

DIVORCE WITH A SPECIAL NEEDS CHILD?

Here's where to start.

To get your desired outcome during a divorce with a special needs child, the first step is to get organized, gain clarity on your child's needs and your financial needs.

Document your child's needs:

- ✔ Put together a list of therapists, doctors, teachers, guidance counselors, advocates and other professionals involved in your child's life, with contact information and schedule of care
- ✔ Create a clear schedule of your child's day-to-day, including medication schedules and regular appointments (therapy, tutoring, doctor appointments)
- ✔ Make a note of anything else that is important for the other parent and any caregivers to be aware of (allergies, fears, communication challenges, physical restrictions, devices, etc)

Get clarity on the financial needs:

- ✔ Put together a budget of your child's expenses, including the cost of therapists, health insurance, medical appointments, tools used in your child's care (wheelchairs, medical devices, etc)
- ✔ Put together a budget of your own expected expenses post-divorce. If you don't where to start, we can provide you with a template.
- ✔ Gather your statements and create a list of all your assets (vehicles, homes, retirement) and your debts (car loans, mortgages, credit cards). If you need a checklist, we can provide you with one.

Put together a team to ensure you are taking care of yourself:

- ✔ Therapy is very helpful for dealing with trauma, betrayal, overwhelm and other emotional issues that come up. Therapy is a safe place to vent and learn coping skills.
- ✔ Special Needs Planning Attorneys can give you an idea of the options that exist to help you safeguard your child's future and facilitate financial agreements for child-related support.
- ✔ Divorce Coaches can help you get organized, make a plan, get "unstuck", look at your options rationally and evaluate how best to move forward.
- ✔ Mediators can help you and your ex communicate effectively to reach financial agreements and craft a detailed parenting plan that puts your child's needs first.
- ✔ Family Law Attorneys can advise you on your rights, explain the law and help you navigate the labyrinth of divorce or consult on complicated issues and concerns.

Finally, make sure you take the time for SELF CARE so you can show up as your best self, make rational choices and get the outcome you deserve.