

FACTSHEET No 4:

The Costs of Divorce and Separation



When separating or divorcing money is often tight as what was one household now has to become two with duplicate mortgage or rent payments and other bills. In addition to these, there are the costs incurred in obtaining a divorce, sorting out arrangements for the children and a financial settlement.

Going to see two separate solicitors can be an expensive process: often considerable correspondence sometimes followed by court proceedings. Solicitors' costs can range from £180 an hour to £250 an hour and the average cost of Court proceedings can generally be somewhere between £5,000 to £7,000 per individual.

Statistics from the National Audit Office Report 'Legal Aid and Mediation for People involved in Family Breakdown' (2007) show that mediation is a more cost-effective and quicker option than using solicitors and the court process.

Mediation Costs

Mediation costs can be met in one of two ways; by private funding or by legal aid.

Private funding

Where mediation is privately funded, the individuals are responsible for their mediation costs. Mediators charge in a range of different ways and at differing rates so it is important to ask for fee information prior to selecting a preferred mediator.

Some mediators will charge an hourly rate whilst others may charge per session or on a total case basis. Hourly rates can typically be £100 per hour for each person or more with an average total cost of mediation around £1,200. At Progressive Mediation our costs are £70 an hour for each person. With an average number of three sessions, our overall costs to reach an agreement should be no more than £500.

Prior to the start of the mediation individuals are required to attend an assessment meeting. The charge for this is £40.

If mediation does not proceed, there is usually a charge for a mediator to sign a form to confirm that mediation is not appropriate, a C100 (for an application regarding children) or a Form A (for an application regarding finances). The fees for this can be as much as £150. At Progressive Mediation we charge £15 for completing this form after attending a MIAM appointment.

Legal Aid

Individuals on a very low income may be eligible for Legal Aid for their mediation. All mediators should assess whether an individual is eligible for legal aid or they can contact the Legal Aid Agency.

If assessed as eligible,

- The mediation will be completely free of charge regardless of any property or money received through the mediation process.
- During mediation some assistance from a Solicitor may also be covered.
- The Legal Aid Agency will pay the mediator's set charges for the work completed on behalf of the individual.

Progressive Mediation Fees

At Progressive we are conscious that for people on a tight budget even the lower costs of Mediation can still be a lot of money. Our mediation costs are therefore significantly less:

Service	Fees
Mediation Information & Assessment Meeting	£40
Joint Mediation Sessions	£70 per person per hour
Preparation of Documents:	
Open Financial Statement	£50 per person
Memorandum of Understanding	£50 per person
Letters summarising sessions	Free of Charge
Telephone calls and emails between sessions	No charge, within reason
Completion of C100 or Form A	£15

How do we do it?

Not by compromising our professional standards. Family mediation is carefully regulated by the Family Mediation Council. Like all reputable family mediators we belong to organisations that subscribe to the council and uphold its code of professional practice.

Nor do we lack experience. Frances qualified as a family mediator in 1990 Charles in 2000. Progressive Mediation has been providing family mediation services for more than 15 years.

Nor do we offer less of a service. In most cases we co-mediate; two mediators in each session. Our mediation is therefore gender-balanced; we offer a wide professional perspective on the issues, and the best possible assurance of impartiality. Two heads surely are better than one.

We work at your convenience. We understand that for most separating couples work, childcare and other commitments impose real constraints on availability. We therefore offer appointments during the working day in the evenings and at weekends.

It's simple. Our overheads are significantly less than many solicitors or mediation services as we work from our home address and do not employ anyone. We have a comfortable fully equipped mediation room for roundtable discussions and can make other rooms available if required. Our clients are therefore not paying for expensive offices, large overheads and staff costs which means we can keep our fees very cost effective.

For further information about Family Mediation in general, the costs involved or to discuss your specific circumstances in confidence give us a call.



Further Information & Help:

Call 0788 903 9393 or email:

frances@progressive-mediation.co.uk

charles@progressive-mdiation.co.uk

www.progressive-mediation.co.uk