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Hiring a Family Law Attorney: Controlling Your Legal Costs

If you discussed the basis and nature of legal fees and costs with your family law attorney and have a written fee agreement, you have taken the necessary first step to help you control your legal expenses. Still, there are a few things you can do during the course of your case to help you and your lawyer manage the overall fees and costs:

Get Organized: During your first interviews, bring as much information as you can and share it with your lawyer. Think about the case in advance before talking to a lawyer. Write down the questions that you want your lawyer to answer. This could help cut down the time that the lawyer will spend investigating the case and gathering information.

Be Thorough: Tell your lawyer all the facts. Do not assume that your lawyer knows them all. Your lawyer should tell you that all your information will be kept in confidence. In order to represent you efficiently, it will help your lawyer to know as much as possible about your case and to avoid surprises during the course of the representation.

Be Efficient: Try to be as concise as possible. In many circumstances you will pay for every minute you spend with your lawyer. A friendly relationship can facilitate the handling of your case, but you should try to limit your discussions to your legal matter. You will not want to pay for a long, friendly conversation about non-legal matters.

Communicate: You need to discuss the case with your lawyer and prepare for meetings. You are probably the primary source of information about your case. If something new happens, you should inform your lawyer. It may change what the lawyer is doing on the case and save you and the lawyer time (and thus money).

Examine Your Bill: Make sure that your bills do not contain costs or expenses beyond those you agreed to pay for. Even if you agreed to pay on a contingency basis (very rare in family law cases), you should check to see that costs and expenses are monitored and properly billed.

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NEED TO FIND AN AFFORDABLE,
QUALIFIED ATTORNEY?

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