

Jugendamt Preparation

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Overview

<i>Understand the Purpose</i>	Confirm the stated reason for the mediation. Review any written notice or correspondence to understand the issue the mediation is addressing. Prepare a summary of your perspective and key points to discuss.
<i>Research the Jugendamt's Role</i>	Understand that the Jugendamt is primarily a mediator, not an enforcer. Their opinions can influence the court, but they do not make legally binding decisions. Keep in mind that if you do reach an agreement with your ex through mediation, that agreement can become binding.
<i>Hire a Translator (if needed)</i>	If you are not fluent in German, arrange for a translator. This ensures you fully understand what is being discussed and can articulate your points clearly.
<i>Organize Documentation</i>	Print and bring all relevant documents, including emails, text messages, legal documents, or other evidence that supports your case. Organize them chronologically or by topic for easy reference.
<i>Define your Objectives</i>	Clearly outline your goals for the mediation. For example, are you there to resolve communication issues, defend your visitation rights, or establish a fair custody agreement? Write these down and bring them with you.
<i>Prepare for Sidetracking</i>	Be ready to redirect conversations back to the original topic if they veer off course. Politely remind the mediator of the mediation's purpose and refocus the discussion

<i>Review German Laws</i>	Familiarize yourself with the legal expectations. For example shared custody (50/50) is the preferred standard unless evidence supports otherwise. Knowing the laws can help you stay confident and assertive. Consider using chat-gpt or other AI software to help conduct this research
<i>Practice your Statements</i>	Rehearse a concise opening statement summarizing your position. Include key points, concerns, and proposed solution. Practice staying calm and professional.
<i>Bring Support (if Allowed)</i>	Some Jugendamt offices allow you to bring a friend, partner, or legal advisor. Check ahead of time and, if possible, bring someone who can provide emotional or logistical support.
<i>Stay Calm and Professional</i>	Even if the conversation becomes emotionally charged, remain composed. Avoid reacting to provocations from your EX or the mediator. Your ability to remain calm if your EX is aggressive or emotional can weigh heavily in your favor.
<i>Focus on the Children's Best Interests</i>	Frame your arguments around the well-being of your children. Show that you are prioritizing their needs and stability, as this will resonate with the Jugendamt.
<i>Prepare for Bias</i>	While the Jugendamt is meant to be neutral, fathers sometimes face bias in family matters. Be prepared to respectfully counter any assumptions with facts and clear evidence.
<i>Don't Agree to Anything Under Pressure</i>	If you feel rushed to make a decision, politely request more time to review the matter. Do not feel obligated to agree on the spot. You can request a few minute break to compose your thoughts or even a future follow up meeting. You can also express your hesitation and state that you'll need to speak with your lawyer before finalizing anything.

Closing Thoughts

Remember that the Jugendamt is supposed to be looking out for the best interest of the child/children. Your anger, aggression, or lack of composure will not be viewed favorably by the Jugendamt even if you feel they are justified. Try to not attack your ex with accusations unless its directly relevant to the argument. Accusations will show a lack of co-parenting ability and again, not in the best interest of the child. Think through your arguments and defense ahead of time and if possible, run them past a friend or AI program to get another opinion. Make sure your statements support the "best interest of the child" idea. Relax and remember that this is mediation, nothing needs to be finalized on this day. You can take the information gained to your lawyer for further guidance or escalation if needed.

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