

# Tips for Preparing for Child Custody Mediation

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By David Pedrazas

Any [child custody dispute](#) has the potential to become extremely contentious and hostile. Battling in court over [child custody](#) can easily be one of the most stressful and heartbreaking events of a person's life, and in some cases, the process can carry on for years—doing untold emotional and financial damage to everyone involved.

## Being Prepared for Mediation is in the Best Interest of You and Your Children

Like in many states, *persons entering into a custody dispute in the State of Utah are strongly encouraged, if not mandated, to begin by entering into the mediation process.* You should think of [family law mediation](#) as your opportunity to *resolve the custody dispute* in the most **amenable** and **mutually beneficial** terms possible with the **best achievable outcome for both parties as well as the child**.

When [divorcing](#) parents are **unable** to come to a mutually agreeable resolution in [child custody mediation](#), **the court is likely to be forced to impose a final decision of its own** which may be detrimental to one or both parties. Before this occurs, it is likely that the dispute will carry on for some time, exacerbating the stress and turmoil which will be acutely felt by everyone.

## 7 Tips for Preparing for Child Custody Mediation:

Remember, **the more hostile the divorce, the higher the likelihood that any children involved may be emotionally or psychologically harmed in the process.** For these reasons, and for your own wellbeing, it is **best to come well prepared** to mediation and to **make the most of it by completing the following checklist:**

### 1. Create Relationship Timeline

Write a “relationship timeline.” This will include the events surrounding your original meeting with the other parent before marriage. Follow through with all of the **major life events** and **important details** including all of the relevant context. This can be used to brief your attorney and to **help you easily reference important dates and events when needed.** You should make at least three copies.

### 2. Draft Custody Schedule

Write a preliminary custody schedule of your own which **you think would be fair and amenable.** This is your opportunity to show *initiative* and to display *evenhandedness, good faith,* and an *interest in the wellbeing of the child.*

### 3. Write a Personal Daily Schedule



Whether you live with the child at present or not, you should write a **detailed account of your daily responsibilities**, ie; **work, self-care, daily necessities**, and so forth. It's also a good idea to write out your **child's daily schedule**, ie; **school, extracurricular activities**, and anything else worth listing. This will help any intervening parties to understand your needs and **to have a better idea how to arrange a possible custody sharing schedule**.

#### 4. Create a List of Concerns

During mediation, you will be asked **if you have any concerns for the future**. Create a list of any and all concerns you may have in order from most important to least important. This will **help you to ensure that all of the pressing issues on your mind can be addressed**.

#### 5. List Factors that Make Your Home a Better Place for the Child/ren

If you wish to pursue **residential custody of the child**, you should write a list of factors that make **your home a better fit for the needs and well-being of the child**. Anything that makes your home **more accommodating** to the **health, welfare, education, and growth of the child** are excellent candidates for this list. Items on this list should be concrete and provable.

#### 6. Write a Post-Separation Timeline

Make a detailed timeline of events beginning from **the time you parted ways with your spouse and the events leading up to your falling out**. Write down every major event that has taken place with day to day context.

#### 7. Prepare Yourself Psychologically

Understand that **the way you present yourself in mediation will have a significant effect on the outcome**. If you appear hostile, unstable, or angry- it may harm your chances of achieving a favorable agreement- and increase the chances that the dispute will go to trial. Seek psychological counseling to help with any emotional issues you may have developed. And remember, just because something happened, does not mean it is in your best interest to bring it up.

### Receive Experienced Legal Counsel and Mediation Services from SLC Attorney David Pedrazas

Family law attorney **David Pedrazas** in Salt Lake City is **trained** and has **over 15 years of experience in divorce and custody law**. He can help you to **understand your rights** and will advise you on how to conduct yourself during the mediation process. If you are in need of **child custody mediation services**, **contact the Salt Lake City, Utah Law Office of David Pedrazas today** by either filling out our **online form** or giving us a call at **801-263-7078**.