



## GROUND RULES

1. Work for what you believe is the most constructive, acceptable agreement for both of you and for your family.
2. During the Collaborative meetings, please remember the following:
  - Turn off or silence phones, tablets and computers to avoid disruption.
  - Do not interrupt when your spouse or his/her attorney is speaking. You will have a full and equal opportunity to speak on every issue presented for discussion.
  - Do not use language that blames or finds fault with the other spouse. Try to use non-inflammatory words and be respectful of each other.
  - Speak for yourself, using "I" statements.
  - If something is not working for you, please tell your attorney so that your concern can be addressed.
  - Listen carefully and try to understand what the other person is saying without being judgmental about the speaker or the message.
  - If you share a complaint, try to raise it as a concern and follow-up with a constructive suggestion.
  - Talk with your attorney about anything you do not understand. Your attorney can clarify issues for you.
3. Be willing to commit to the time required to meet regularly and be prepared for each meeting.
4. Be patient. Delays in the process can happen even with everyone acting in good faith.
5. Address the problems and concerns at hand, rather than attack each other.
6. Avoid positions; rather, express yourself in terms of needs and interests and the outcomes you would like to achieve.
7. During online video meetings, please abide by the following:
  - Turn off music, radio programs or other background noise to minimize distractions during the meeting
  - Put yourself on mute when not speaking to minimize microphone feedback.
  - Do your best to avoid disruptions from children, pets and others in the house.
  - You can request to speak to your attorney and/or coach privately in a breakout room. If you are uncomfortable asking, communicate with that person in the chat. They will then request a breakout room.
  - *NOTE: When using text chat in Zoom, be careful where you send your messages – the chat app tells you who will receive the message – you can chat with individual people by clicking in the upper right corner of their image or the box with the name.*