

- Are you facing divorce or separation?
- Are you wanting to reduce the emotional and financial costs of the family breakdown?
- Are you having difficulties with problems over housing, maintenance, children and joint possessions?
- Are you feeling you're never going to agree on anything?
- Are you dreading the thought of fighting it out in court?
- Are you needing help to move things along more calmly?

Mediation helps clients to make fair and workable arrangements

The Relate Leicestershire Family Mediation Service can provide the help you need.

What does it cost?

You may be eligible to receive funding for Family Mediation. This will be assessed at your first meeting.

If you are, there will be no cost to you.

If you are not, please see the charges on the enclosed leaflet. As a registered charity and non-profit-making organisation we aim to keep our fees as low as possible.

Shouldn't I go straight to a solicitor?

You can of course go straight to a solicitor. However, solicitors themselves often suggest mediation. And we encourage those who have used mediation to take their solicitors' advice on the agreements they reach. If, with experienced help, a couple can agree how to resolve issues face to face, communication problems are reduced, and you are spared the expense of each of you going through a solicitor. Most importantly it reduces the element of conflict for all concerned.

How do I make an appointment to find out more?

Contact us by letter, telephone, fax or e-mail, or ask your solicitor to refer you.

Relate Leicestershire Family Mediation

81/83 Aylestone Road
Leicester LE2 7LL

Telephone: 0116 2549696

Fax: 0116 2557240

Email: mediation2@relateleics.org

Other services include:

- Counselling
- Sex Problem Service
- Relationship Training & Education
- Relate2U*
- Families in Conflict*

For information on any of the above

Telephone: 0116 2543011

Email: info@relateleics.org



Facing divorce or separation?

Mediation will help you move forward and make a new start

relate

Family Mediation Service helps reduce conflict in separation or divorce

Family mediation is a service provided by Relate Leicestershire, drawing on its long experience of dealing with relationships. Family Mediation helps couples – married or unmarried, with or without children – to make decisions and settle disputes that arise from the breakdown of their relationship. These matters may need resolving as soon as the relationship has ended or some time afterwards. We try to help in a way that reduces conflict and distress.

What is family mediation?

During mediation professionally trained mediators help couples communicate better and reach their own decisions about their future. The mediators can help you to:

- decide the issues for mediation
- explore each person's needs and interests
- focus on children's needs and future parenting arrangements*
- develop solutions
- draw up an agreement

Who is family mediation for?

Any couple whose relationship has broken down and who need to sort things out regarding the future of their children, their property or their money, or all of these.

Mediation is not the same as reconciliation, and we make no attempt to encourage a couple to reconsider their decision to separate. If both of you decide during the mediation meetings that you wish to think again about your separation, we may encourage you to seek help from another service such as Relate Counselling.

Family Mediation can involve grandparents, step-parents and other members of the extended family.

Why mediate?

- Research shows that mediation improves communication, reduces bitterness and brings benefits to the children involved.
- Mediation helps clients to make fair and workable arrangements
- Discussion takes place with the minimum of conflict and distress.
- Mediation helps clients take control of their situation and work things out together.
- Mediation helps clients to move forward and make a new start.
- Mediation costs less and is usually quicker than contested divorce proceedings.

Mediation is voluntary.

About our mediators

Our mediators have been specially trained to national standards by National Family Mediation. They are assessed by the Legal Services Commission and are members of the UK College of Family Mediators. Their role is to ease communication between you and your ex-partner on, the important decisions which affect your family. They will not:

- take sides
- make decisions for you

Note: If legal advice is needed they will refer you to an appropriate source.

Is mediation confidential?

Yes. Everything you discuss is strictly confidential to the service; the only exception to this would be to protect children or others from possible injury or abuse.

Mediation costs less and is usually quicker than contested divorce proceedings

What happens in family mediation?

The mediator(s) meet both you and your ex-partner, separately at first, to explain about mediation, answer any questions and establish whether mediation is a suitable way forward for all concerned. This meeting takes up to 45 minutes.

If mediation is appropriate, you will be offered further meetings that you both attend, to work out solutions to the issues that are raised.

Mediation gives you the opportunity to talk freely about your concerns, your children and your future. The mediator will assist with your discussions, but the decisions you reach will be your own.

The number of meetings you need will depend on how complex the issues are and the rate of progress. Usually from 3 to 6 sessions are needed. This will be discussed with you at the beginning. Each meeting lasts up to 1½ hours.

Your safety

If you are concerned about your own safety, or the safety of a child, or if you have experienced violence or intimidation in the past, please discuss this with the mediator at your first appointment. We can provide special arrangements for mediation appointments, for example separate arrival and departure times, and separate waiting areas for both parties.

Any special needs?

If you have difficulty climbing stairs, need an interpreter or signer, or have any other special needs please let us know so that we can make suitable arrangements.

The Family Mediation Service is committed to equal opportunities. We are sensitive to issues of gender, colour, race, religion, sexual orientation and disability that may be relevant to the resolution of family dispute.

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