

## Collaborative Law:

Each person retains a trained collaborative attorney to advise and assist in negotiating an agreement on all matters. Negotiations take place in “four-way” settlement meetings. Attorneys and clients agree not to file anything with the court until a full settlement is reached. Resolution of the matter is the only agenda.

## Who is a Collaborative Family Lawyer?

A Collaborative Family Lawyer is a Family Law practitioner who is committed to reaching a settlement without court intervention.

## What Happens if a Settlement is not reached?

Both Collaborative Lawyers must withdraw from the case. However, they will assist their respective clients in the transition of their case to new lawyers to litigate the case in court.

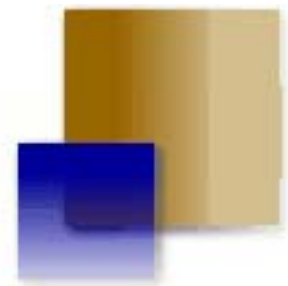


*Our Mission is to resolve Family Law Matters through Non-Adversarial Techniques.*

## **Many Advantages:**

- *Lower Costs*
- *Client Involvement*
- *Supportive Approach*
- *Less Stress / Win-Win Climate*
- *Speed*
- *Creativity*
- *Clients in Charge*

*Saint Johns County  
Collaborative Family  
Law Group*



**Welcome to  
Saint Johns Collaborative Family Law  
Group**

**We are a group of attorneys, counselors, child specialists, and financial consultants whose mission is to resolve family law matters through non-adversarial techniques.**

**Divorce and other family law matters are not brought to the courts until the parties and their attorneys have negotiated a full resolution of the matter.**

*SJC Collaborative Family Law Group  
info@sjccflg.com  
www.sjccflg.com*

*A New Way to Handle Divorce*

## How Does Collaborative Family Law Work

As in traditional family law/divorce cases, your lawyer supports you and your spouse's lawyer supports your spouse. But in collaborative family law, both lawyers must also practice collaborative law.

Collaborative Family Law attorneys utilize an interdisciplinary network of professionals to provide expertise and advice as needed on issues relevant to the ultimate settlement of the case.

Before the process begins, all participants—lawyers and clients—formally contract to work together to resolve your divorce issues. Both lawyers pledge not to take the case to court.

To resolve the matter using collaborative family law, the lawyers initiate “four-way” meetings between themselves and their clients. When indicated other professionals, such as counselors, financial consultants are involved in the process.

The meetings promote improved communication and cooperation in an environment that fosters analysis and reasoning. This helps generate options and creates a positive resolution while giving both parties control over the outcome.

The commitment to continued cooperation—if communication becomes difficult—also increases the likelihood of a solution where everybody wins.

While no two divorces are alike, Collaborative Family Law focuses on finding a way in which divorce professionals can work with the parties in a manner that will achieve a more than satisfactory settlement in an efficient, cooperative manner.

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### The Attorneys...

- Advise their clients of our Florida law that applies to the parties' circumstances.
- Model for their clients honest, dignified behavior, and mutual respect.
- Assist their clients in finding creative solutions to problems with the help of neutral experts if needed.
- Model for their clients the ability to hear and understand what is important to the other party so that the interests of both parties are promoted.
- Cooperate with each other to provide all necessary disclosure and discovery.
- Remain committed to settlement and assist parties in reaching agreements and overcoming obstacles.
- Do not prepare or file any documents with the Court except with the mutual agreement of all concerned.

### The Parties...

- Participate in good faith to reach a negotiated agreement that addresses both parties' concerns.
- Make full and fair disclosures to their attorneys and the other party of all facts relevant to their legal matter.
- Do not ask or expect their attorneys to propose an unethical or illegal position.
- Strive to communicate respectfully with each other to settle their legal matter promptly and economically.
- Unless mutually agreed, discuss settlement in the conference setting.