Initial Consultation Checklist

The purpose of the initial consult is to get legal advice and, if your case requires additional legal work, help you decide whether to hire the consulting lawyer. An initial consult can be 30 minutes or one hour long depending on your needs and availability.

The following is a checklist of items that may be helpful – though not necessary - to bring to an initial consultation. Any information and documentation can be gathered later if you don't have it.

- Court pleadings (e.g., petition for dissolution, motion papers, etc.) or legal documents related to the consult.
- A brief timeline of events.
- A list of your most important questions (there are no "dumb" questions).
- A list or spreadsheet of your assets and debts and estimated values.
- Your prenuptial, post-nuptial, separation or any other agreement.
- Most recent pay stubs and tax returns (including W 2 forms) for the two most recent years.
- Any other documents you think are important to address your questions. For example, if your spouse is running up debt, bring account statements. If domestic violence or abuse is alleged, bring any police, child protective services, or other reports or evidence you have.

Attorney–Client Privilege

The information you provide during the initial consult is protected by the attorney-client privilege. That means a lawyer generally cannot reveal information you disclose. The purpose for the attorney-client privilege is to allow you to feel free to disclose all necessary information to provide for good legal advice and advocacy.