

Understanding the Divorce Process



Typical Duration	UNCONTESTED 6-12 weeks	CONTESTED 6-12 months	HIGHLY CONTESTED 12-18 months
01	Initial Consult & Opening 1-2 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss goals, concerns, and immediate needs Provide initial documents Engagement letter completed; retainer paid 	
02	Filing the Case 1-2 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We prepare and file your Complaint/Answer Court assigns judge & case number 	
03	Service of Process 2-6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The other party receives the official paperwork notifying them that the case has been filed with the court. 	
04	Temporary Orders 4-8 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requests for temporary custody/support Brief hearing if no agreement 	
05	Discovery 2-4 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exchange financial documents May include subpoenas or depositions 	
06	Parenting Evaluations 1-3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GAL/evaluator if custody is disputed Reports & recommendations 	
07	Negotiations & Mediation Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attorney proposal exchanges Mediation may be ordered 	
08	Pretrial / Settlement Conference Around month 2 for pretrial and month 5 for settlement conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court narrows issues Exhibit / witness preparation 	
09	Final Hearing or Trial Approximately 2 months after the settlement conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short hearing if settled Full trial if no settlement 	
10	Final Judgment 1-4 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judge signs decree Orders become binding 	