

Smith & Bledsoe Family Law Secures Appellate Victory Affirming Williamson County Divorce Decree

The Texas Third Court of Appeals upheld the firm's defense of a father's parental rights, ruling a Mediated Settlement Agreement is contractually binding.

AUSTIN, TX, UNITED STATES, June 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Austin family law firm [Smith & Bledsoe Family Law](#) has secured an appellate victory

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*Nikki Chapa, attorney at
Smith & Bledsoe Family Law*

before the Texas Third Court of Appeals, which affirmed a trial court's final divorce decree in a Williamson County civil matter. In the case under No. 03-25-00020-CV, the appellate court upheld the firm's defense of a father's parental and property rights, ruling that a contractually binding Mediated Settlement Agreement (MSA) covering child custody and asset division remains fully enforceable even if the original divorce action was temporarily dismissed without prejudice.

Attorney [Nikki Chapa](#) represented the father throughout the appellate litigation, handling the briefing and legal strategy required to defend the trial court's judgment. According to court filings, the legal dispute centered on the permanence of family law mediation agreements within Texas. The matter originated in a Williamson County district court, where the parties executed an MSA to resolve their divorce. Following a temporary procedural dismissal of that initial petition, the opposing party challenged the agreement, alleging that the dismissal effectively voided the mediated terms upon refileing.

The Texas Third Court of Appeals rejected the challenge and accepted the legal positions filed by Smith & Bledsoe Family Law. In its final ruling, the court held that an MSA satisfying the statutory requirements of the Texas Family Code remains an irrevocable contract. The formal opinion states that a trial court must enter a judgment that conforms exactly with the executed agreement, provided the statutory criteria were met at execution, regardless of intermediate procedural actions.

"The ruling from the Texas Third Court of Appeals provides clear guidance on the legal finality of mediated settlement agreements," said Nikki Chapa, attorney at Smith & Bledsoe Family Law.

"The court affirmed that statutory mediation agreements maintain their contractual authority regardless of subsequent procedural updates or temporary dismissals in the underlying litigation. This decision establishes that when parties reach an agreement through formal mediation, those terms remain legally stable."

The appellate mandate clarifies that a temporary dismissal without prejudice does not dissolve the underlying contractual obligations established under the Texas Family Code. This outcome provides a definitive resolution for the firm's client, protecting the established structure for his parental rights, child conservatorship duties, and the division of the community estate. The decision provides clear precedent for family law litigants across Central Texas who utilize mediation to resolve domestic disputes. A summary of this specific litigation outcome is published on the [Smith & Bledsoe Family Law website](#).

About Smith & Bledsoe Family Law

Smith & Bledsoe Family Law is an Austin, Texas family law firm focused on high-stakes divorce, child custody, and complex family matters across Central Texas. The firm is led by Christian Smith, a Super Lawyers honoree recognized among the top tier of Texas attorneys, and Brandon Bledsoe, a seasoned trial lawyer known for strategic, results-driven advocacy. Together, they bring courtroom credibility, sharp negotiation skills, and deep knowledge of local courts to cases where outcomes matter long after the judgment is signed. Smith & Bledsoe Family Law represents clients in contested and uncontested divorce, complex property division, custody and conservatorship disputes, child support, enforcement and modification actions, prenuptial and postnuptial agreements, adoption, and LGBTQ+ family law. The firm is known for direct communication, tailored legal strategy, and hands-on representation, delivering clarity and control to clients navigating some of the most consequential legal decisions of their lives.

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