



Divorce Mediation Readiness Checklist

A practical preparation guide for self-represented participants.

- Use this guide to organize your thoughts before mediation. Bring notes, documents, and questions - not final positions. The goal is to help both participants identify issues, clarify options, and prepare for a productive conversation.
- This worksheet is for general educational and mediation-preparation purposes only. Mediation Pro Se is neutral and does not represent either party. This is not legal advice. Each participant may consult an independent attorney or tax/financial professional before signing any agreement.
- Disclaimer: Mediation Pro Se provides neutral mediation services and does not represent either participant. The mediator does not provide legal advice, legal representation, tax advice, financial advice, or therapeutic services. Participants are encouraged to consult independent professionals, including an attorney, before signing any agreement or filing documents with the court.
- Mediation Confidentiality Notice: California law generally treats mediation communications as confidential, subject to specific legal rules and exceptions. Participants should review any mediation confidentiality disclosures provided before mediation begins and consult an attorney with questions about how confidentiality may apply to their situation.



Divorce Mediation Readiness Checklist

Use this checklist before your first mediation session to identify what is known, what is missing, and what decisions may need to be discussed.

1. Confirm the process

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Both participants understand the mediator is neutral. | ☐ Both participants have contact information for scheduling. |
| ☐ Both participants know whether a court case has already been filed. | ☐ Each person has considered independent legal advice. |
| ☐ Safety, coercion, or domestic violence concerns have been disclosed to the mediator. | ☐ Interpreter, accessibility, or virtual-meeting needs have been identified. |

2. Gather basic case information

Topic	Information to gather
Names and contact information	Legal names, current addresses, email addresses, phone numbers.
Marriage / partnership dates	Date of marriage, date of separation, domestic partnership dates if applicable.
Court information	County, case number, filed documents, upcoming hearings, current orders.
Children	Names, ages, school/daycare, medical needs, activity schedules.
Professionals involved	Attorneys, accountants, financial advisors, therapists, coaches, QDRO specialists.

3. Financial documents to collect

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Recent pay stubs or income records | ☐ Last 2-3 years tax returns |
| ☐ Bank statements | ☐ Credit card statements |
| ☐ Mortgage statements | ☐ Retirement account statements |
| ☐ Investment account statements | ☐ Business records, if applicable |
| ☐ Vehicle loan statements | ☐ Student loan statements |
| ☐ Insurance policies | ☐ Monthly budget or expense estimate |



4. Issues to prepare for discussion

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Parenting schedule | ☐ Decision-making for children |
| ☐ Holidays and school breaks | ☐ Child support questions |
| ☐ Spousal support questions | ☐ Home ownership or sale |
| ☐ Bank and investment accounts | ☐ Retirement accounts |
| ☐ Debts and reimbursements | ☐ Taxes and filing status |
| ☐ Insurance and healthcare | ☐ Timing and next steps |

5. Your mediation goals

Write down goals in plain language. Separate needs from preferences. Identify where flexibility may be possible.

Priority	What I hope to resolve	Possible options
1		
2		
3		
4		

6. Questions for the Mediator:



For California self-help information and current form references, review the California Courts Self-Help Guide.

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