

What to expect from your first meeting with your Family Solicitor



This guidance has been put together to give you an idea about what to expect during your appointment and the type of information we will ask for.

It has been modelled on an appointment for a client who is considering or going through a divorce, but the general principles apply to all appointments. We offer an initial fixed fee consultation appointment to all clients to help assess their situation and give them a steer regarding the next steps they should take.

We can advise clients on any aspect of relationship breakdown in a fixed fee appointment, but the most common issues clients tend to discuss are divorce, finances and children.

Background

We will usually start the appointment by asking you a little bit about why you have come to see us and the events leading up to you booking an appointment. Do not worry we are not expecting a perfect account, just an overview of the situation which has caused you to consult a solicitor. After this, we will ask you a number of questions about yourself, your spouse and your children, including names, dates of birth and addresses.

Divorce

The next thing we will do is talk you through the divorce process, should this be something you are considering. We will explain the procedure for both sole and joint applications and outline the costs if you would like assistance with this part of the process. We will also explain where the finances fit in with that process and in what order you should approach matters.

Finances

Once you are happy with your understanding of the divorce process, we will proceed to talk to you about finances and to give you some advice regarding how a financial agreement could be reached in your case.

We will explain the different factors that a court would take into account when deciding what an appropriate settlement would be and give you an indication of how that division would look in your case.

In order to do that, it will be necessary to put a value on your assets and liabilities. We may therefore ask you some questions about yours and your spouse's financial situation such as:

- The value of your property
- Whether the property is subject to a mortgage
- Whether you have any savings or investments
- Whether you have any substantial liabilities
- Your respective incomes
- The value of your pension

We are not expecting perfect answers and we do know that in most relationships, one party tends to be more involved in finances than the other. We will take that into account and provide the best advice we can on the information you provide us.

We will then talk about the procedure for exchanging financial information and how to negotiate a settlement. This will involve a discussion about Mediation and other forms of alternative dispute resolution, to help you reach an agreement in a swift and non confrontational manner.

Children

Last, but most definitely not least, we may ask you some questions regarding the arrangements for your children. If you are struggling to have contact with your children following a relationship breakdown then we can advise you of the best way to proceed to reestablish a pattern of contact.

Overview

This is just an example of the sorts of topics we cover during our initial appointments and the information you can gather in preparation. It is by no means an exhaustive list and we recognise that every case is different.

We hope that this guide will help if you are considering taking legal advice, but are hesitant to take that first step until you know what an appointment would involve.

If you would like to book a consultation with a member of our family team please get in touch using the details below.

