HELPFUL INFORMATION TO ASSEMBLE
(prior to discussion in mediation)

Documents and Research

SPECIAL NOTE re forthcoming update:
Effective January 1, 2005 with the sweeping changes in Colorado divorce law, parties are now required to disclose (and certify in final Court forms that they have provided each other) a comprehensive set of documents relating to nearly every aspect of their financial affairs. The latest Mandatory Disclosures List (detailing all required disclosure items and documents) is located on our website's Forms & Tools page (www.ColoradoDivorceMediation.com/tools/). This more general list will be updated to reflect these new disclosure requirements.

It is very helpful to obtain the following documents (or to research these matters by making notes with details of how you determined the required information) relating to:

Income & Support Information:

1. Past 3 year's tax returns
2. Last year's W-2 and/or 1099's
3. Most recent paystub from all employers showing year to date pay
4. Cost of health insurance for self, cost for family including children, cost for children only
5. Cost of work-related child daycare (or clear understanding of how charged in school year and during summer)
6. Cost of children's continuing unusual medical care, and private schooling
7. If self-employed, or if you also own a business, special information including records reflecting current gross receipts, and ordinary and necessary expenses required to produce that income.

Assets & Associated Liens Information:

8. Value of homes, rental or other real estate (consider property tax valuation statements, realtor competitive market evaluations, appraisals)
9. Balance of mortgages (name of companies & payoff balances for each) & home equity lines of credit
10. Description including year, model & mileage of automobiles & basis of estimated values
11. Balance of auto loans & liens (name of companies & payoff balances for each)

12. Account number, bank name & branch & current balances for all bank, savings & brokerage accounts
13. Bank name & balance of any certificates of deposit
14. Equity name & number of shares held of any stocks
15. Bonds description (including maturity date) of any bonds
16. Description (name of insured, owner of policy, beneficiary, death benefit, present cash value) of any life insurance
17. Description (institution & date with current value) of any Individual Retirement Accounts
18. Description of any 401(k) or similar plan, tax deferred saving plan or other defined contribution retirement account, and the balance of any loan against these
19. Description of any pension type benefits, to include: monthly or yearly benefit earned as of this date (not projected benefit), payable at normal retirement date (earliest date of retirement with full retirement benefits); also need same information as of date of marriage (documentation necessary)
20. For businesses, special information will also be required, but bring 3-5 years tax returns relating to business (business tax returns or K-1's if corporation or partnership, Schedule C if sole proprietorship)
21. Description including basis of estimate of present market value of special items of personal property (as example only, motorcycles, boats, skimobiles, campers, trailers, furs, jewelry, special animals, coin or gun or stamp or art or other collectibles collections, other than standard tools)
22. Description of any interest you hold in any form of trust, with trust documents and statements regarding value of trust assets

Debts & Miscellaneous:

23. Name of all bank cards, revolving charge obligations, unsecured loans, etc. (other than those already listed above with house or cars), in whose name this credit was extended, current minimum monthly payment, and current balance
24. Any prior agreements (pre-nuptial or marital) or prior Court Orders

YOUR HOUSEHOLD'S BUDGET:

It is also very helpful that you have given substantial thought to your anticipated income and reasonable living needs. Pages 2, 3 & 4 of the required Sworn Financial Statement (a court form available on our website's Tools & Divorce Forms page as well) are a good framework to consider a budget for your household in the circumstances you expect to find yourself **after** your separation and/or divorce. The Courts ordinarily do not require that you estimate the children's share, and that column of the form is commonly ignored.

FINAL NOTE:

Exchange of documentation of certain of these items may be required, but do NOT worry or stress about any particular item in advance of our work together.

We can understand better whether any particular item is important or necessary to your mediation as we meet, and we can often help you understand easier ways to obtain information you need, but that is not readily available.

Lawrence F. King, J.D.
Christopher L. Griffith, J.D., M.S.

Mediators

www.ColoradoDivorceMediation.com