

# Family Focus

## WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO COMMUNICATE WITH MY LAWYER DURING MY DIVORCE?

Posted by **Stuart Scott** | Jun 28, 2019

Divorce can be a stressful and emotionally draining time. However, knowing when and how to communicate with your legal team can help to alleviate some of the stress. Here are a few tips for ways to best communicate with your lawyer.

- 1. Avoid communicating on minor issues that are out of the control of your lawyer.** Most family law lawyers bill on an hourly rate. You may have paid a retainer at the start of your case, and as time is billed on your case, the fees are taken from the retainer. When the case concludes any money left in the retainer account is refunded to the client.

However, one of the quickest ways to drain one's retainer is communicating with your lawyer about complaints you have with your spouse, that have no impact on the legal proceedings or are even complaints that your lawyer cannot do anything about. It is natural to want to communicate with one's lawyer regularly during the divorce process. A lawyer may provide valuable advice. Your lawyer should understand your situation and know the ins and outs of it in detail. Sharing and obtaining information with a person who is there to help you through your divorce, therefore, is only natural. Keep the communications short and simple to your lawyer when you want to communicate information but you do not expect any action to be taken.

- 2. Consider whether others on your legal team can assist you.** The first thing to learn in your legal representation is when you can talk to someone other than the lawyer. Most lawyers have secretarial and paralegal help. Generally, the hourly rate for a paralegal is much less than that for the lawyer. Often times speaking to a secretary comes with no charge. This means establishing the parameters of which person to contact depending on what type of information is needed is very

important from the start.

3. **Consider addressing multiple issues in one conversation.** Another cost saving measure is to wait and make a single call regarding a number of issues that come up over time rather than every time anything happens.

I often times recommend my clients have a safe (and secure) place where they can take down or otherwise store their questions. Then, when the time is right, a number of different issues can be addressed in a single phone call, rather than making a number of phone calls.

4. **Understand the process.** Understand what to expect out of the divorce process on the front end.

Good lawyers will sit down with their clients early in the process and give them a big picture understanding of what is likely to happen as well as a list of do's and don'ts that can avoid unfortunate mistakes and otherwise needless communication. Direct, honest, and efficient communication with one's lawyer is critical during a divorce. Avoiding excessive or otherwise unneeded communication, however, could save you many thousands of dollars.

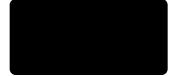
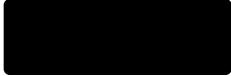
#### About the Author:

Stuart Scott is a litigation attorney with over 25 years of experience. He has tried hundreds of cases in both state and federal court. Some of his noteworthy victories have been featured in local, state and national publications. Stuart is also listed as a Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 31 Family Law Mediator. Stuart focuses his primary area of practice on family law. He represents people going through divorce and focuses his efforts on providing his legal services and advice to his clients in this area. Mr. Scott may be reached in our Nashville office at 615-620-1710.



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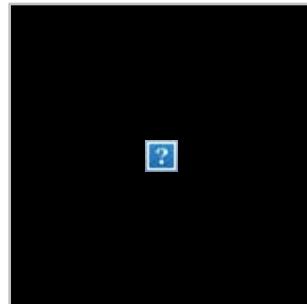
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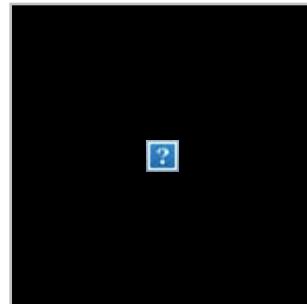
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