

How To Navigate Custody Battles

A child custody battle can be one of the most stressful situations for a parent and child to endure. Of course, no one wants to decide the fate of their child's life in an ugly custody battle in court, but sometimes, contentious parents cannot agree outside of court.

Parents need to put their feelings about their spouse aside to determine what is best for their child. Be prepared if no one can agree by utilizing mediation or custody evaluation; this is common in custody situations.

No matter what happens, each parent must realize that there is no [magical](#) formula for success. Custody battles are often stressful, expensive, and disruptive to the child's life. However, there are ways to make this process as pain-free as possible for everyone and still serve the child's best interests.

Try to Settle Out of Court

You should make every effort to settle a custody dispute outside of court. Believe it or not, a judge would rather see the custody dispute decided [outside](#) of court due to the long-term effects of a custody battle and court-ordered decision on the family. However, if both parents can put their feelings aside and work together, several options are available.

- Informal Negotiation - it may be difficult for spouses to cooperate as their marriage ends, but an agreement made outside of court is the best way to settle. Successful co-parenting will create the best possible situation for both spouses and the child involved.
- Mediation - appointing a third-party mediator to guide custody discussions is a good idea. Of course, they can't decide anything official, but the mediator can propose solutions.
- Arbitration - another possible solution is similar to going to court but less expensive, and the result does not go on public record. A retired [judge](#), or another neutral third party, reviews the case and makes an informed decision. The final decision is binding, which a judge can uphold in court.

If the Custody Battle Goes to Court

One of the first realizations for each parent is that there usually isn't a clear ["winner"](#) in custody battles. You should only make decisions if they are in the child's best interest. If possible, joint custody that disrupts the child's life as little as possible is an ideal resolution.

Here are some tips to ensure that negotiations go smoothly:

- **Prioritize The Child's Well-Being** - Again, any evidence or documentation presented helps make informed decisions about custody and visitation. It's not about beating the [ex](#) and is not the time to fight about the past or reveal damaging information about spouses. Custody battles are an emotional time for everyone involved, and the proceedings should remain as professional as possible.
- **Hire A Professional** - Making sensible decisions from the start is the only way to guarantee the child's future. That is why hiring an experienced family attorney is the first order of business. The attorney can create custody agreements that favor both parents and work best for the child's safety.
- **Dismiss Unrealistic Expectations** - An attorney can help dispel common misconceptions about custody battles. Mothers do not get full custody automatically, and Fathers should not expect discrimination or dismissal. Realistic expectations will ensure the process runs as smoothly as it can.
- **Be Prepared** - a custody battle is rarely the end. Usually, after the [first](#) custody battle, one parent has hard feelings and may think they lost the war. It increases the likelihood of returning to court to make amendments to the agreement and makes co-parenting harder in the future.

Get Representation To Protect Your Parental Rights

Custody battles are complicated and lengthy, sometimes taking months or years. It is best if both spouses vow to co-parent and work together to determine their child's future. If a custody battle happens, then hiring an experienced attorney who can guide their clients to form a collaborative agreement is the best way to go.

If one parent receiving full custody is in the child's best interest, the custody proceedings could get ugly. Leave nothing to chance and contact the experienced staff at JM Blattner Attorneys at Law and set up a free consultation. We work diligently to ensure that the children and their families receive the best outcome.