

Helping you reach an agreement

How mediation works when relationships end and families change



Almost always, problems are best solved when people talk. But sometimes you need a helping hand.

When relationships end or there are disagreements, emotions can run high and talking face to face can seem like the hardest thing to do. Sometimes you need help to get the talking started and focus on what really matters to you and your family. That's where mediation comes in.

Mediation works by helping people who have decided to separate, end a civil partnership or divorce or who are trying to deal with changes in family relationships to talk things through. Mediators are trained to help you discuss and agree on the best arrangements for the future. This may be about arrangements for your children, your money or the practicalities of how life will work in the future.

Bringing real benefits

Mediation works because it:

- Helps you make informed decisions that are right for your circumstances, your future and the future of your family.
- Provides somewhere to talk calmly and privately.
- Can provide a cost effective solution.
- Helps children by helping their parents to work together to plan for their future.

What makes Resolution mediators special is that most are also qualified family law professionals who understand the law as well as being trained in mediation skills. Most importantly, they understand how best to help you deal with things when relationships change.

Mediation can be especially helpful where parents need to sort out how they can best raise their children even though they will no longer be living together. If you are a parent, a mediator can help you focus on what is best for your children, and talk with you about how best to make sure your children's views can be heard,

so you are more likely to reach an agreement that ensures their future security and happiness.

Working together

Resolution mediators usually mediate alone but can sometimes work in twos. Some are trained to talk with children and young people, and can help you to decide when that might be particularly helpful. They can also help you to decide the best way to use your mediation and to choose the professional assistance that will best meet your needs and circumstances, such as financial advisers and family consultants.

The MIAM (Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting)

Although mediation is a voluntary choice, since April 2014 most people engaged in family court proceedings are required to attend an initial meeting (a Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting sometimes referred to as a 'MIAM') to find out about the ways in which it is possible to sort things out away from the courtroom, including whether mediation is suitable for them.

Resolution's mediators can provide this meeting, and make sure that your needs (particularly where you are vulnerable) are matched to a service that suits your family's requirements.



How does mediation work?

Mediators listen to find out what is important to you and help you to make your own choices and decisions about the best way forward. They will help you reach practical solutions which work for you, and if you are parents, for your children.

You will probably have a number of sessions together with the mediator – three to five one to two hour sessions are common. You can consult your own lawyer at any time, to take legal advice on what is best for you.

When you are both satisfied with the decisions you have reached, your lawyer will then complete the legal formalities.

Whatever your relationship or family situation is or has been, a Resolution mediator will make sure you can discuss all your options, which might include traditional legal advice, solicitor negotiation, working collaboratively (where you can sit down with your lawyers all together to work things out) and arbitration, or a combination, to address your particular needs.

Resolution's leaflet *Choosing the Right Process* explains these options in more detail and is available to download from the Resolution website:

www.resolution.org.uk

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Mediation just seemed to make sense as we didn't want to fight anymore now that a decision to divorce had been made. It gently took our egos out of the situation in a reassuring and balanced way. It reminds both parties that especially if there are children involved, that it really is about providing the most amicable and positive outcome for everyone.

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Natasha, used mediation

The right choice for you and your family

There are a number of ways to sort things out when you are separating. This might be when your family life is changing and decisions need to be made, whether you have been married, in a civil partnership, have been cohabiting, or are a grandparent or carer. Resolution trained mediators will help you decide whether mediation is right for you and your circumstances.

Helping you reach an agreement



To find out more about how mediation can help you, visit our website www.resolution.org.uk/family-mediation

On the Resolution website you will find a directory of Resolution mediators throughout England and Wales.

Resolution mediators are also listed on the Family Mediation Council website: www.familymediationcouncil.org.uk/find-local-mediator

You can also contact us at the address below.



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