

SIMPLE GUIDE TO THE COLORADO DIVORCE PROCESS

What to expect and
what it means

At Solutions Based Family Law, we know that divorces can be challenging and overwhelming. In order to help orient you with the process, we created a simplified timeline and accompanying explanations to help visualize and understand the standard steps to getting a divorce in Colorado.

Every case is different and not all divorces look the same, but the following provides you with what you can likely expect during your case.



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A TIMELINE OF THE BASIC STEPS

Step #1

File Petition for Dissolution of Marriage, Summons, and Case Information Sheet and serve on the opposing party

Step #2

Complete Mandatory Financial Disclosures

Step #3

Attend Initial Status Conference

Step #4

Partake in court-ordered mediation

Step #5

Attend Permanent Orders Hearing

★ Again, keep in mind that every case is different. Some parties come to the table with an agreement in place, others reach an agreement later in the process, and in some cases, an agreement is never reached and the Court must decide how to resolve the issues in dispute. Many factors may dictate how your own case plays out, but the above are the basic steps of which to be aware.



EXPANSION AND EXPLANATION

The Petition for Dissolution of Marriage, Summons and Case Information Sheet are filed with the court to commence your case. We will gather certain information about you, the opposing party, and any minor children of the marriage, draft these documents and e-file them with the court. We will also serve the same documents on the opposing party, providing notice to them that the case has been filed. Once the court accepts these documents, the case will have officially begun.

The court will then issue a [Case Management Order](#) and a [Notice of Initial Status Conference](#). A Case Management Order outlines the parties' responsibilities, obligations, deadlines, and other general information of which to be aware. This is especially helpful to parties who are not represented by counsel.

Initial Status Conference is a short meeting with either a judge, magistrate, or family court facilitator that occurs typically around forty (40) days from the date the case was filed. At this juncture, the Court will want to know the status of the case, whether or not there are any issues that need to be addressed immediately, and will then issue any necessary deadlines to ensure that your case continues to move forward.



However, before the Initial Status Conference, you will need to complete **Mandatory Financial Disclosures**. Mandatory Financial Disclosures are when each party fills out a Sworn Financial Statement and gathers the necessary documentation to reveal their income, debts, assets, and regular monthly expenses to the other party. This allows both parties to assess their financial status, the marital estate, and marital property so that an equitable settlement can be made. If the parties cannot come to such a settlement, this documentation will then guide the judge assigned to your case to divide the same.

Mediation is required in most family law cases, including divorce. The court will order Mediation and the parties will meet with the mediator and present the issues to be resolved, which can include spousal maintenance, division of marital property, marital debt, custody, child support, and so forth.

If the parties can come to an overall agreement, a [Parenting Plan](#) (if required) and [Separation Agreement](#) are drafted and brought before the court to incorporate into its final divorce decree.

If the parties come to an agreement on some issues but not all, a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) is drafted, outlining such agreements.

When there are all or some remaining issues to be resolved, those issues are then presented to the court in a **Permanent Orders Hearing**. During this Hearing, a judge will look at the facts of the case, the provided financial disclosures and the law concerning the same and will decide such outstanding issues accordingly. At the conclusion, the judge will enter a decree of dissolution of marriage and substantive orders will be entered which outline the judge's decisions.

Please do not hesitate to call with any questions, we are here to help!