



Resolve family differences with mediation

Supporting families to achieve positive outcomes

What is mediation?

It is a process to help you resolve your family differences such as your finances or arrangements for your children upon separation, without going to court. It is not relationship counselling.

Mediation is voluntary and the discussions are confidential (apart from in exceptional circumstances).

What happens?

The mediator will arrange an initial face to face or video meeting with both of you separately to discuss the issues, consider your process options and to see if mediation is suitable for you. This is called a Mediation Information and Assessment meeting (MIAM).

The mediator is impartial and will manage the discussions and to ensure you can both speak freely and openly in calm surroundings. They will help you explore options providing legal, financial, and general information (but not advice).

If you both want to proceed, then mediation can start.

Meetings typically involve:

- **One mediator:** Usually, one mediator works with both of you in joint meetings. Occasionally, a second mediator may join if needed or if requested by you.
- **Meeting setup:** You choose to meet together, or in or in separate rooms if preferred. You can also bring someone with you, such as a solicitor or supportive person if agreed in advance.
- **Location flexibility:** Meetings can be held online or face-to-face as you wish.

If a consensus is reached, a Memorandum of Understanding will be prepared together with an open summary of financial information (where appropriate).

Meeting duration and frequency

Mediation usually requires 3-5 sessions, each lasting 1.5 to 2 hours. However, you may arrange for longer or shorter meetings if preferred. You can end mediation at any time if it doesn't feel right for you. Equally, in some circumstances, the mediator may end the mediation if they take the view that it is no longer appropriate.

Is mediation better than court?

Mediation allows you to make informed decisions about your future without a court order being imposed. It is:

- **Faster and less costly** than court or long communications through solicitors.
- **Conflict-reducing:** Mediation promotes better communication and reduces tension.
- **A good way of achieving a resolution:** You each have an equal say, and there is no judgment involved. You are empowered to make decisions that are best for your family, rather than having decisions imposed upon you by the court.

Note: Mediation may not be suitable if there are issues of domestic abuse, child protection concerns, or lack of openness from either party.

Costs

Fee structure: Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting (MIAM), £150 plus VAT. Mediation, £145 plus VAT, per person per hour.

Estimated total: For three sessions, a Memorandum of Understanding, and a financial summary, the cost is around £1,000–£1,250 per person, plus VAT- a fraction of the cost of going to court.

Voucher scheme: A £500 voucher is available for cases involving child arrangements.

Is a Solicitor required?

It is recommended that you take legal advice during the process. You should certainly do so when you reach an overall solution to check that you remain satisfied with the proposals. These can then be converted into a legally binding court order.

How we can help

Our experienced mediators are here to guide you through each step of the mediation process, helping you navigate family or financial issues in a calm and supportive environment. Whether it's setting up arrangements for children, dividing finances, or discussing other concerns, we focus on finding practical solutions that work for everyone involved. We provide impartial guidance, flexible meeting options, and the clarity you need to move forward with confidence.

Contact our mediation team today



Richard Phillips
Senior Consultant Solicitor
and Mediator
Private Family Law team
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“ Richard Phillips is a standout mediator. It is not uncommon for family law clients to dislike mediation but Richard always manages to keep clients in the process and on board. ”



Sadie Glover
Partner and Mediator
Private Family Law team
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“ Sadie is excellent. The depth of her experience and knowledge was clear from our first meeting where she instilled a sense of confidence and trust that I've felt consistently since. Sadie is kind, calm and assertive. ”

About Machins Solicitors LLP

With offices in Berkhamsted and Luton Machins is one of the leading law firms in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire offering an extensive range of services to Individuals and Businesses. We strive for excellence, taking the time to get to know you. For Machins it's personal, so we invest our time and energy to build strong, personal relationships to work with you and find the right legal solution.



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