



MEDIATION



The basic information set out below is not intended to provide all the answers, and should be read in conjunction with the detailed advice provided.

Mediation is a process by which parties to a dispute may meet with someone independent of their own legal representatives to try and negotiate a settlement between them.

The mediator does not give legal advice to either party, but the mediators we use do have legal expertise in the area of family law.

Not all cases are appropriate for mediation, but naturally this is something which will be discussed with you. If you are seeking legal aid (public funding) it may be necessary to refer to a mediator before legal aid can be applied for.

If you are in a mediation process you are still entitled to seek your own independent legal advice from us whilst that is ongoing. You can also seek independent legal advice once the mediation process has been completed and, if a settlement is reached, it would be usual for that to be formally recorded.

HATCH BRENNER FAMILY LAW DEPARTMENT OUR APPROACH

Most family disputes are the result of a breakdown in a relationship. People in these situations are often emotionally stressed, with feelings of sadness, anger, hopelessness and guilt. No one enters a relationship expecting it to end. We appreciate that people in these situations feel very sensitive, and will often require support in reaching difficult decisions.

Where children are involved, we recognise the need to protect them from the difficulties which their parents may be having.

In our experience no one wants to go to Court over any issue if they can avoid it - although sometimes it is necessary.

Our approach is to try to negotiate fair settlements, and to keep legal costs to a minimum. However, this is not always possible because of the complexities of the case, or because the other party is not so willing to reach a fair solution.

We will try to provide realistic estimates of costs. If, for any reason, we need to vary those estimates, we will tell you. We account to clients on a monthly basis and expect those accounts to be paid promptly. We expect clients to pay Court fees on account. We also expect clients to pay on account for other fees which we may be responsible for, such as the instruction of estate agents, accountants or barristers.

We ask that you are open and honest with us.

We will seek to be non-confrontational and straightforward with the other party, or their representatives. We do not seek to enter into arguments for the sake of them, but will be firm when necessary. Our aim is to give you measured advice, in a cost-effective way, in order to reach an appropriate conclusion as quickly as the procedures will allow. This will enable you to begin putting a distressing part of your life behind you and hopefully make a fresh start.

We will be glad to help at every stage of the process. Please feel free to contact Jonathan Brock, David Bloomfield, Richard Dilks or Jo Mayes for a free initial discussion over the telephone, entirely without obligation. They will be delighted to hear from you.

THE FAMILY DEPARTMENT



Jonathan Brock

Jonathan is head of the family department, and is a court advocacy specialist handling matrimonial, divorce, co-habitee and childcare matters.

David Bloomfield

David is a childcare specialist and has been a Hatch Brenner partner since 1985. David is a member and former interviewer for the Law Society's Children's Panel and the Norfolk & Norwich Medico-Legal Society



Richard Dilks

Richard has always specialised in family matters including financial settlements after divorce or separation, and child-related issues such as contact and residence disputes. Richard is a Family Law accredited specialist and trained Collaborative Lawyer.



Jo Mayes

Jo joined the firm in 1985, and has had experience in civil litigation, personal injury and divorce matters. Jo is a member of the Norfolk & Norwich Medico-Legal Society.



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DENCORA HOUSE

Solicitors

Hatch Brenner LLP is a limited liability partnership regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority and registered in England and Wales with registered number OC343110. The registered office is 4 Theatre Street Norwich NR2 1QY. A list of members may be inspected at any of our offices. The term 'Partner' is used to refer to a Member of Hatch Brenner LLP.

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