

TIPS TO PREPARE FOR MEDIATION:

- If you are well prepared, you'll be more confident, and likely achieve better outcomes.
- Think through your goals for mediation. Write them down and mark which ones are most important to you.
- Gather documents you want or need to share with the mediator and other party.
- Consider if you and your spouse can agree on the values of real estate, pension interests, business or other assets. Talk to the mediator about jointly hiring a real estate appraiser, or pension or business valuator.
- Consider if you need a Hear the Child report. The *Family Law Act* requires parents consider their children's views when making parenting arrangements.
- Practice talking about your interests. Try to identify the other party's likely interests. For example, if you want to remain living in the family home, be ready to explain **why** or **what about** remaining in the home is important to you.
- Find a family lawyer who can give you independent legal advice, before, during or after the mediation. You will need independent legal advice before you sign a written agreement. It is often helpful to get independent legal advice before you begin mediation. Remember a mediator can only give legal information.
- Consider if your expectations are realistic. Independent legal advice will help.
- Prepare to make and receive proposals and counter-proposals.
- If your mediation is online, make sure you have a computer with a camera, microphone and speakers (or headset). If you've never used Zoom before, find a friend or family member who can help you get familiar with Zoom.
- Be open to the mediator's suggestions – they have seen the issues you and the other party need to resolve many times.
- Plan how to respond to strong emotions – either your own or those of your ex-spouse. Remember you can ask to speak to the mediator alone, or for a break for coffee, food, etc.