

### How To Find An Attorney

If you are ineligible for a court appointed attorney, and you are able to hire an attorney, these are some questions you should ask before you decide whether or not to hire him or her:

- How much do you charge by the hour? Do you charge, and if you do, how much do you charge for a first meeting and a consultation?
- What is your minimum fee for a case such as mine?
- What is covered by your fee?
- How many court appearances are included?
- What is your rate for appearances in court?
- Will you attempt to recoup my legal and court fees from my abuser?
- Do you have a written agreement that I can sign and a copy of it for me to keep?
- Are you willing to help me get necessary court orders, such as custody, visitation and/or protective orders?
- Will you seek changes in final orders and judgments if new circumstances justify the changes?
- Are you willing to assist me if my abuser violates a custody or protective order? What are your fees in those circumstances?
- Do you charge for time when I telephone you or when you respond to letters I send?

Also ask:

- Are you willing to speak to and coordinate with a domestic violence advocate?
- What should I do to help you with my case?
- What do you expect of me?
- What papers, documents, and witnesses should I get for you?
- What do you think are my chances for success in court?

From the very beginning you should feel comfortable when you talk to your lawyer and be sure that she or he understands your situation and knows how to help. If you do not have confidence in the first lawyer you speak with, you have every right to search for another. Your local domestic violence program may be able to refer you to a lawyer.