

## CASE PREPARATION CHECKLIST

**GOALS** – four goals for case outcome

*What are your goals for the case that you want to discuss with your attorney and that you want your attorney to prioritize?*

*Do you have specific goals for your children? e.g. that your children continue to attend private school*

*Do you have specific financial goals? e.g. that you receive post-divorce spousal support*

*Do you have goals about the case process, as the case begins? e.g. that you want to review the opposing party's bank statements for accounts that are not joint accounts during the case*

**CONCERNS** – four concerns relating to case

*What are your concerns the case that you want to discuss with your attorney?*

*Do you have concerns about the other parent? e.g. the other parent drinks alcohol excessively, and you are therefore concerned about the parent's ability to provide a safe home environment for the children*

*Do you have concerns about the children or about finances? e.g. one of the children has a significant physical disability and you are concerned that standard child support will not be enough to provide adequate care for the child*

*Do you have concerns about the case process? e.g. that your attorney's fees will be too much money*

*Do you have concerns about certain facts that the other party may try to use against you? e.g. several years ago you sought in-patient treatment for depression*

**DOCUMENT GATHERING**

Last three federal tax returns filed

Most recently received income-reporting documents (W-2, K-1, 1099, etc.)

Six months of pay stubs

Twelve months of account statements

**SECURITY CHECK**

- Change passwords (phone, email, social media, etc.)
- Go “private” on social media
- Need for private investigator? *discuss first with attorney*
- Change locks at residence? *discuss first with attorney*

**INFORMATION GATHERING – HELPFUL LISTS**

- Current assets and liabilities (Inventory form)
- Current monthly expenses, including expenses for children (Budget form)
- Individuals with knowledge of facts relevant to case (possible witnesses)

*For each listed individual, provide name, relationship, description of individual’s knowledge of relevant facts, current phone number, email address, and physical address*

**INFORMATION GATHERING – HELPFUL SUMMARIES**

- Relationship history
- History of parenting
- Personal history
- Mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, criminal history, CPS involvement, excessive spending, significant debts, and other case-specific issues