



Understanding Mediation

Mediation is a confidential meeting where a trained, neutral mediator helps the parties work toward their own agreement. The mediator does not take sides or make decisions. Many Georgia courts require mediation in contested family law cases before a final hearing or trial.

How mediation works

- 1 Scheduling.** The attorneys agree on a mediator and a date. Mediator fees are usually split between the parties, and sessions are often held by video.
- 2 Preparation.** We gather financial information, talk through your goals, and prepare proposals before the session.
- 3 Separate Rooms.** The parties usually stay in separate rooms, in person or virtual, while the mediator moves between them.
- 4 Negotiation.** Offers and counteroffers pass through the mediator until the parties reach an agreement or an impasse.
- 5 Written Agreement.** If the parties settle, the terms are put in writing and signed. A signed mediated agreement is generally binding. When possible, we prepare complete final orders that same day, ready to file.

Why it works

Control. You and the other party decide the outcome, not a judge.

Confidentiality. What is said in mediation generally cannot be used later in court.

Cost. Settling at mediation is usually far less expensive than going to trial.

Progress. Even if not everything settles, narrowing the issues saves time and money.

What to keep in mind

Mediation is a normal step in the process, not a sign that your case is going badly.

A truly good mediation ends with both parties feeling like they lost. That means real compromise happened.

If your attorney encourages settlement, it is not because they aren't fighting for you. It is because they don't believe court would give you a better result.

Plan to be available for the full scheduled time. Sessions often run long.

Nothing is final until an agreement is signed.

This guide provides general information about mediation in Georgia family law matters and is not legal advice about your specific case. Your attorney will explain how mediation applies to your situation.

YOUR ROLE

Send us requested documents before mediation, think through your priorities ahead of time, and be ready to make decisions during the session.

QUESTIONS?

As always, all questions and requests should be directed to the team via email to team@pepitone.law.