

Wendy A. Campbell, MFT
Individual and Family Counseling

The following are frequently asked questions I get from parents embarking on mediation:

Q: What do we do in mediation?

A: We work together to identify a custody arrangement that best meets the needs of the child(ren); put together a holiday and vacation schedule, and any other agreements that will aid the parents in their efforts to move forward.

Q: How long does it take?

A: The length of time can vary. If the parents are aligned in most of their desires for a parenting plan, then mediation can be completed in as little as two or three sessions.

In private mediation we will take the time necessary for as many agreements as possible to be attained. The more agreements the better able the parents are to succeed in the implementation of the plan.

Q: How is this different from Family Court Service mediation?

A: Family Court Service Mediation only allows for two hours total for the mediation process. Two hours includes the parents' time with the mediator and the child(ren)'s time.

Q: Do I have to attend with my ex?

A: If there is a restraining order in place against one of the parents, we would meet separately. However, mediation is most productive with both parents present.

Q: Can my current spouse participate or attend?

A: I have found it to be uncomfortable and unproductive if parents bring their new spouse(s). The parenting plan for your child(ren) is between the biological parents, not the new spouse/step-parent.

Q: How much is it going to cost?

A: The cost per 50 minute session is \$150.00; the amount for the retainer is \$2,000.00. The cost per session is deducted from the retainer and any of my time spent on the case is deducted from the retainer; be it collateral contacts, meeting with the parents, meeting with the children and writing the report.

Q: Do the children come?

A: At the first session I meet with just the parents. If the child is less than five years old, I do not meet with the child alone. If the parents do not agree on a parenting plan, I will meet with the child alone and potentially each parent alone with the children.

Q: What if I live out of the area?

A: If you live out of the area the best approach to mediation is to plan enough in advance to have a significant amount of time on a single day for us to all meet together in my office. We could also meet two days in a row if necessary. As a last resort, after the initial mediation session in person, we can meet via speaker phone with one parent present in my office.