

Most divorce cases involve one person who has thought about it for months and is prepared mentally and financially to proceed and the other person who is completely unprepared and feels blind-sided by the “sudden” decision to separate. There are certain actions that can be undertaken if you want to be prepared.

~ Open a separate bank account. Do not put your money into a joint account with your spouse. Stop all direct deposits into joint accounts.

~ Open your own credit card accounts. Talk to credit card companies and check into removing your liability on any joint credit cards.

~ If needed for yourself and/or your children, consult with a therapist. This is a difficult time emotionally for all involved.

~ Be certain that you have the financial information that you will need. Know where the bank accounts are, together with the account numbers. Know where the investment accounts are. Know who holds the mortgage on the house and what the monthly payment is. Know what your spouse’s income is. Get a copy of the pay stub if you are able. Most of this information can be gathered by paying attention to the mail for a month or so.

~ Depending on the assets, you may want to contact a financial planner. Many of these are certified as divorce financial specialists.

~ Have the health insurance information and the insurance card itself.

~ Have a vehicle titled in your name or leased to you to avoid your spouse “repossessing” your car if it is in his/her name.

~ Find out from an experienced family law attorney what your rights are.