

CHILD SUPPORT NEGOTIATIONS

Passion, Preparation, Professionalism

1. PASSION

Why do you do this? What facts/opinions/emotions do you bring with you to negotiations and to child support court? Why does your client deserve for you to take a stand for his interests and well-being? _____

2. PREPARATION

Know the law. Know your client. Know the opposition.

A. Prepare yourself – know the story:

1. Pay history – arrears, etc.
2. Client – current job status; job history for the last 5 years (or since order began); medical issues; criminal background.
3. Custodial Parent – who is it? (mom, maternal GM, paternal GM)
– being paid personally or state reimbursement
4. Know the essentials ... then think outside the box
 - ultimatum subpoena
 - forgiving arrears (state or personal)
 - going above/around child support agent

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B. Know the opposition:

1. County attorney or District attorney
2. DSS/CSE staff
3. DSS/CSE supervisors.
4. Attend their functions/lunches if possible (know their passions, pressures, and what makes them tick).
5. Case Workers:
Talk to them about their work outside the context of a case.
Know what type of proposal they appreciate and go along with
6. Judges and clerks.

C. Prepare your client:

1. Prepare your client for the future
2. Long-term case vs. one-hit wonder
3. Take opportunities to educate your client about the system, child support, fatherhood, etc.

3. PROFESSIONALISM

Integrity – amount of cash with client

Organization

Appearance

Respect – to all court personnel and to your clients (who are rarely shown respect)

Don't take out frustrations

All-out zealous representation, with a cordial demeanor and professional tone

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