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Family Support Agency

What is the Family Mediation Service?

Family Mediation Service

How can mediation help?

The Family Mediation Service encourages the separating couple to co-operate with each other in working out mutually acceptable arrangements on all or any of the following:

- Parenting the children
- Financial support
- Family home and property
- Pensions
- Other issues related to the separation

What is the mediator's role?

- To see a couple together and look at issues to be discussed and agreed.
- To create a climate in which neither party dominates but in which both parties participate fully in good faith.
- To create and maintain an atmosphere of co-operation and responsibility.
- To help couples deal with difficult emotional issues that can prevent them reaching agreement.
- To help couples reach agreement that they both find acceptable.

This service is FREE

Mediation is not marriage counselling or a legal advice service. This service is for married and non-married couples; in certain circumstances, it can also assist in disputes within families.

How does the service operate?

A professionally trained Mediator assists the couple to reach their own agreement.

1. Both parties attend.
2. Discussions are confidential.
3. The Mediator does not take sides.

For an appointment both parties must contact the service independently and confirm that they are willing to attend.

How long does it take?

Mediation usually takes between three and six sessions. Each session lasts approximately one hour.

Outcome

Most mediations end with a written document that sets out all the details of the couple's agreement. This can then be taken to solicitors to be drawn into a Legal Contract or Legal Deed of Separation and/or used as the basis for a Decree of Divorce.

What is a family session?

When a couple has reached agreement, a session is offered to parents with their children to discuss their new family arrangements in an encouraging and positive way.

What are the advantages of mediation?

- It is a confidential service.
- A balanced agreement is reached that is acceptable to the parties.
- Decisions taken together are more likely to be honoured.
- It promotes communication and co-operation, reducing bitterness and distress.
- Parents are helped to remain as partners in childrearing by developing parenting plans that suit their particular circumstances.
- Parents are helped to manage conflict in a way that protects the best interests of their children.

What is mediation?

Mediation is a service to help couples who have decided to separate or divorce, or who have already separated, to negotiate their own terms of agreement, taking into account the needs and interests of all involved. In certain circumstances, mediation can also assist in disputes within families.

Mediation allows people to make their own decisions and hold onto their own power.

The Family Mediation Service is a state run service staffed by professionally trained and accredited mediators. It was set up in 1986 and now operates under the auspices of the statutory Family Support Agency. There are 16 offices located around the country.

Full-time offices are located in the following areas:

DUBLIN

St. Stephens Green House
Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2.

Telephone: (01)634 4320 Fax (01) 662 2339

LIMERICK

3rd Floor, Riverpoint, Lower Mallow Street, Limerick.

Telephone: (061) 214310 Fax (061) 312225

CORK

Hibernian House, 80A South Mall, Cork.

Telephone: (021) 4252200 Fax (021) 4251331

GALWAY

Ross House, Merchant's Road, Galway.

Telephone: (091) 509730 Fax (091) 567623

For information on the location of other offices, please contact one of the above numbers or visit www.fsa.ie/familymediation