



McKINLEY IRVIN

FAMILY LAW

How To MINIMIZE LEGAL FEES AND COSTS

While legal fees are an important consideration, it's difficult to predict exactly what a family law case will cost due to many variables. That said, there are proactive steps you can take to help use your resources efficiently. The following tips reflect what we've learned from years of helping clients navigate these matters.

1. Be Honest and Transparent

Tell your attorney everything upfront, even if it's uncomfortable. Surprises later in the case can increase costs and harm your credibility in court. Full disclosure allows your attorney to plan ahead and advocate more effectively.

2. Respond Promptly to Your Legal Team

When your attorney or staff reach out for information or decisions, respond as quickly as possible. Timely communication helps prevent rushed work, missed deadlines, or unnecessary back-and-forth.

3. Be Clear About Your Goals

Tell your attorney what matters most to you. This helps prioritize legal strategy and avoid spending time on less important issues.

4. Communicate Respectfully with the Other Party

Keep all texts, emails, and conversations civil. If communication breaks down, your attorney may need to step in, which adds time and cost. Assume your messages may end up in front of the court.

5. Be Open to Settlement

Litigating every issue is the most expensive way to handle a case. Stay open to resolving issues early, including at mediation. Every issue settled reduces the need for hearings and trial preparation.

6. Choose Your Battles Wisely

Focus your legal resources on high-impact issues (e.g., parenting plans, support, or safety). Avoid spending time and money on items that are easily replaced or not worth the cost to litigate.

7. Stay Organized

Keep track of what documents you've provided and be ready with summaries when needed. Sending complete and well-organized information saves time and reduces the need for clarification.

8. Follow Court Orders

Comply with all court orders, even temporary ones. Disregarding an order can result in contempt charges, fines, and damage to your credibility in court.

9. Consolidate Your Questions

Instead of reaching out multiple times, keep a running list and send one email or bring it to a scheduled meeting. Grouping your questions is more efficient and cost-effective.

10. Direct Questions to Support Staff When Appropriate

Paralegals and legal assistants can often answer questions about scheduling, forms, or procedures. They bill at a lower rate and may be able to help faster.

11. Prepare for Meetings

Before meetings or calls, write down key questions or updates. This ensures your time is used effectively and that nothing important is missed.

12. Notify Us of Changes Immediately

Let us know right away if your contact details (email, phone number, or address) or circumstances (such as income, housing, or parenting arrangements) change. Early notice allows us to take timely, cost-effective steps on your behalf.

We are here to help you navigate this process with care and efficiency. Following these tips will help you reduce unnecessary legal expenses while still receiving strong, effective representation.