

Day #10: The Eleven Step Divorce Litigation Process, #2: Choosing YOUR Attorney

Hi,

Thanks again for Subscribing. Today we continue through the “eleven steps” for a contested New Jersey Divorce.

Step 2: Choosing an Attorney

Once you have determined that a divorce is inevitable, the next step is finding *your* attorney. Although some people represent themselves “*pro se*”, many individuals in New Jersey retain a divorce attorney to help them through the divorce process and to help protect their rights.

When choosing an attorney, there are some basic considerations you should consider such as:

- Is the attorney licensed to practice in New Jersey?
- Does the attorney’s practice emphasize family law?
- Is the attorney local?

- Price is another important consideration that may limit the options available to potential clients. There is somewhat of a wide range of hourly rates and retainer amounts.

Some of the ways that clients find attorneys are through personal referrals, through the local bar associations, and through the internet.

Once these basic considerations have been met, the next step is to determine the right attorney.

Personality plays a key role in divorce cases, and a good rapport between client and attorney may be crucial to maximizing your results and limiting exposure.

The attorney-client relationship will likely last months or even years from the first initial consultation until the ultimate divorce, so personality will be more important than one might think. I sometimes joke that I have probably been divorced numerous times (on behalf of my clients). Despite the law largely remaining the same, each one has been defined not just by specific facts but by the personality of the party's and the attorneys involved in the case.

Finally, competence and experience are always important when choosing any professional. Most people today prefer attorneys that work predominantly in the area of divorce work, or that limit their practice to only a few key areas of law.

Effective representation includes teaching and advising you about the law and divorce procedure, coordinating with you to design and implement effective litigation strategy, and outlining appropriate objectives that maximize your leverage and limit exposure.

A good attorney should be honest about what objectives are likely achievable and discuss both “best case” and “worst case” scenarios. After an initial consultation both attorney and client should understand their expectations for the case, their respective responsibilities and rights, and whether or not they are interested in working together.

A hallmark of my firm is a client-first culture and limiting the number of cases we take to ensure ample time for each matter and time to communicate. [To learn more you can click here to review my pledge to my clients.](#)

Tomorrow we will review the important divorce document the Case Information Statement “CIS.”

All the best,

Carl

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