



Getting Started

Before you start negotiations with your spouse, you need to ask yourself some questions. Start with the worksheet entitled “My Priorities” to give you the big picture, then narrow your focus to items such as:

1. Who gets to keep the home?
2. Who will pay the mortgage (and other expenses such as gas, electricity, and home repairs) while you're apart?
3. How will you share the money in your joint bank accounts?
4. How will you share assets such as stocks and bonds? Pension(s)?
5. Who keeps the family home/car/boat/ washing machine, etc.? How will you split big-ticket items?
6. How will you handle joint credit cards? You should cancel and freeze them ASAP. If you've never had credit in your own name, however, you should apply for your own credit card before the joint cards are cancelled or frozen. Discuss with A.M. Financial before cancelling any cards as it could negatively affect your credit.
7. How will current debts be managed?
8. Who will be responsible for the debts either of you incur while you're separated?
9. Will you continue to file joint income tax returns? Are there taxes due, or other problems pertaining to joint tax returns that will surface after the divorce that will have to be addressed in the division of property and liabilities?
10. Will one of you be paying spousal support to the other? How much will it be? Will it be in the form of a lump-sum or periodic payments? How can these options effect my future financial situation?
11. Will one of you be paying child support to the other? How much? When will the payments be made? When will they end (e.g. when the child turns 21, or leaves the home, or completes college, etc? What is the law in your state)?
12. Can spousal or child support change? What can I expect in order to plan for the future prudently?
13. Will one or both of you be contributing to a college fund for your kids? How will the payments be made? Are there any tax implications? Will distributions need to be agreed upon?
14. How will you share responsibility for the care and raising of your children: joint, sole, or shared parenting? When will the children be staying with each of you?
15. Who will pay for legal fees? Will each of you be responsible for retaining and paying your own lawyer? What if your spouse has limited your financial resources to prevent you from seeking professional support?

A.M. Financial (along with legal counsel and/or mediation) can help you find answers to many of these questions and more – increasing the chances of reaching a settlement that fully addresses your long-term financial needs and securing your financial future.

A.M. Financial· Amy Mahlen, CFP®, CDFA™

(303) 875-8730 · amahlen@mahlenfinancial.com · www.mahlenfinancial.com