ANTWORKS
FAMILY MEDIATION
• Helping families find their way forward •



Frequently Asked Questions About Family Mediation

with Antworks Family Mediation

Family mediation is confidential (unless information is shared about a risk to a child or adult, or about a serious crime such as money laundering). **Family mediation is voluntary, impartial and led by you.**

1 What are your qualifications and accreditation?

Our mediator, Helen Jones, is registered with the Family Mediation Council (FMC registration no. 2250T), has completed an FMC-approved foundation course and is working towards accreditation. All family mediators receive professional supervision; mediators working towards accreditation receive extra supervision and work with an accredited family mediator who can help with vouchers and the C100, Form A, or FM1 forms you may need.

2 What happens, step by step?

First you each have an individual assessment meeting (sometimes called a MIAM). Once you have both had an individual meeting you are then invited to a joint session with the other person, where the mediator supports you to talk about what you want to happen and come to agreement. Most couples need 3 to 5 sessions of 90 minutes. At the end you can request that your agreements are written up into a Memorandum of Understanding or Parenting Plan.

3 How are your fees structured?

Our fees are £140 for each individual assessment and £140 per person per hour of mediation. Written documents, such as a Memorandum of Understanding or Parenting Plans, are charged at £40 per document. Room hire will be charged if in-person mediation is requested. We are not VAT registered so there is no VAT and we don't pass on any other costs (such as co-mediation) to you.

4 Who is eligible for Legal Aid or government vouchers?

If you think you might qualify for Legal Aid, let us know. We work with leading Legal Aid mediators Amity Mediation. We can still work with you under their arrangements.

Many people qualify for the government's family mediation voucher scheme, which contributes £500 towards your shared mediation costs for arrangements involving children. If you don't qualify for Legal Aid, the voucher more than covers the cost of your first joint mediation session.

5 Do you offer online or in-person mediation?

Mediation usually takes place online, but we can arrange to meet in person if you both agree.

6 What other mediation options do you offer?

If joint mediation is not suitable in your situation we can use 'shuttle' mediation where you are in separate rooms (including virtual 'rooms') and the mediator shuttles between you. In some situations it is best to have two mediators (co-mediation). Occasionally, if both parties agree, solicitors or financial advisers can join the discussion.

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7 Do you offer child-inclusive mediation?

Yes, where appropriate, by arrangement with a registered child-inclusive mediator (CIM).

8 How do you handle domestic abuse or power imbalances?

Mediators are required to carry out safety and safeguarding screening for domestic abuse, coercive control or hidden assets during the assessment. Our aim is always a safe, balanced environment where you won't be intimidated.

9 What issues can mediation cover?

Finances and property, child arrangements, child maintenance, and wider family contact (such as grandparents). We provide neutral information rather than legal advice.

10 How can an agreement become a legally binding order?

Once you have both approved your Memorandum of Understanding or Parenting Plan, you or your solicitor can apply for a judge to make it legally binding as a 'consent order'.

11 What happens if mediation breaks down or isn't successful?

If you cannot reach an agreement, a mediator can sign the form (such as the C100 or other court-required certificate) that allows you to apply to the family court.

12 How long does a child arrangements order usually take?

A Child Arrangements Order typically takes 6 to 12 months from the initial application to a final conclusion, with a national average of around 9 to 10 months. In certain family court areas (including courts in Northern England), a regional 'Pathfinder' pilot is in use. Straightforward cases routed through this streamlined, less adversarial approach can conclude much faster – around 16 weeks (about 4 months) on average in pilot areas.

13 How long does a special guardianship order usually take?

A private Special Guardianship Order typically takes at least 4 to 6 months from the initial notice to final court resolution, and longer if the case is complex or contested. In public cases, assessments are carried out within 12 weeks of notice (which must be three months).

14 How long does a financial separation order usually take?

Based on a Memorandum of Understanding agreed by you both in family mediation, a financial consent order typically takes 3 to 5 weeks once submitted to the court for approval along with your Open Statement of Financial Information. If formal court proceedings are needed (a contested financial remedy order), expect 6 to 12 months, and up to 18–24 months for complex or contested cases. Court timescales are approximate and can change.

Ready to take the first step?

Get in touch for a free, confidential 15 minute chat or to arrange an assessment meeting. There is no need to have all the answers before you contact us.