practice and can assist you with a collaborative divorce, but let's make sure we share a common understanding of what you have in mind. Do you simply means both spouses want to use an amicable process and avoid heading toward trial (informal) or do you wish to use a formal Collaborative Divorce process in which both parties are represented by collaborative attorneys and agree to use a formal Collaborative Practice model, in which you agree not to engage in divorce litigation while using mutual experts to help with issues involving your children and assets. (The formal model is depicted above.)