# Collaborative Divorce in Utah

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Although a divorce dissolves a marriage, there are certain responsibilities and relationships that will continue for a lifetime. This is particularly true if there are children involved. Collaborative law provides an alternative to the standard divorce processes that require spouses resolve their various divorce issues through litigation. A collaborative divorce can be used to lay a strong foundation for you, your ex-spouse, and your children, to rebuild the rest of your lives.

If you are considering a divorce and would prefer to do so without engaging in contentious litigation, a collaborative divorce lawyer may be able to help you. Get in touch with us at Wall Legal Solutions. We are dedicated to advocating and negotiating on the behalf of our clients in collaborative divorce cases.

#### What is a Collaborative Divorce?

A collaborative divorce uses methods other than litigation to reach settlement terms for a divorce. It differs from a standard divorce, as it requires the parties to refrain from going to court to settle their disputes. Instead, *negotiation* and mediation are used to resolve the marriage in a diplomatic manner while addressing any underlying issues that exists between the two parties. Neutral, third-party specialists, such as financial and mental health professionals, are often consulted to assist with working through matters that may cause contention, such as child support, alimony and asset division, so that both parties are content with the results.

#### The Process

A collaborative divorce requires the willing participation of both parties. *Each party should be represented by his* or her own attorney. Both parties and their attorneys will have to sign a contract that will detail the rules of the collaborative divorce. The terms of the contract generally include requirements such as:

- Both lawyers must agree to withdraw from the case if a resolution is not achieved.
- Both parties agree to the full voluntary disclosure of all information and must act in good faith.

After the contract has been signed, each spouse will meet privately with his or her attorney to establish their standing on the issues that have to be addressed. Both sides will then meet to begin negotiations, which may take place over several meetings. Unbiased, third-party professionals that are approved by both parties may consulted to assist. If necessary, a licensed mediator may be asked to carefully manage any conflicts that arise during the negotiations so that an agreement can be achieved. Once the terms of settlement have been obtained, the divorce filings and settlement agreement will be submitted to the court.

### **Benefits of a Collaborative Divorce**

There are a variety of advantages to opting for a collaborative divorce. A collaborative divorce can:

- Take place in informal settings
- Encourage open communication
- Be less taxing than other divorce options
- Cost much less than a divorce that involves litigation
- Be completed in the fraction of the time of a regular divorce
- · Provide customized solutions for both parties that may not have been suggested by the court

Going through a collaborative divorce will not work for every couple seeking a divorce. However, for situations in which the needs of children are the priority or confidentiality is preferred, it may be the best option to use.

## **Collaborate with Wall Legal Solutions**

If you are seeking legal representation for a collaborative divorce or for any other legal matter, Wall Legal Services can help you. In addition to family law, we also provide legal services for criminal defense, estate planning and more. Call us at 801-441-2388 or contact us here to schedule a free, initial consultation on your case.