

CHOOSING COLLABORATIVE LAW OR COOPERATIVE LAW

In both Collaborative and Cooperative law, lawyers and clients meet together from the beginning of a case to reach an agreement that meets the needs of the parties and their family. In both processes, you:

- ✓ solve problems together
- ✓ focus on children's needs
- ✓ communicate respectfully
- ✓ keep your case private
- ✓ get individual legal advice
- ✓ exchange all relevant information
- ✓ make well-informed decisions
- ✓ make binding agreements tailored to fit your needs
- ✓ use time and money efficiently

The difference between Collaborative and Cooperative law is that in Collaborative Law people use a "disqualification agreement" but not in Cooperative Law. Under the disqualification agreement, Collaborative lawyers cannot represent either party in court if the parties do not reach agreement.

	Collaborative Law	Cooperative Law
Benefits	Everyone has an extra incentive to reach agreement to make the process work.	People can keep the same lawyer if they go to court.
Possible risks	People may feel too pressured to reach agreement because parties would need new lawyers if they go to court.	The negotiation process may be more adversarial because the same lawyers can go to court.

It's up to the parties to decide whether you prefer Collaborative or Cooperative law. In both processes, the goal is to reach agreement that works for all parties without going to court. Both processes include a "cooling off" period to keep people from quickly going to court (except in emergency).