



10 Tips for Reducing the Expenses of Getting a Divorce

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10 TIPS FOR REDUCING THE EXPENSES OF GETTING A DIVORCE

Posted by [Marlene Pontrelli](#) and [Robert Schwartz](#) 8/16/19

Litigation of any kind can be expensive, and a divorce is no exception. The good news is that there are many ways that you can help control the expense. Here are 10 tips for reducing the expenses of your divorce.

1. *Put It in Writing.* If you need to relay information to your attorney that is important but not urgent, consider providing it to your attorney by mail, fax, or email. This creates a prompt and accurate record for your file and takes less time than exchanging phone messages and talking on the phone.
2. *Keep Your Attorney Informed.* Just as your attorney should keep you up to date on the status of your case, you need to do the same. Keep your lawyer advised about any major developments in your life such as plans to move, have someone move into your home, change your employment status, or buy or sell property.

During the divorce, if your contact information changes, be sure to notify your attorney. Your attorney may need to reach you with information, and reaching you in a timely manner may help avoid more costly fees later.

3. *Avoid Using Your Attorney Just to Vent.* Divorces are emotional and it is often comforting to talk to someone who knows your situation better than anyone else. But using your attorney to talk about things your

attorney has no control over can be expensive. Before picking up the phone, ask yourself whether your attorney has the ability to address the situation or do you really just want to vent your feelings to someone.

4. *Obtain Copies of Documents.* An important part of litigation includes reviewing documents such as tax returns, account statements, report cards, or medical records. Your attorney will ordinarily be able to request or subpoena these items, but many may be readily available to you directly upon request.
5. *Utilize Support Professionals.* Get to know the support staff at your lawyer's office. Although only attorneys are able to give you legal advice, the paralegal, legal secretary, or law clerk may be able to answer questions regarding the status of your case. Just as your communication with your attorney, all communication with any professionals in a law firm is required to be kept strictly confidential.
6. *Leave a Detailed Message.* If your attorney knows the information you are seeking, she or he can often get the answer before returning your call. This not only gets your answer faster, but also reduces costs.
7. *Discuss More Than One Matter During a Call.* It is not unusual for clients to have many questions during litigation. If your question is not urgent, consider waiting to call until you have more than one inquiry. Never hesitate to call to ask any legal questions.
8. *Provide Timely Responses to Information Requests.* Whenever possible, provide information requested by your lawyer in a timely manner. This avoids the cost of follow-up action by your lawyer and the additional expense of extending the time in litigation.

9. *Carefully Review Your Monthly Statements.* Scrutinize your monthly billing statements closely. If you believe an error has been made, contact your lawyer's office right away to discuss your concerns.
10. *Remain Open to Settlement.* Be alert to recognize that when your disagreement concerns financial matters, the value of money in dispute may be less than the amount it will cost to go to trial. By doing your part, you can use your legal fees wisely and control the costs of your divorce.

Keeping the above tips in mind will help to reduce your costs in your divorce action.

About the Authors:

[Marlene Pontrelli](#) is a Member in our Phoenix office. Marlene is a certified specialist in family law. Her practice focuses on all aspects of family law including dissolution, post-dissolution, paternity, child custody and child support matters. She is admitted to practice in California and Arizona. She is a member of the State Bar's Family Law Practice and Procedure Committee and is a judge pro tem for the Superior Court of Maricopa County in family law. She has extensive trial and appellate experience including appearing before the Arizona Court of Appeals, Arizona Supreme Court and Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Ms. Pontrelli has written several books, including as a co-author of the Divorce in Arizona book. She is a frequent lecturer in the area of family law and has conducted workshops throughout the country. Ms. Pontrelli is also an adjunct professor at The Sandra Day O'Connor School of Law at Arizona State University, where she teaches the family law class. Marlene may be reached in our Phoenix office at 602-285-5081.

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