

## INFORMATION SHEET

### 3-1

Choosing an attorney is a very important decision to make. There are many facets that should be taken into consideration prior to making this decision. There are a variety of things that can be a distraction to a father while making the decision to choose an attorney. Anger, confusion, frustration, and emotional pain are just a few factors that could interfere with a father making a wise decision. The purpose of this information sheet is to provide guidance that can help a father make a wise decision.

The first thing that should be considered prior to choosing an attorney is exactly what you need the attorney to accomplish? Are there any alternatives to hiring an attorney? Can you accomplish your objectives without the use of an attorney? These are just a few things to consider when deciding to hire an attorney. When you decide that you need to hire an attorney there are some other considerations that needs to be addressed. The use of an attorney can be very expensive. The question of how much you can afford for an attorney's services must be answered.

After you make the decision to hire an attorney, there are certain things that you can do that will help you make a wise choice. First thing you must do is become knowledgeable about the process. A great source of information is the Internet. Go online and type in the term "choose an attorney" into one of the many search engines. A variety of sites will become available for you to read and scan for information. Much of this topics information will be expressed in these sites.

Some of the common points you will find are 1. Make certain you are comfortable with your attorney. During the process of litigation, you will have to share many personal aspects of your life with your attorney. Does your attorney listen to you? Is he/she available when you need him/her? Does the attorney understand what you are trying to accomplish? If you are not comfortable with your attorney, then it is probably not a good choice.

## INFORMATION SHEET

### 3-1

2. What is your attorney's level of experience. You are going to be entrusting to your attorney things that will have a profound effect on your life. You want to have that information in the hands of someone who is experienced, competent, and capable to represent your best interest. Ask the question. You have a right to know. 3. Do you have an understanding of your attorney legal fees? The use of an attorney can be very expensive. Some charge a fee for an initial consultation, others give the initial consultation for free. Most attorneys request a retainer fee prior to accepting a case. There are also court fees, fees for preparing certain documents such as a parenting plan, child support worksheets, and numerous others. You need to have an understanding of what your financial obligations are concerning the attorney's services. Once again, asked the question. You have a right to know.

Once you decide that you should hire an attorney, where do you look? One of the best sources for finding an attorney is the personal referral. Information from someone you trust about an attorney who did a good job is very valuable. Many attorneys advertise in a variety of sources from television to the yellow pages. If you respond to an ad be prepared prior to setting an appointment. Don't be intimidated. Remember that you are hiring the attorney to work for you and represent your best interest. Ask the questions discussed earlier and record the answers.

Finally, there are times when a father will choose an attorney in a sense of desperation without considering all the factors involved. Don't fall into that trap. Interview a variety of attorneys. Make your selection based on factors that will best suit your situation. Remember one of the first points made in this information sheet. Make certain you are comfortable with your attorney. If you are not comfortable with your attorney, then it is probably not a good choice.