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**ANNOUNCEMENT – NEW LEGAL SERVICES OFFERED**  
**Collaborative Family Law**

**What is Collaborative Law?**

Collaborative Law uses cooperative methods rather than adversarial techniques and litigation to resolve legal disputes. One of the major tenets is that attorneys and their clients enter into a contract agreeing to use collaborative approaches to find a mutually agreeable solution to their differences and agree not to go to court.

**How does the Collaborative Family Law process work?**

The divorce process, as it currently exists, is frequently divisive, adversarial, costly, and emotionally destructive to everyone involved (parents & children). The traditional system of divorce is very akin to war. Collaborative Family Law offers clients and attorneys a way out of the combative, adversarial, warlike litigation model. Collaborative Family Law engages the attorneys and their clients in a process that frees them to work toward resolving conflict using cooperative strategies rather than court.

The attorneys and the clients sign an agreement that they will not go to court. If the process breaks down, the collaborative attorneys must withdraw and the clients must retain new “litigation” attorneys. Participating in the collaborative process allows the attorneys to use many of the best attributes of being a good lawyer such as analysis and reasoning to help solve problems, and helping their clients to generate options, while establishing and creating a positive context for settlement of very complex and difficult family matters.

**Is this mediation?**

Collaborative law is not mediation. Collaborative law does use a very similar alternative dispute resolution approach to resolving disputes like mediation, however, there is no third party neutral facilitating the process. In this process both sides of the dispute are represented by their own attorney. Those attorneys are bound by the same oath to zealously represent their client; however, everyone agrees to do it in a collaborative

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framework instead of in court. Collaborative lawyers work very hard for their clients and expend much time preparing and helping the client to achieve a resolution that “they” will feel good about without the threat of court coming from either side.

**Want to know more?**

Please contact my office and I will explain the entire process and let you determine if this process will work for you and your family. The Collaborative process is not for everyone and every dispute, but it will work for those who want to resolve very tough family matters, respectfully.

**WHAT ARE SOME ADVANTAGES OF COLLABORATIVE FAMILY LAW**

**Lower Cost:**

The Collaborative process is generally less expensive than the traditional litigation route and it often takes less time.

**Client Centered:**

The clients are at the center of this process. They become educated and empowered to make the decisions which affect their lives.

**Inter-disciplinary Approach:**

The clients are supported, when necessary, by other professionals who have expertise in the emotional, financial and legal arenas, which are all critical elements of divorce and family disputes.

**Less Stress:**

The process hopefully eliminates much of the stress, fear and anxiety that are generated when utilizing traditional court proceedings. Everyone can focus on settlement without the imminent *threat* of going to court.

**Win-Win Climate:**

The Collaborative process creates a positive climate that will help facilitate a more satisfactory outcome for everyone involved. The hope is that everyone will feel they have accomplished a goal and no one will feel like they have just lost something, which is often the feeling after court.

**Speed:**

The Collaborative process often takes less time than the traditional court methods and helps parties resolve difficult family matters on their own calendar not the courts.

**Creativity:**

The Collaborative process encourages creative resolution to the matters at hand. In this process the parties are not bound by traditional outcomes established in court.

**Client Focused:**

This non-adversarial approach shifts decision making into the hands of the clients where it belongs.