Dream Living Florida

AT COMPASS · ST. PETERSBURG

Your Home & Your *Divorce*

A calm, practical guide for St. Pete and Pinellas County homeowners making decisions about the house.



Tiffany McAlister

Dream Living Florida at Compass

727-418-5756 · dreamlivingflorida.com

A NOTE BEFORE YOU BEGIN

You do not have to figure this out alone



If you are reading this, you are probably in the middle of one of the hardest seasons of life. The house is often the biggest shared asset in a marriage, and it is usually the most emotional one too. It holds memories, routines, and for many families, the kids' sense of home.

My job is to take some of the weight off. I give both parties the same honest information, a fair and realistic value, and a clear plan, without taking sides. I keep conversations focused on the property so decisions stay practical and you are not paying for extra time with attorneys.

Use this guide to get organized, know the right questions to ask, and feel more in control of what comes next. And when you are ready, I am a confidential phone call away.

Tiffany

Tiffany McAlister, Dream Living Florida at Compass

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

1. Building your divorce support team
2. 5 steps toward an amicable decision about the home
3. Things to consider before you list
4. Questions to ask your lender
5. Your home documents checklist

SECTION ONE

Your Divorce Support Team

The right people around you save time, money and stress. Here is who to have in your corner, and space to keep their information in one place.

Family Law Attorney

Protects your rights and guides your settlement. Each spouse should have their own.

NAME / PHONE

Mediator

A neutral professional who helps you reach agreements outside the courtroom.

NAME / PHONE

CPA or Financial Advisor

Explains the tax side of selling or keeping the home and helps plan your next chapter.

NAME / PHONE

Mortgage Lender

Tells you early whether a buyout or a new purchase is realistic, and what you qualify for.

NAME / PHONE

Neutral Real Estate Advisor

Provides one fair valuation, outlines options with real numbers and handles the sale for both parties.

TIFFANY MCALISTER / 727-418-5756

Title Company

Confirms how the home is titled, clears the title and handles closing and the deed.

NAME / PHONE

Insurance Agent

Quotes homeowners, wind and flood coverage for whoever keeps the home. Key in coastal Pinellas.

NAME / PHONE

Counselor or Coach

Support for you and your children through the emotional side of the transition.

NAME / PHONE

Need a referral? I am happy to introduce you to trusted local professionals.

SECTION TWO

5 Steps Toward an Amicable Decision About the Home

Agreeing on the house is easier when both people work from the same facts. These steps keep the process calm, fair and moving forward.

01

Pause and Get the Facts

Before anyone decides, gather the basics: how the home is titled, the mortgage balance, monthly costs, insurance, and any HOA or condo fees. Facts take the emotion down a notch.

02

Agree on One Neutral Value

Two opinions of value usually mean two arguments. A single, transparent market analysis shared with both parties and both attorneys gives everyone the same starting point.

03

Compare the Options With Real Numbers

Sell and split, one spouse buys out the other, trade the home for other assets, or co-own for a set time. Look at the net proceeds, the refinance math and the monthly costs for each.

04

Put It in Writing

Work with your attorneys so your marital settlement agreement spells out who keeps or sells the home, who pays what until then, how offers are approved and how proceeds are divided.

05

Follow Through to the Finish

Close the sale, or complete the refinance and deed transfer if one spouse keeps the home. Confirm the departing spouse is removed from the loan and the title, then take a deep breath.

> **Keep the kids in mind.** Timing a move around the school year, keeping routines steady and keeping adult conversations away from little ears makes a real difference.

SECTION THREE

Things to Consider Before You List

If selling is the plan, a little agreement up front prevents a lot of friction later. Check these off together, ideally with your attorneys' input.

- [ ] **Both signatures.** Are both owners ready and willing to sign the listing and sale documents?
- [ ] **Who lives there** until closing, and who handles showings and upkeep?
- [ ] **Who pays** the mortgage, insurance, utilities, taxes and HOA until it sells?
- [ ] **List price.** Have you agreed on the price and how a price change gets approved?
- [ ] **Offers.** How will you review and approve offers, and how quickly will you respond?
- [ ] **Repairs and prep.** What is the budget, and who pays for it?
- [ ] **Proceeds.** How will sale proceeds be held and divided, per your agreement or court order?
- [ ] **Timing.** Does your timeline line up with the court process, the school year and your next home?
- [ ] **Flood zone and elevation.** Do you have an elevation certificate or details on any past storm damage?
- [ ] **Insurance.** Is a 4-point or wind mitigation inspection needed for an older home?
- [ ] **Furniture and staging.** What stays for photos and showings, and who moves what, when?
- [ ] **Communication.** Text, email or phone? Agree on how updates will be shared with both of you.
- [ ] **Taxes.** Have you asked your CPA about capital gains and how the sale affects each of you?
- [ ] **Homestead.** Have you asked your attorney how the sale or a move-out affects your homestead exemption?

> **Coastal St. Pete tip:** flood zone, elevation and insurance costs can change buyer demand and your net proceeds. I pull this information for both parties before we set a price.

SECTION FOUR

Questions to Ask Your Lender

Whether one of you is keeping the home or you are both planning your next move, talk with a lender early, before decisions are final.

01 What would it take for one of us to buy out the other and refinance into one name?

02 How do I get off the current mortgage, and what has to happen with the deed?

03 How can the buyout or new loan be structured for the best terms?

04 What is a property settlement or marital settlement agreement, and why does it matter to you?

05 Can alimony or child support count as qualifying income, and what history do I need?

06 If I am newly back in the workforce, how long do I need to be employed to qualify?

07 Can I buy a new home while I am still on our current mortgage?

08 What low down payment options might fit my situation?

09 If our current rate is low, what does refinancing out of it really cost each month?

10 How can I protect my credit during the divorce?

11 Does it make more sense for me to rent for a while, or buy now?

12 What documents should I bring to our first conversation?

SECTION FIVE

Your Home Documents Checklist

Gather these early and keep copies in one folder. Your attorney, lender, CPA and I will likely ask for many of them.

- [ ] Deed showing how the home is titled
- [ ] Most recent mortgage statement(s), including any HELOC
- [ ] Closing statement from when you bought the home
- [ ] Homeowners, wind and flood insurance policies
- [ ] Elevation certificate and survey, if you have them
- [ ] Property tax bill and homestead exemption details
- [ ] HOA or condo documents, fees and contact information
- [ ] List of improvements, with dates, costs and permits
- [ ] Past inspection reports, including 4-point or wind mitigation
- [ ] Recent utility bills
- [ ] Warranties for the roof, AC and appliances
- [ ] A copy of your settlement agreement once it is drafted

Not sure what your home is worth today? Request a confidential, no-obligation home valuation at **dreamlivingflorida.com/home-value** or call me directly. Both parties receive the same information.



CONFIDENTIAL AND JUDGMENT-FREE

Let's talk about your next chapter

A private conversation about your home and your options, on your timeline. Everything we discuss stays between us and the people you choose to include.

Tiffany McAlister

Dream Living Florida at Compass

727-418-5756 · Tiffany@dreamlivingflorida.com

200 Central Ave, Suite 111, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

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