

## ***Checklist for Hiring a Family Law Attorney***

- Find out whether the money that you pay to the attorney is refundable if it isn't used, for example, if you and the other party reconcile and end your separation.
- Don't get too wrapped up with online ratings, some of which don't use reliable or verifiable data to rate attorneys. Some law firms pay third party "reputation management" vendors who manage online reviews for them.
- Talk with friends and/or family members that you trust to give you input, even if it is only about attorneys that you should avoid.
- Expect a written, detailed and signed fee contract if you hire the attorney.
- Ask how much of the attorney's practice is actually devoted to family law so that you can avoid an attorney who merely dabbles in family law.
- Get an estimate of the cost for your case, using both the best-case scenario *and the worst-case scenario*.
- Be specific with important questions. For example: *How* is support calculated?
- Hire an attorney with a temperament and personality that is well-suited to yours.
- Ask how long he or she has practiced family law, specifically.
- Make sure the attorney actually listens to your questions and answers them.
- Ask how long that attorney has practiced in the county where your case is or will be pending (*i.e.*, familiarity with judges, etc.).

