

Custody Mediation Prep Checklist

Mediation goes better when you know what you need, what you can trade, and what you'll say when you feel provoked.

Know your goals

- ☐ Must-haves (what protects the child)
- ☐ Nice-to-haves (where you can be flexible)
- ☐ Your proposed regular schedule
- ☐ Holidays, school breaks and summer
- ☐ Exchange times, places and transportation
- ☐ How parents will communicate and make decisions

Bring

- ☐ Current orders
- ☐ A calendar of the child's school year and activities
- ☐ Your written proposal (one or two pages)
- ☐ A notepad and pen
- ☐ Water and anything you need to stay comfortable

Rehearse

- ☐ Your opening in under a minute
- ☐ Calm responses to the three things most likely to upset you
- ☐ How you'll ask for a break
- ☐ What you'll say if you need time before agreeing

Safety

- ☐ If there has been abuse, tell the mediator privately before the session; ask about separate rooms, separate sessions or being excused
- ☐ Plan safe arrival and departure

On the day

- ☐ Arrive early
- ☐ Listen fully before answering
- ☐ Keep proposals tied to the child's needs
- ☐ Don't sign anything you don't understand; ask for time or attorney review

After

- ☐ Write down what was agreed and what wasn't
- ☐ Note next steps and deadlines

General template for organizing your own information. It is not legal advice and not a court-approved form. Court rules and required forms vary by state and county, so check your court's local rules and self-help center. Doing this by hand takes hours: Custody Commander organizes evidence, builds your timeline and exports court-ready PDFs — free tier and a 14-day free trial at custodycommander.com.