

WHAT IS COLLABORATIVE FAMILY LAW?

- The practice of family law using interest-based negotiation where lawyers are retained solely to help the parties achieve a mutually acceptable settlement.
- The lawyers and parties sign a contract agreeing not to go to court.
- The parties and lawyers work as a team.
- The clients are responsible for :
 - Deciding issues to resolve;
 - Exchanging important information;
 - Sharing interests, needs, objectives, and proposals with the other spouse;
 - Understanding interests, needs, objectives, and proposals of the other spouse;
 - Generating settlement proposals;
 - Creating mutually acceptable outcome.
- The Lawyers are responsible for:
 - Creating a safe negotiating environment;
 - Advocating interests;
 - Advocating for collaborative process;
 - Acting as a negotiation coach;
 - Acting as information resource.
- Negotiations take place in a series of four-way settlement meetings to exchange information, express interests, goals and concerns, develop options for settlement, and negotiate mutually acceptable agreements.
- During settlement negotiations, all parties treat each other with respect and they negotiate in good faith.