

## What You Need to do Before Filing for Divorce

The sayings “look before you leap” or “think before you act” are especially important and applicable in any divorce. It’s important for you to be prepared before you begin so that you feel more confident in the steps that you are taking. Here are some of our suggestions for the top things to do before filing for divorce:

1.

### **TALK TO A MARRIAGE COUNSELOR, A THERAPIST, OR ANOTHER TRUSTED PROFESSIONAL.**

Even if you don’t think there is hope for your marriage or you are already firm in your decision to divorce your spouse, a divorce is a huge change in your life. As such, it’s always best to seek help and advice on how to cope with these changes. A professional can assist you with coming up with a way to tell your children and your friends about the divorce, to prepare you for the unavoidable stress, and teach you how to communicate with your spouse during this difficult transition period.

2.

### **TALK TO AN ATTORNEY.**

Researching on the internet, talking to your friends, and reading books are all valuable tools to help prepare you for a divorce, but there are limitations to what these resources can do for you. Would you rely solely on the internet to diagnose and treat you for a medical condition? Of course not! While you may end up not hiring an attorney to handle your separation or divorce, getting as much information as you can from a qualified expert in family law will help you understand your options ahead of time. There is a lot to know about divorce in California. The law is complex and even the simplest situation can become confusing due to a lack of knowledge of how to navigate the legal system.

3.

### **BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF.**

Even though California is a no-fault state, meaning that there is no specific reason that needs to be stated before obtaining a divorce, the actions and behaviors during the marriage can and do have significant impact on issues such as custody and support. Do you have a drug or alcohol problem? Have you been abusive to your spouse? If you have a mental health issue, is it currently being actively treated? Have you incurred a lot of debt that your spouse does not know about? By being honest with yourself and identifying potential areas of trouble before beginning the divorce process, the better off you will be

during the case.

4.

## **MAKE A PLAN.**

What are you going to do after you have a conversation with your spouse? Are you able to move out of the house quickly and safely if you need to? Do you have the financial resources to support yourself for at least three months if your spouse cuts you off? Have you secured all of your important documents? Working with an attorney to come up with your own personalized plan is a worthwhile investment that will save you lots of time, money, and heartache in the future.

5.

## **TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOURSELF.**

Time for another very appropriate saying: “to know and not to do is still not yet to know.” Once you have a plan in place, don’t be afraid to act! Yes, this is important, and no, it’s not something you should put off. Take a deep breath, review your plan, and start checking off items on your list. You can do this. You will do this. And you will be glad you did.

We’d love to help you create your plan of action and help you prepare for your divorce. [Contact us](#) so we can get started. We offer not only the advice of attorneys but also the advice of our Certified Divorce Coach. We all find fulfillment in helping others such as yourself.