



# From the Roundtable:

YOUR MONEY:

## Cutting Divorce Costs

Adapted from *Connecticut Magazine*

**Michael Becker**  
ATTORNEY MEDIATOR

Divorce mediation offers a more peaceful and cost-effective approach to divorce than court litigation. Michael Becker, an attorney with degrees in accounting and marriage and family therapy specializing in divorce mediation, estimates that hiring a mediator typically costs significantly less than divorce litigation.

Mediators usually work with both spouses together, facilitating discussions and providing information to reach a mutually agreeable settlement. This process usually saves time and money by avoiding legal posturing and reducing the need for multiple attorneys. James Wu, former chair of the family law section for the Connecticut Bar Association, notes that mediation can reduce hostility and give both parties input, resulting in a less confrontational way to resolve disputes — and is considerably less expensive than litigation.

Patricia Kane, a former mediator in Stamford, reports a very high success rate for those who start the mediation process. While some people advise against mediation for couples with a history of domestic abuse, Kane notes that even those with instability, alcoholism, or mental health issues can succeed if committed to reaching agreements. And while some therapists serve as mediators, Wu recommends hiring an attorney experienced in mediation for better familiarity with divorce laws, parenting issues, alimony, and child support.