

**Sample**

Let’s look at a sample family law case under both the traditional vs. unbundled approach:

**Example:** Abigail needs to modify her current visitation order with her ex-husband Bobby because her son Charlie has entered his first year of kindergarten. Under the current order, Bobby is entitled to visitation Wednesday evenings through Saturday at noon. This arrangement will not work when Charlie starts kindergarten. Bobby is considering contesting the matter on the basis that, since both parties live equidistant from the school, there is no reason why Charlie can’t maintain the current arrangement. Abigail decides she needs to consult with an attorney. She first meets with a lawyer at a traditional firm who explains she will to put down a \$5,000.00 retainer to get started. Abigail then considers contacting a virtual law office to discuss web-based, limited scope, unbundled representation.

Let’s look at two separate hypothetical invoices for the same client. The first represents the billable hour approach at \$250 per hour. The second represents the unbundled, flat fee approach.

<b>Traditional - Retainer</b>		<b>Unbundled – Flat Fee</b>	
Initial intake @ \$250 per hour to describe problem	<b>\$250</b>	Client fills out questionnaire online describing legal problem	<b>\$0</b>
Attorney meets with paralegal & associate for 25 minutes to describe problem and delegate work. Attorney, his associate and paralegal all bill for this 25 minute meeting.	<b>\$105 – Attorney B’s time; \$94.50 – Associate’s time; \$37.80 – Paralegal’s time</b>	Client and Attorney arrange a 30-minute phone or Skype meeting to review information submitted in questionnaire	<b>\$50</b>
Associate drafts complaint to modify visitation. He has never done one before, so it takes him three hours. Luckily, he bills at just \$225 per hour.  Paralegal drafts courthouse paperwork. She is	<b>\$675 – Associate’s time  \$90 – Paralegal’s time</b>	Attorney C drafts complaint to modify visitation. She charges a flat fee of \$275 for this service. It includes the courthouse paperwork as well.	<b>\$275</b>

experienced and gets it done in one hour.			
Attorney meets with client in the office to review the documents.	<b>\$250</b>	Attorney sends paperwork and Complaint to Client via secure client portal for client's review	<b>\$0</b>
Client wants to make changes and has questions. The meeting takes awhile	<b>\$250</b>	Client has questions and wants to make changes. Sends an email to Attorney for additional advice.	<b>\$50</b>
Paralegal makes changes	<b>\$90</b>	Attorney makes changes	<b>\$0</b>
Paralegal files the document with the court after Attorney reviews the file one last time – for good measure.	<b>\$90 – Paralegal's time \$125 – 30 minutes of Attorney B's time</b>	Client files documents herself.	<b>\$0</b>
Ex-husband files a response. Attorney B reads response and discusses with his staff for 30 minutes.	<b>\$250 – Attorney B's time \$112.50 – Associate's time \$45 – Paralegal's time</b>	Ex-husband files a response. Client asks Attorney C to review the documents and interpret via email.	<b>\$99</b>
Court schedules mediation. Attorney prepares for mediation for one hour. Attends mediation with client. The mediation itself only took 30 minutes, but unfortunately Attorney had to wait 90 minutes with Client in lobby until it was their turn. Attorney charges \$300/hour for time in court. Attorney also charges mileage, and lives about 16 miles from	<b>Prep time – \$250  Court Time - \$600  Mileage @ Federal Rate: \$17.92  Travel time - \$250</b>	Attorney counsels Client over the phone about the mediation process, what to bring and what to expect.  Client attends mediation on her own.	<b>\$50</b>

the courthouse – one way.			
Client and ex-husband are unable to reach an agreement at mediation. Case scheduled for pre-trial conference. Attorney meets with Client to discuss status of case.	<b>\$250</b>	Client discusses how to prepare for pre-trial conference with Attorney C for 30 minutes via Skype.	<b>\$50</b>
Client and Attorney attend pre-trial conference. It lasts just 18 minutes, but Attorney had to wait an hour with client in lobby.	<b>\$390</b>	Client attends pre-trial hearing on her own.	<b>\$0</b>
Attorney engages in discovery process versus ex-husband. This includes Requests for Interrogatories, Production of Documents, and Admissions. The Associate handles the preparation of these documents, and is learning as he goes. It takes him about 4 hours to complete	<b>\$900.00</b>	Client asks Attorney for advice on how to proceed. Attorney recommends collecting evidence, counsels Client on the standards in the case and offers court coaching for one hour over the phone. Attorney prepares discovery requests @ \$149/document and recommends three documents for Client.	<b>\$100 – Advice</b> <b>\$447 – Documents</b>
Ex-husband offers to settle the case and calls Attorney. They speak for 15 minutes.	<b>\$62.50</b>	Ex-husband offers to settle the case and calls Client. They speak for 15 minutes	<b>\$0</b>
Attorney has Associate draft a Stipulation as to the agreed-upon visitation	<b>\$337.50</b>	Attorney drafts Stipulation.	<b>\$149</b>

arrangement. Associate is getting better. He only spends 90 minutes on the document.			
Paralegal files Stipulation after Attorney's review	<b>\$90 – Paralegal's time</b> <b>\$125 – 30 minutes of Attorney's time</b>	Client files Stipulation on her own.	<b>\$0</b>
Order is entered and client's goal is met.		Order is entered and client's goal is met.	
<b>Total Bill</b>	<b>\$5,737.72</b>	<b>Total Bill</b>	<b>\$1,270.00</b>