



Massachusetts Divorce Lawyer Explains Divorce 101

What kind of divorce do *you* really want?

If you are facing a Massachusetts divorce, you may feel overwhelmed and unsure about the future. Perhaps you have a friend or relative that suffered through a high-conflict divorce that took years and wiped them out financially and emotionally. Although divorce and other family law issues are among the most stressful of situations, you are not powerless to decide what type of divorce you are going to have, even if you are not the initiating spouse. Our **Boston divorce lawyer** can help explain your options below.

When relationships end it is natural for strong emotions to be present, but divorce should not be about revenge or making your spouse suffer for past events. If this is your primary goal, you will likely have an expensive, miserable divorce and be even more unhappy when it is eventually over. If you have kids, they will almost certainly feel the negative effects of the conflict. Their relationships with one or both parents could be damaged, sometimes with long-term consequences. In the beginning, you may think getting back at your spouse will make you feel better, but it won't.

Thus, before you start the divorce process think about *what type of divorce would you rather have?* If you are a parent, even if your children are grown, how do you want your kids to view you during and after the divorce? **Try to move beyond feelings of anger or sadness and consider what steps you should take to manage this conflict in a financially and emotionally intelligent way.**

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Some law firms urge you to call or fill out an online form to learn about “Divorce Secrets.” If you were having an operation, would you select the physician that offered you “*Secrets to Cardiac Surgery*”? Didn’t think so. This kind of hype may appeal to some, but my clients understand that in order to achieve a good resolution, you want a law firm working with you that is **experienced in conflict management; not conflict creation.**

Divorce Process Options

One of the first decisions you will make is to consider the process you and your spouse will use to get through the divorce. It is also a good idea to remember that the vast majority of cases are settled before trial, so does it make sense for you to commit significant emotional and financial assets preparing for litigation when it is unlikely to actually occur?

Although most cases can be resolved using mediation or the collaborative process, sometimes the old-fashioned court-based divorce is necessary. Courts play an important role when parties cannot or will not agree. Perhaps someone is hiding assets or making demands that are well beyond normal settlement ranges, or a history of abuse makes other options unrealistic. These cases may need to be litigated, but *these cases are not most cases.*

Other less adversarial options exist, including Divorce and Family Mediation and Collaborative Divorce. Both of these options are explained in greater detail on this website. Both Mediation and Collaborative Divorce are voluntary, meaning you cannot force your spouse to attend mediation or retain a specially trained collaborative attorney, so it is best to consider these choices early on and discuss the benefits with your spouse.

At The Divorce Collaborative LLC of Medway, MA, experienced family law attorney and mediator Steve McDonough understands there are no *one size fits all solutions* to issues such as child custody, alimony, child support, and asset division so Steve is trained and experienced in mediation, the collaborative divorce process, and litigation. Steve listens carefully to his clients, and then works closely with them to decide the best options for them and their family.

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