



# DIRECT MEDIATION SERVICES



Dear Client,

## **Re: Family Mediation - Client Care Letter**

### **Instructions**

It is important to read this letter in detail as it contains information about how your mediation case will be managed. If you do not understand any part of this letter, you must ask your mediator, and they will answer your questions.

### **How we work**

One of the main purposes of this letter is to explain how we operate.

Your case has been allocated to family mediator. All correspondence related to your case should go through the office. Our telephone number is: 0113 468 9593 and our email address is: [info@directmediationservices.co.uk](mailto:info@directmediationservices.co.uk) It is always best to email, as the phone lines can be very busy.

All our mediators are registered with the Family Mediation Council (FMC) and also hold membership of member organisations, such as Resolution. They are also fully insured to do the work that they do.

Our organisation takes on both private and Legal Aid cases. If you are privately funded, we will charge you a fee for providing family mediation. You will also be responsible for all court application fees and other disbursements. If your mediation is funded by Legal Aid, our service will be free of charge. Please note that we are not affiliated with His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service, and we do not provide legal advice. Any court application fees are separate and not covered by our family mediation service funded by Legal Aid.

Our administration team will do their best to respond promptly to letters or calls made to our office about your mediation case, but we ask you to understand that an immediate reply is not always possible. It is not expected for you to speak to your mediator outside the mediation sessions.

Your mediator will not take any original documents from you such as bank statements. We expect you to make the necessary copies for mediation sessions. We do not provide a document copying or printing service.

### **Professional Fees (if privately funded)**

The professional fees for mediation are fixed at £135 per hour per person (inc. VAT). They are non-negotiable. Fees are payable irrespective of an agreement being met. We have a cancellation policy on our website under Policies, which we ask you to read. All fees are paid in advance of the mediation sessions. If you do not pay in advance, mediation will not take place.

We have over 200 approved venues across England and Wales; however, if you choose to have mediation at another venue, you may be charged for the mediator's travel expenses. It is the decision of the mediator whether they agree to mediate at another venue. Most clients prefer to use our online services, which means that you can have your appointment sooner and in the comfort of your home.

If, after paying privately for mediation sessions, your financial circumstances change and you become eligible for Legal Aid, we will no longer be able to act for you. In such a case, we will refer you to a Legal Aid practice to continue your mediation. It will then be your decision, along with the other participant, whether to continue mediation with the referred practice or another Legal Aid mediation provider of your choice.

It is your responsibility to notify us of any adverse change in your financial circumstances.

### **Fee for a Mediation Information & Assessment Meeting (MIAM) if you are privately funded**

Our fee for conducting the MIAM is £87 (inc. VAT), and the fee for issuing a mediation certificate is £48 (inc. VAT). We require payment of £135 in advance of the MIAM appointment. If your case proceeds to mediation and no mediation certificate is issued, the £48 will be retained and applied toward your mediation fees at the rate specified above.

If you book a Fast-track MIAM, please note that the additional cost for this service is non-refundable, even if the MIAM appointment is cancelled or the case does not proceed to mediation.

### **Proceeds of Crime (POCA)**

Mediators have a duty under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 to report suspected criminal activity, including hidden assets or unlawfully obtained funds. If such issues arise during mediation, the process may be paused or terminated, and a report made to the relevant authorities. You should seek legal advice if you have concerns about the legality of any financial matters discussed.

### **Office Opening times**

Please note that our office is open from 9 am to 5 pm during weekdays.

### **Your file**

If you are publicly funded, we are required by the Legal Aid Agency to retain a copy of your case file for up to 7 years after your case is closed. During this period, the Legal Aid Agency may review your file as part of their audit of Direct Mediation Services. After the 7-year retention period, your case file will be securely deleted unless you request a copy within this timeframe. Since the file is stored digitally, any requested copy will be provided electronically.

If you are privately funded, we will retain the information you provide for the provision of services for a period of 7 years. Under data protection legislation, you have the right to access the personal data we hold about you. This right also applies to clients funded by the Legal Aid Agency.

## Case Closure Policy

If no further mediation sessions are booked within 3 months of your last appointment, your case will be closed. To resume mediation after closure, you will need to recontact us, and additional steps or fees may apply.

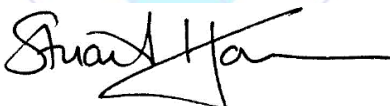
## Complaints procedure

If you have any concerns about the conduct of your case, we encourage you to raise them initially with your mediator. For full details of our complaint's procedure, please visit the "Documents" section on our website.

If we are unable to resolve your concerns to your satisfaction, you may escalate your complaint to the mediator's member organisation, and ultimately to the Family Mediation Council. For further information, please visit the Family Mediation Council's website at <https://www.familymediationcouncil.org.uk>.

## Thank you

Above all we would like to thank you for choosing Direct Mediation Services. We look forward to working with you on your mediation case.

Yours sincerely,  


Stuart M. Hanson B Mus (Hons), FSoM, FMCA PPC, JP  
Managing Partner & Family Mediator  
URN: 1326A

DIRECT MEDIATION  
SERVICES

