



WSMS FAMILY MEDIATION SERVICE
INFORMATION SHEET ON FAMILY MATTERS (1)

(Please Read Carefully)

Mediation for separation or divorce is undertaken usually by a sole Mediator who is a professional with experience in marital and family work. If appropriate a Co-Mediator may be appointed. This provides a supportive, professional forum in which a couple can be helped to deal with all the issues arising from separation or divorce, including, for example, the practicalities of separation, the question of divorce, arrangements for children, housing, property and capital adjustments, and maintenance and any other issues which either party may raise.

The Initial Assessment meeting is a separate and confidential discussion.

Mediation is generally undertaken with the couple together, but if separate discussions are held by agreement with either party, the matters then discussed are brought back into the joint session. When working in this way, separate confidences are not maintained between the couple.

A supplemental process is sometimes offered, in conjunction with the mediation process outlined above. This involves both parties attending a mediation meeting together with their solicitors, when attempts can be made in joint or separate meetings to resolve outstanding differences. The mediator will shuttle between the parties, facilitating negotiation and movement, helping them to narrow and resolve their differences. Here, the Mediator will maintain confidentiality between parties, except that relevant factual matters are required to be mutually disclosed.

In all cases parties will not be required to reach complete and binding agreement in mediation without having had the opportunity to review matters with their own solicitors. Summaries of the financial information and of the settlement proposals will be provided to the parties for this purpose as required.

Mediation Time and Cost

The Initial Assessment will last for approximately one hour. You may be asked to provide identification and proof of address.

The Mediation Meeting generally lasts 1.5 hours to 2 hours each. The number of sessions will depend upon the issues: 2 to 4 sessions are not uncommon, but more or less may be needed. They may take place at weekly intervals or as otherwise agreed. Parties do not need to commit themselves to any fixed number of sessions but they can decide at the end of each session if they wish to continue.

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West Sussex Mediation Service (WSMS) charges for mediation sessions and interim work are:

- The Initial Assessment = **£70 per person.**
- Joint Mediation Session = **£100 per hour per person.**
- Mediation Summaries provided by the mediator –

Memorandum of Understanding (**M of U**) - relating to children = **£75 per copy**,
Memorandum of Understanding relating to finances = **£100 per copy**,
Combined = **£175 per copy.**

These fees are in place to cover the cost of the significant additional work that is carried out by the mediator and office staff following a mediation session.

NB By expecting the Mediator to formulate an M of U, WSMS would expect payment to be made, by both parties, irrespective of what they choose to do with it thereafter

- Our mediator is authorised to complete a Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting Form A or a Form C100 for a fee of **£70.**
If mediation doesn't proceed, but such an assessment has taken place, a client can then use this form to formally notify a Solicitor/Court of this outcome.

NB For any last minute cancellations of a meeting (less than 48 hrs) there will be a chargeable fee of £25 to cover incurred costs.

We normally take payment in cash at the actual meeting. We are sometimes able to take a payment by debit/credit card using PayPal Here, but the client will incur a small transaction fee for this facility.

WSMS was established in 2000. One of its main objectives is the encouragement of sensitive, efficient and economic handling, by its mediators, of family issues. Another objective is to promote and encourage the use of mediation, which in any event is now becoming more widespread as a result of the new Family Law legislation.

WSMS Mediators have undergone formal mediation training. The work that they undertake follows accepted principles. They have no authority to impose decisions, but will assist parties in working out arrangements for themselves, their children, and any other issues including those relating to property and finance.

Complaints

If a couple, or either of them, have a complaint about the mediation or the Mediator(s), the complaint should in the first place be put in writing to Nick Handley Service Co-ordinator at West Sussex Mediation Service, Park House, North Street, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1RN. He will try to resolve the complaint with the help of senior management. If the complaint cannot be resolved in this way, then the complaint will be referred to an independent third party.